

# The INSIDE GAME



The Official Newsletter of SABR's Deadball Era Committee

VOL. XIV, No. 5: "LET'S GET THIS LUMPY LICORICE-STAINED BALL ROLLING!" NOVEMBER 2014

## THE CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

by **John McMurray**

With Hank O'Day and Jacob Ruppert being inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2013, it is reasonable to ask which Deadball Era figures — if any — still merit inclusion. Considering that no current voters would have seen any of the candidates from that era play, advanced metrics may tilt the scale when it comes to making the case for long-ago players. There are a surprising number of Deadball Era players whose candidacies still inspire Hall of Fame debate. The most consistently-mentioned possibilities are Bill Dahlen, Chicago and Brooklyn's renowned (and tempestuous) shortstop; Sherry Magee, recognized for his offensive prowess with Philadelphia from 1904 through 1914; and outfielder Jimmy Sheckard, who is best known for his time with the Cubs.

Peter Morris is author of several baseball books relating to baseball's formative years and a member of the Hall of Fame's 16-member committee in 2012 which was charged with selecting players for the Hall of Fame who played prior to 1947. He believes that players elected to the Hall of Fame must deserve the honor legitimately: "My philosophy is that we should be

*continued on page 27*

## LEAGUE PARK III: THE DEADBALL ERA CLEVELAND AL: 1901-1909

by **Ron Selter**

There were four ballparks in Cleveland called League Park. The first (League Park I) was used by the National League Cleveland club from 1879-1884. This park was located at Silby (later Carnegie) Street, Kennard (later East 46th) Street, and Cedar Street. The second park (League Park II) was used by the American Association Cleveland Blues from 1887-1888 and the NL Cleveland Spiders in 1889-1890. This second park in Cleveland to be called League Park was at a different location (39th Street, East 35th Street, Euclid Avenue, and Payne Avenue). League Park III was at a third location (located in downtown Cleveland at East 70th Street, Linwood Avenue, Dunham (later East 66th Street) and Lexington Avenue Northeast).<sup>1</sup> League Park III was used by the little-lamented NL Cleveland Spiders for the 1891 to 1899 seasons, and was thereafter the first Cleveland ballpark used by the American League, starting as a minor league park in 1900. League Park IV was built of steel-and-concrete on the site of League Park III between the 1909 and 1910

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seasons. This Deadball Era ballpark was later used by the AL Cleveland Indians until mid-season 1932, and again for most home games from 1934 to 1946.

At League Park III, home plate and the grandstand were located in the northwest corner of the site. Dimensional data for this ballpark in *Green Cathedrals* are limited to RF (290) and the height of the RF fence (20 feet). On Opening Day 1901 in its first major league AL season, the park consisted of a covered wooden grandstand in several sections extending from well beyond first base to well beyond third base. In addition, small bleachers were located far down the LF and RF foul lines. In 1901-1902, there were no seats in the fair territory portion of the outfield. The seating capacity of the park in 1901 was about 9,000. For most of its existence (1891-1904), the ballpark's dimensions were constrained by the inability of the club to purchase several houses and a saloon on Lexington Avenue, in what would have been the RF corner. Except for this aspect, the park site for 1891-1904 was rectangular. Because of the saloon property, the playing field was angled such that the RF foul line just hit the corner of

the saloon property. As a result, there was a diagonal section of fence and a screen that ran from the RF foul pole to the Lexington Avenue perimeter fence. An extension of the RF line intersected the RF perimeter fence at 102 degrees, and the LF foul line therefore had to intersect the LF fence at 78 degrees. The LF and RF fences met in the CF corner (to the right of dead CF) at a right angle. One curious feature of the ballpark was the existence, starting with the 1903 season, of an enclosed pathway — dubbed the subway — located behind the LF fence that provided access to the RF bleachers from the third base bleachers.<sup>2</sup>

Late in the 1904 season, the ballclub managed to acquire the properties along Lexington Avenue, permitting the ballpark to be expanded. This acquisition meant the park site was now actually a rectangle. The additional space in RF was used to extend the first base bleachers to the Lexington Avenue perimeter fence. In addition, the field was reoriented towards RF with the LF line now meeting the LF fence at 85 degrees and the RF line now intersecting the RF fence at 95 degrees. Before the 1908 season, the capacity of

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### Committee Chair

John McMurray: [deadball@sabr.org](mailto:deadball@sabr.org)

### Committee Vice Chair

Trey Strecker: [tstrecker@bsu.edu](mailto:tstrecker@bsu.edu)

### Newsletter Editor

Bill Lamb: [wflamb12@yahoo.com](mailto:wflamb12@yahoo.com)

### Assistant Editor

Mark Dugo: [claydad96@aol.com](mailto:claydad96@aol.com)

### Assistant Editor

Bob Harris: [bob@bumblebeagle.org](mailto:bob@bumblebeagle.org)

### Book Review Editor

Gail Rowe: [growes36@comcast.net](mailto:growes36@comcast.net)

## NEW DEADBALL ERA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*The Inside Game* is pleased to welcome the following SABR members who have expressed interest in the Deadball Era to the committee:

**Joe Abisaid**  
**David P. Keys**  
**Thomas Mason**  
**Andy Terrick**

We look forward to their active participation in committee endeavors. These new committee members, as well as our newsletter contributors, can be contacted via the SABR directory.

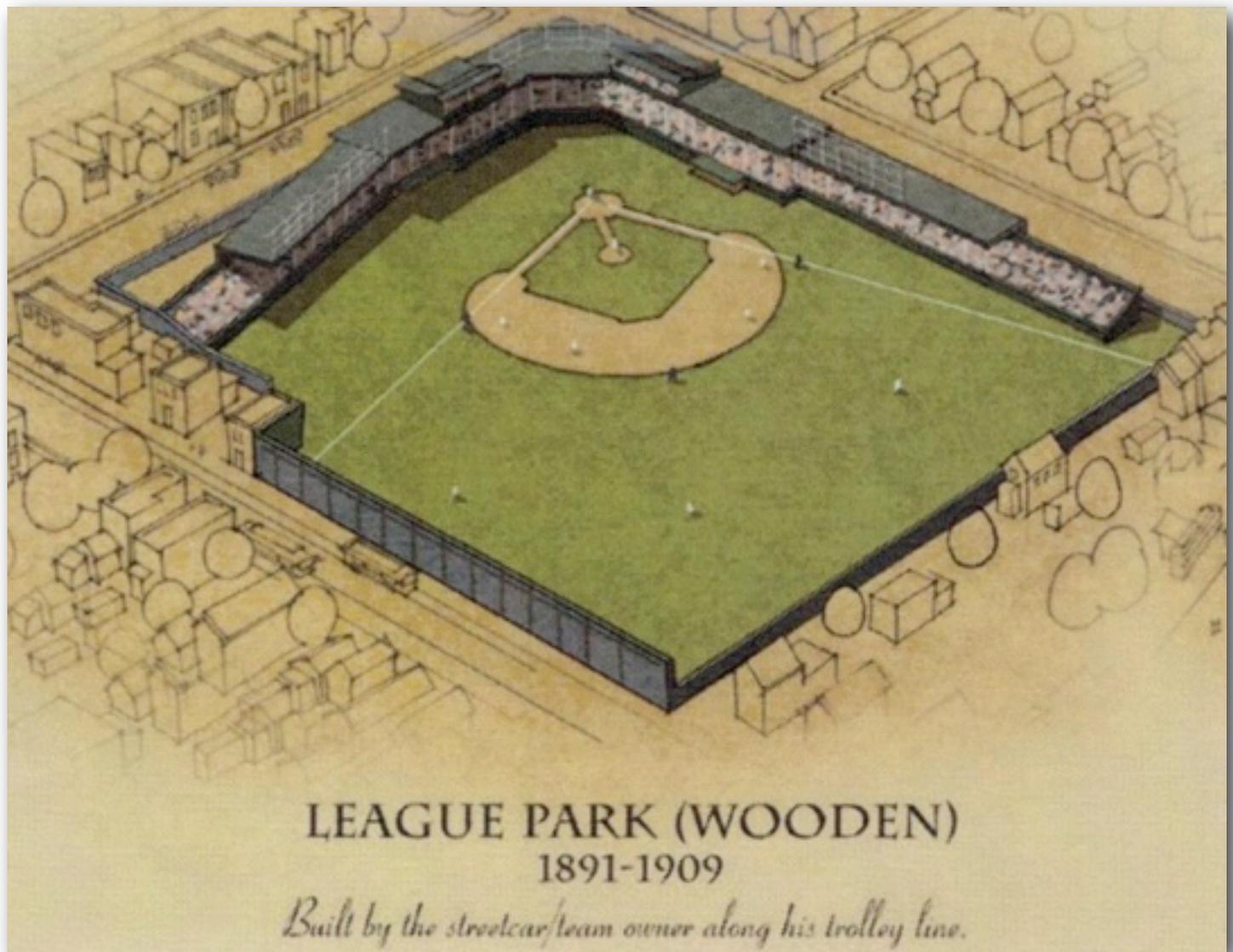


the ballpark was increased by adding a new set of bleachers behind the LF-CF fence, while the bleacher section at the CF end of the RF bleachers was removed, otherwise the RF bleachers would have blocked the view from the new LF-CF bleachers. Finally after the 1908 season, all of the remaining RF bleachers were removed.

### THE BASIS OF THE PARK'S CONFIGURATIONS AND DIMENSIONS

The knowledge of the park's original configuration and dimensions was based on three principal sources: (1) an 1892 Cleveland Ward Map, (2) an 1896 Sanborn fire insurance map, and (3) the ballpark diagram from *Baseball*

*Memories 1900-1909*.<sup>3,4,5</sup> The 1892 Ward Map showed the park site, the stands, the foul lines and the baselines. This map also showed the RF line terminating at the corner of the saloon property. The baselines and foul lines determined the location of home plate and the backstop distance (75 feet). This information was used to plot the location of home plate and the foul lines on the 1896 Sanborn map.<sup>4</sup> The Sanborn map was also used as the basis of the park diagram, as it showed additional stands built after 1892. All of the other ballpark dimensions were derived from this diagram. The resulting LF dimension was 353, dead CF was 409, and RF was 248. The deepest point in the ballpark was the CF corner (445), at the junction



**League Park III-Second Configuration 1905-09**

of the LF and RF fences, and was about halfway between dead CF and right-center. It was 304 in RF to the junction of the diagonal fence and the perimeter Lexington Avenue fence. The definitive evidence regarding the existence of the diagonal fence section in RF was found as a result of research into home runs hit at League Park III. In the game of September 29, 1904, Napoleon Lajoie (the Cleveland captain and the reason the Cleveland team was known as the Naps) hit a home run to RF. The game account in the *Boston Globe* described the home run as being hit over the screen in RF, the ball dropping over the inside fence.<sup>6</sup>

The first configuration change took place before the 1903 season. Capacity was increased by the building of bleachers in RF in front of the 20 foot high RF wall. The bleachers were located in RF and extended from the CF corner to within about 50 feet of the RF foul line. These bleachers, whose depth was estimated to have been 25-30 feet, reduced the straight-away RF distance from 323 to 286. The seating capacity of the ballpark

was again increased after the 1904 season when the saloon and houses along Lexington Avenue were acquired and added to the park site. This addition to the site amounted to 10,000 square feet. At this time the playing field was rotated seven degrees towards RF and the first base stands were extended to the Lexington Avenue fence.

Before the 1908 season, the park's capacity was again increased by the construction of an additional set of wooden bleachers behind the LF fence. The addition of these new bleachers increased the area of the park site by about 4,500 square feet. These new bleachers, as shown in a 1909 photo from the *Cleveland Leader*, extended from about straight-away left field all the way to the CF corner.<sup>7</sup> Early in the 1908 season, a game account in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* referred to an inside-the-park-home-run (IPHR) to CF by Charlie Hickman as the first Cleveland home run on the enlarged grounds.<sup>8</sup> This meant that the center field portion of the RF bleachers had been removed, most likely to unblock the sight lines



*League Park Exterior*

from the new CF bleachers. Additional evidence for the removal of the old CF bleachers is that IPHRs to CF increased from 1.8 per season (1903-1907) to six in 1908. The main portion of the RF bleachers remained in use for another season (1908) after which, they were removed as shown by the 1909 photo in the *Cleveland Leader*.<sup>9</sup> Park data and dimensions for League Park III are shown in Table 1.

### THE IMPACT OF THE PARK'S CONFIGURATIONS AND DIMENSIONS ON BATTING

For the 1901-1902 seasons League Park was the second smallest AL ballpark. Despite this small size, the batting park factors were unexceptional – in fact downright average. See table of League Park III Batting Park Factors below. Only for doubles was the park factor above 100. In the 1901 season, the Cleveland Bluebirds (as they were called that year) set an unbreakable record – fewest home runs hit at home: NONE! Apparently that was not entirely due to the ballpark, as the visitors managed a dozen home runs at League Park that season. With those numbers in mind, one concludes that unlike today's ballparks, League Park's original AL configuration was not designed to suit the home team's sluggers. In the next season things turned out a lot better for Cleveland, now called either the Blues or the Broncos, as the team hit 15 home runs to the visitor's five in 60 home games at League Park, while at the same time compiling a .310 home batting average, the highest in the AL.<sup>10</sup>

The reconfiguration of the park for the 1903 season significantly reduced the size of RF. However, this change appears to have had virtually no impact on batting except for home runs. The League Park batting park factors for 1901-1902 vs. 1903-1907 were virtually unchanged except for a small increase in doubles and a small decrease in triples. See Batting Park Factors at League Park III, below. It is interesting to note that the short RF fence at League Park in 1903 resulted in only six Over-The-Fence (OTF) home runs to RF, while in that same season the short LF fence at Washington's AL Park was the scene of 30 OTF home runs. It

would appear that the AL in general and the Cleveland team in particular did not have many power-hitting left-handed batters. In the six seasons (1903-1908) when the RF bleacher were in place, there were on average only five OTF home runs to RF per season. In the same six seasons in this configuration, the park was a very average hitter's park, being a slightly above average park for doubles, and a slightly below average park for triples and home runs. The removal of the RF bleachers before the 1909 season had a negligible impact on batting except for triples (the triples park factor increased 35%) and home runs. Home runs fell from 15 in 1908 to only three in 1909, while the park's home run park factor dropped from 81 to 20. Unlike many Deadball Era ballparks, League Park III was not a park conducive to Inside-the-Park-Home Runs as shown by the home run data below. The installation of the RF bleachers for the 1903 season led to a drop in IPHR from 5.5 per season for 1901-1902 to 1.8 per season for the next five seasons. During the five seasons (1903-1907) with the RF-CF bleachers in place, IPHR accounted for just 13% of the total home runs hit at League Park III. In the 1908 season with the removal of the CF portion of the RF-CF bleachers, IPHR accounted for 60% of total home runs at the park. In 1909, after the removal of the remaining portion of the bleachers, all three home runs hit that season were IPHR. The home run data and batting park factors are shown in Table 2.

### NOTES

1. Philip J. Lowry, *Green Cathedrals* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison Wesley, rev. ed. 1992).
2. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, April 16, 1905.
3. Cleveland Ward Map 1892.
4. Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. Map, Cleveland 1896, Sheet 292.
5. Marc Okkonen, *Baseball Memories 1900-1909* (New York: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 1992), 49.
6. *Boston Globe*, September 30, 1904.
7. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, July 6, 1909.
8. *Cleveland Leader*, June 5, 1908.
9. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, July 6, 1909.
10. Excluding five home games played at neutral sites.

**TABLE 1. PARK DATA FOR LEAGUE PARK III.**

| Years     | DIMENSIONS (FROM PARK DIAGRAM) |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----------|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|           | LF                             | SLF | LC  | CF* | RC  | SRF | RF  |
| 1901-1902 | 353                            | 347 | 362 | 409 | 390 | 323 | 248 |
| 1903-1904 | 353                            | 347 | 362 | 409 | 352 | 286 | 248 |
| 1905-1907 | 356                            | 364 | 390 | 400 | 315 | 308 | 290 |
| 1908      | 356                            | 364 | 390 | 450 | 315 | 308 | 290 |
| 1909      | 356                            | 364 | 390 | 450 | 348 | 308 | 290 |

\* Deepest point was the CF corner 455 (1901-1902), 439 (1903-1907), 455 (1908-1909)

| AVERAGE OUTFIELD DISTANCES |     |     |     |
|----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Years                      | LF  | CF  | RF  |
| 1901-1902                  | 351 | 402 | 322 |
| 1903-1904                  | 351 | 390 | 303 |
| 1905-1907                  | 369 | 385 | 301 |
| 1908                       | 369 | 388 | 301 |
| 1909                       | 369 | 396 | 312 |

| FENCE HEIGHTS<br>(FROM GREEN CATHEDRALS AND<br>ESTIMATED FROM PHOTOS) |    |       |      |
|---|----|-------|------|
| Years   | LF | CF    | RF   |
| 1901-1902   | 10 | 10-20 | 20   |
| 1903-1907   | 10 | 6-20  | 6-20 |
| 1908  | 10 | 6-20  | 6-20 |
| 1909  | 10 | 10-20 | 20   |

**CAPACITY:** 9,000 (1901); Est.11,200 (1903-1904); Est.11,600 (1905-1907); Est. 12,600 (1908);Est. 11,600 (1909).

**PARK SIZE — COMPOSITE AVERAGE OUTFIELD DISTANCE:** 358 (1901-1902); 348 (1903-1904); 352 (1905-1907); 353 (1908), 363 (1909)

**PARK SITE AREA:** 3.9 acres (1901-19-04), 4.2 acres, (1905-19-07), 4.3 acres (1908-1909)

**DEADBALL ERA RUN FACTOR:** 96 (Rank: AL 14)

**NEW YORK LAW AIMS  
AT TICKET SCALPERS**

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**SEVERAL STATES FOLLOWING THE  
PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN  
PITTSBURGH ACT**

President Dreyfuss of the Pittsburgh Baseball Club received a copy yesterday of the anti-ticket scalping bill now pending before the New York legislature. The bill passed the House by a large majority and has been reported to the Senate.

The Pittsburgh club set the pace for legislation

of this kind when it asked the Pittsburgh council to pass an ordinance in this city. The St. Louis club is urging the adoption of a similar law in Missouri, and now the New York clubs are advocating the reform in the Empire State.

The act is not as strong as the Pittsburgh ordinance because it does not prevent speculation in theater and football tickets, but the theater ticket scalping graft in New York is so firmly established that nothing short of an uprising of the people would force a proper bill through the Empire State Legislature.

*The (Pittsburg) Gazette Times, March 3, 1912*

**TABLE 2. HOME RUN AND PARK FACTOR DATA FOR LEAGUE PARK III.**

**HOME RUNS BY TYPE**

| Years     | Total | OTF | Bounce | IPHR |
|-----------|-------|-----|--------|------|
| 1901-1902 | 32    | 21  | 0      | 11   |
| 1903-1907 | 71    | 62  | 4      | 9    |
| 1908      | 15    | 6   | 0      | 9    |
| 1909      | 3     | 0   | 0      | 3    |

Bounce: Bounce Home Runs  
 IPHR: Inside-the-Park-Home Runs  
 OTF: Over-The-Fence (Includes Bounce)

**OTF HOME RUNS BY FIELD  
 (EXCLUDING BOUNCE)**

| Years     | Total | LF        | CF | RF | Unk      |
|-----------|-------|-----------|----|----|----------|
| 1901-1902 | 21    | <b>17</b> | 1  | 3  | <b>0</b> |
| 1903-1907 | 58    | <b>30</b> | 4  | 24 | <b>0</b> |
| 1908      | 6     | 0         | 0  | 6  | 0        |
| 1909      | 0     |           |    |    |          |

Unk unknown  
**Bold** revised

**INSIDE-THE-PARK HOME RUN  
 DISTRIBUTION BY FIELD**

| Years     | Total | LF | LC | CF | RC | RF | Unk |
|-----------|-------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1901-1902 | 11    | 1  | 0  | 5  | 2  | 3  | 0   |
| 1903-1907 | 9     | 3  | 1  | 3  | 1  | 1  | 0   |
| 1908      | 9     | 2  | 1  | 6  | 0  | 0  | 0   |
| 1909      | 3     | 0  | 0  | 3  | 0  | 0  | 0   |

Unk unknown  
**Bold** revised

**BATTING PARK FACTORS**

| Years     | BA         | OBP        | SLUG       | 2B*        | 3B*       | HR*       | BB**       |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1901-1902 | 100        | <b>99</b>  | 99         | 118        | 83        | <b>69</b> | 91         |
| 1903-1907 | <b>102</b> | <b>101</b> | <b>102</b> | <b>112</b> | <b>94</b> | <b>82</b> | <b>93</b>  |
| 1908      | <b>105</b> | <b>103</b> | <b>105</b> | <b>123</b> | <b>86</b> | 81        | <b>95</b>  |
| 1909      | <b>104</b> | <b>104</b> | 102        | <b>126</b> | <b>84</b> | 22        | <b>104</b> |

\* Per AB  
 \*\* Per Total Plate Appearance (AB+BB+HP)  
**Bold** revised

**JENNINGS MAY DIE**

**FAMOUS BALL PLAYER DIVED WITHOUT  
 LOOKING INTO WATERLESS TANK**

ITHACA, N.Y.—Hughey Jennings, one of the most famous baseball men in the country, and baseball coach at Cornell University, yesterday met with a most peculiar accident, which may prove fatal.

Jennings, after the regular practice of the Cornell baseball squad, went to the bathrooms in the Cornell gymnasium for a plunge. Without looking into the big swimming pool, Jennings dove in. There was no water in the tank, however, and Jennings struck the tile bottom with terrible force.

The fall rendered him unconscious. Both his wrists are badly sprained, and it is feared that his skull is fractured.

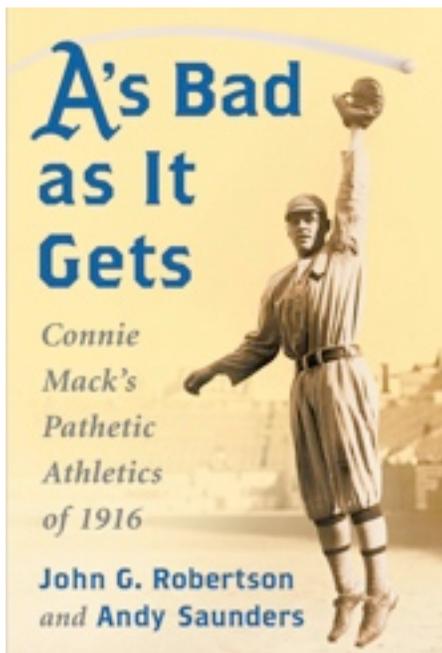
*The Pittsburg Press, February 26, 1904*

**DEADBALL BIOS**

Since our last newsletter issue, the BioProject has published profiles of such Deadball Era figures as Frank Fuller, Bob Rhoads, Hod Eller, Morrie Rath, Bert Yeabsley, John Bender, Hack Spencer, Boss Schmidt, Andy Nelson, Eddie Hohnhurst, Warren McLaughlin, Howie Shanks, Mutz Ens, Pi Schwert, Jack Lelivelt, and Bill Lelivelt. As always, we urge you to check these bios out if you have not already done so.

Ed Barrow is of the opinion that a decided move to increase batting will be made at the joint rules committee. Barrow favors allowing a batsman taking first on three balls.

*The Pittsburg Press, January 3, 1906*



**A'S BAD AS IT GETS:  
CONNIE MACK'S  
PATHETIC ATHLETICS  
OF 1916**

**BY JOHN G. ROBERTSON  
AND ANDY SAUNDERS**

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Reviewed by  
**John Rossi**  
[rossi@lasalle.edu](mailto:rossi@lasalle.edu)

What was the worst team in baseball history? There are plenty of candidates. Was it the 'Amazin' Mets of 1962 who lost an incredible 120 games? The pathetic 1961 Phillies team that set a record of 23 consecutive losses? How about the awful Tigers of 2004 that fell one game shy of matching the Mets record? John G. Robertson and

Andy Saunders would reject these and grant that ignominious distinction to Connie Mack's 1916 Athletics club, a team that recorded just 36 victories against 117 defeats, a team that finished 54.5 games out of first place and an incredible 40 games behind the seventh place Washington Senators. As one baseball wit noted: On a clear day the A's could see seventh place.

The responsibility for this baseball mess, Robertson and Saunders place squarely on the thin shoulders of Connie Mack, baseball's Grand Old Man or "The Tall Tactician" as he was known by baseball writers in those days of flowery sports writing. Robertson and Saunders trace the events of that ghastly season, the worst of Mack's eighteen last place finishes to his decision to break up his first baseball dynasty, the A's squad of 1910-1914 that won four pennants and three World Series. Famous for its heralded \$100,000 infield, that team included four players who were elected to the Hall of Fame: Eddie Collins, Frank "Home Run" Baker, and pitchers Albert "Chief" Bender, and Eddie Plank — five if you include Mack himself. Robertson and Saunders reject the traditional view that Mack, who was famously tight with the dollar, sold his players to pay his bills (p.28). They argue instead that he was purging the team of dissidents who had flopped badly against the "Miracle" Braves team in the 1914 World Series and were

getting ready to jump to the Federal League.

Mack, they also believe, underestimated how difficult it would be to construct a new quality team. His traditional approach of signing collegiate players and scanning the minor leagues and sandlots for cheap replacements did not work this time. Beginning in 1915 his A's compiled a string of seven consecutive last place finishes before he finally began to replenish his roster with the players who made up his second great team — the A's second dynasty that won three pennants and two World Series victories of the years 1929-1931.

Mack's 1916 team was a blend of the young, the inexperienced, and a handful of veterans who were over the hill. Pitcher "Bullet Joe" Bush, first baseman "Stuffy" McInnis, and catcher Wally Schang went on to have distinguished careers in the majors. Bush, who won 15 games while losing 24, compiled a respectable ERA of 2.57. He also produced the highlight of an otherwise disastrous season, a near perfect no-hitter. Shortstop Whitey Witt and third baseman Charlie Pick struggled defensively. Witt made 78 errors, Pick 42, giving new meaning to the concept of a strong left side of the infield. Witt later developed into a solid outfielder, playing in two World Series for the New York Yankees. Speaking of errors, as a team the A's made the staggering total of 314 miscues,

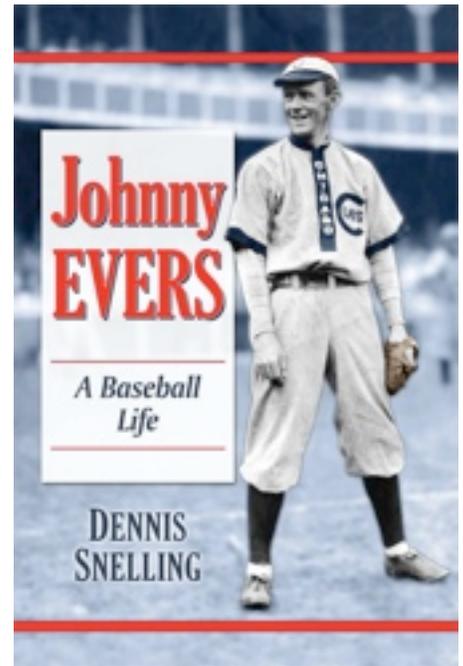
66 more than their nearest rivals. Veterans such as Rueben "Rube" Oldring and Napoleon "Nap" Lajoie were past their prime and just playing out the string.

Robertson and Saunders take readers through the 1916 season, month by month, highlighting the low moments including a horrendous 20 consecutive game losing streak in July and August. For details and commentary they rely heavily on the baseball writer for the *Philadelphia Evening Telegraph*, William G. Weart, one of the founders of the Baseball Writers Association of America. Weart was an unabashed admirer of Mack whose optimism about the young A's eventually flagged. While his commentaries are

interesting they could have been summarized at times instead of being quoted verbatim.

Robertson and Saunders do a commendable job in tracing the events of this awful season for the A's. The writing is clear, the authors have a sense of humor, and they know their baseball. There are a couple of minor mistakes. For instance, Gus Zernial never managed the A's, but overall this is solid addition to anyone's baseball library.

*John P. Rossi is Professor Emeritus of History at La Salle University in Philadelphia and the author of three books on baseball history including, The 1964 Phillies: the Story of Baseball's Most Memorable Collapse (2005).*



**JOHNNY EVERS: A  
BASEBALL LIFE  
BY DENNIS SNELLING**

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Reviewed by  
**David Shiner**  
[cunegonde@prodigy.net](mailto:cunegonde@prodigy.net)

**BALL PLAYER GOES BEHIND  
BARS FOR "SASSING" UMPIRE**

**TIMOTHY FLOOD, TORONTO'S SECOND  
BASEMAN, GETS 15 DAYS FOR TALKING  
BACK TO OFFICIAL**

The well known expression, "Every dog has his day," has at last qualified in the case of the down-trodden umpire. The latter's day was a long time coming, however, and at that it dawned on the other side of the Canadian border.

Timothy Flood, second baseman of the Toronto team, has been sent to jail for "sassing" Umpire Conway. Flood, who formerly played with Brooklyn, did not like the decision of the judge of play and proceeded to let loose a small torrent of his personal views a la American. He nearly collapsed a moment later when placed under arrest.

The magistrate scored Flood's offense as aggravated assault, and sentenced him to 15 days imprisonment. Baseball enthusiasts in Toronto are signing a petition for his release.

*The Duluth Daily Star, July 3, 1907*

In the introduction of his splendid biography of Johnny Evers, author Dennis Snelling writes, "History has rendered Joe Tinker, Johnny Evers, and Frank Chance inseparable, forever intertwined." The public perception of Tinker, Evers, and Chance as a sort of trinitarian unity, one originally "intertwined" in Franklin P. Adams' celebrated poem *Baseball's Sad Lexicon*, has indeed served to keep their

memories alive. However, it has also tended to shield all but the most devoted baseball history buffs from viewing each player as a distinct individual. In Snelling's words, "It is unfortunate that Evers, a singular personality and a unique talent, has been unable to break free from the reputation of his teammates" (p. 1). Snelling aims to remedy that state of affairs with this biography. He succeeds in exemplary fashion.

Johnny Evers, as Snelling reminds us without exaggeration or hyperbole, was one terrific ballplayer. He was widely regarded as the premier second baseman in the National League during his prime years. His fielding prowess would have earned him numerous Gold Gloves if that award had existed a century ago. He was a superior offensive performer who played in four World Series and batted .350 or higher in three of the four. His baseball IQ was off the charts. Except for a few weeks as a rookie at the tail-end of the 1902 season, he never played for a team that finished below third place in the National League. It can be truthfully said of only a handful of players in major league history that winning teams followed them around. Johnny Evers was one of those few.

The subtitle of Snelling's book, "A Baseball Life," is entirely fitting. As a player and person, Evers fits in the general category also occupied by the

likes of Billy Martin and Larry Bowa – a feisty, overachieving middle infielder whose life is impossible to imagine without baseball. "In the off-season," Snelling points out, "Johnny Kling had his billiard hall, Joe Tinker chased the footlights, and Frank Chance tended his orange groves. But Johnny Evers was all about baseball, all the time" (p. 112). That single-mindedness sometimes led Evers to neglect his family life and his business interests, both of which suffered as a result. But it also made him the ballplayer he was.

Evers was a polarizing figure, and his biographer might have been tempted to follow suit in his prose. Snelling wisely avoids that temptation. His treatment of his subject is sober and evenhanded, and he writes in a relaxed and engaging manner. He uses source materials comprehensively and well, easily meeting contemporary standards of scholarship for a work of this type. The book is impressive optically as well as

stylistically: layout, font, and picture selection are excellent, as has become typical for McFarland publications.

My quibbles with the book are few and slight. The New York Highlanders are referred to as the "Yankees" as early as 1906 (p. 48, and elsewhere). There are only two brief mentions of *Touching Second* (1910), the hefty and impressive tome that Evers co-wrote with sportswriter Hugh Fullerton; readers might have expected more. At times Snelling resorts to brief fictional embellishments, as witness the following: "Evers glanced out the window, gave a final wave, and then closed his eyes, thinking about his father and how he had just missed seeing this day" (p. 15). And his account of the "Merkle boner" game relies too much on recollections by Evers and Tinker nearly four decades after the fact. Still, Snelling tells that story with restraint, which is commendable given how little we know about the climax of that fateful game.

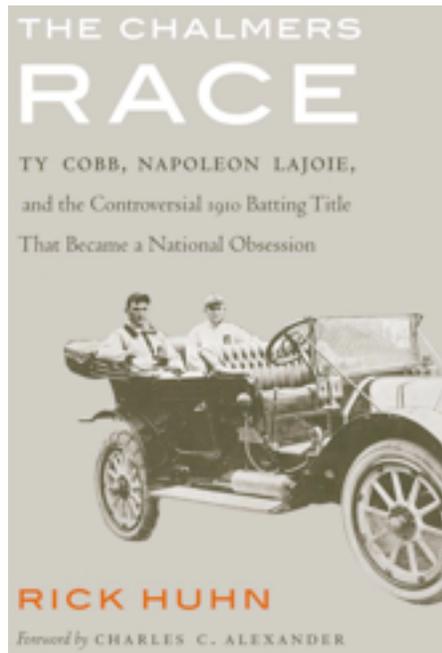
#### **PUBLISHERS ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

As always, *The Inside Game* appreciates the courtesy copies of reviewed books supplied to us by their publishers. Two of the works reviewed in this issue, *A's Bad As It Gets* and *Johnny Evers, A Baseball Life*, were published by McFarland & Company and can be order via telephone at 1-800-253-2187 or online at [mcfarlandpub.com](http://mcfarlandpub.com). *The Chalmers Race* was put out by the University of Nebraska Press and can be order calling 1-800-848-6224 or emailing [pressmail@unl.edu](mailto:pressmail@unl.edu). *The Best They Could Be* was published by Potomac Books and can be order via 1-800-755-2518 (telephone) or [pbimail@presswarehouse.com](mailto:pbimail@presswarehouse.com). We thank these publishers for their generosity and urge your patronage.

Especially impressive is his depiction of the moment when Evers claimed a force play: “Johnny Evers was standing on second base, raising the ball to the sky as if he were Perseus holding aloft the severed head of Medusa” (pp. 77-78).

Late in life Evers was introduced to Franklin Adams, the man who had inadvertently immortalized him and his longtime teammates. As Snelling tells us, the former second sacker graciously expressed his gratitude to Adams, opining that he “would have been forgotten if not for *Baseball’s Sad Lexicon*” (p 191). In reminding us of Johnny Evers’ distinctive brand of excellence on the 100th anniversary of his MVP season, when he led the Miracle Braves of Boston to perhaps the most improbable world championship in baseball history, Dennis Snelling has provided an equally valuable service in helping us envisage one of the greatest players of the Deadball Era.

*David Shiner has written a large number of articles, interviews, book reviews, and stories about baseball for various sports magazines, research journals, and literary publications. He is also the author of Baseball’s Greatest Players: The Saga Continues (Superior Books, 2001), a sequel to Tom Meany’s classic Baseball’s Greatest Players.*



**THE CHALMERS RACE:  
TY COBB, NAPOLEON  
LAJOIE AND THE  
CONTROVERSIAL 1910  
BATTING TITLE THAT  
BECAME A NATIONAL  
OBSESSION  
BY RICK HUHN**

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hardcover]

Reviewed by  
**Charles Leerhsen**  
[cleerhsen@gmail.com](mailto:cleerhsen@gmail.com)

In 1910 the Chalmers-Detroit Company decided, as a publicity gimmick, to give one of its \$1,500 cars to the major league hitter who ended up with the highest average. Since the only tangible reward for winning the batting title had been a trophy presented by a blackface minstrel, this was a dramatic development that

riveted players and fans alike. No one was more jazzed, though, than the folks at Chalmers, especially when the promotion turned into a close, controversial contest between Nap Lajoie and Ty Cobb, two of the game’s greatest stars. After working for three years on a biography of Cobb, I wondered, when I first heard of Rick Huhn’s *The Chalmers Race*, if the episode was intriguing enough to merit 200-plus pages. Having read the book, I am convinced it is not, though I would not mind seeing someone with a tougher editor take a shot at it.

First, let me say that there are a lot of potential stumbling blocks in the telling of this tale, and Huhn, though obviously eager to please, has managed to stub a toe on virtually all of them. It takes just a few pages to see he is not writing so much as layering in the padding (in overwrought, cliché-studded prose). In a way that is understandable, since nothing terribly interesting happened regarding the contest until late in the season when Cobb, who was 23 and had won the last three batting crowns, surged past Lajoie, who at 36 had been leading the pack with an average of around .400. But Huhn’s attempts to add context, or fill pages in passable fashion, mostly fall flat. It is no fun to read a long, confusing account of automaker Hugh Chalmers’ employment history, and even less agreeable to be relentlessly reminded that the batting title

goes to the player with the best average. ("One's performance in previous seasons made no difference, nor did the perception of fellow players, the media, or the fans. The winner need not be the best ballplayer..." [p. 18]).

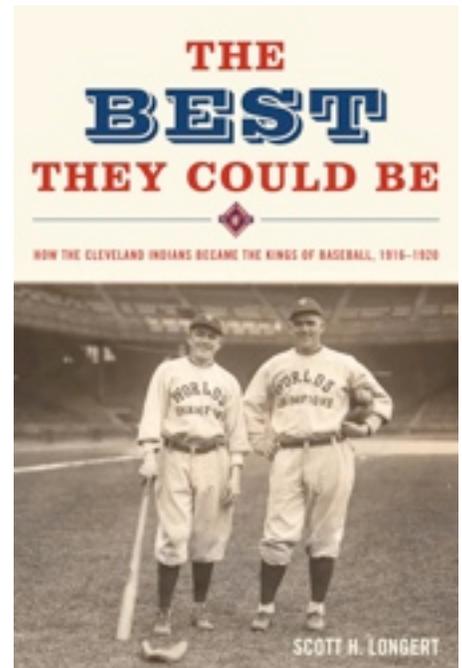
With nothing new to say, Huhn merely rehashes the old myths. The most fascinating day of the Chalmers race was the last one, October 9, when Lajoie's Naps played a doubleheader against the Browns in St. Louis. To pull ahead of Cobb who had knocked off for the season with two games to go, Lajoie needed eight or nine hits. And, as Deadball Era devotees know, nine hits is what he got, but only because third baseman Red Corriden, on orders from Browns manager Jack O'Connor, consistently played the Frenchman back on the leftfield grass and Lajoie continually bunted.

Why would the Browns help him? Such fakery came with no small risk: for his role in the farce, O'Connor was fired and kept permanently from the big leagues (even though American League President Ban Johnson ruled that nothing illegal had transpired, and found missing at-bats that made Cobb the winner). Huhn answers the "why" question with the conventional, *Field of Dreams* wisdom about everyone hating Cobb, and repeats the oft-told tale about a telegram of congratulations for Lajoie signed by nine Tigers. If he had researched more thoroughly he might realize that Cobb's

relationship with fellow players was not as contentious as some think. The year before, when he was mobbed by angry Philadelphia fans, his teammates had rushed to his aid, swinging fists and bats to get him safely away. And two years later, they staged the first players' strike to protest Cobb's suspension.

But beyond that Huhn does not seem aware that gamblers haunted the Deadball game. The Chalmers race was a popular betting proposition. Given how far behind Lajoie was on the last day, one could have gotten excellent odds on him, and as the Browns demonstrated ham-handedly, they had influence over the outcome. It is naive to assume that money did not play a larger role in the debacle than anyone's pro-Lajoie or anti-Cobb feelings. But Huhn, though he quotes O'Connor saying he planned to bet on the World Series, does not connect the fixed at-bats to betting. Instead of expert analysis we get more padding — to wit, a long and detailed account of a trial in which O'Connor sued the Browns to collect the full value of his contract. Objection sustained.

*Charles Leerhsen, a former executive editor at Sports Illustrated, is the author of Ty Cobb: A Terrible Beauty, which will be published next spring by Simon and Schuster.*



**THE BEST THEY  
COULD BE:  
HOW THE CLEVELAND  
INDIANS BECAME THE  
KINGS OF BASEBALL,  
1916-1920**

**BY SCOTT H. LONGERT**

2013. Washington, DC:  
Potomac Books [ISBN:  
978-1-61234-493-5  
(hardcover); ISBN:  
978-1-61234-493-2 (electronic)  
255 pp., \$27.50 USD]

Reviewed by  
**Bill Lamb**  
[wflamb12@yahoo.com](mailto:wflamb12@yahoo.com)

With *The Best That They Could Be*, author Scott H. Longert enters the crowded field of baseball club biography with a very readable history of the World War I-era Cleveland Indians. In relatively short, crisply written chapters, Longert takes the Tribe from the dark days of late 1915,

when American League president Ban Johnson desperately sought a buyer for the financially troubled, non-competitive Cleveland club, through the glory of a 1920 World Series triumph. The heroes of this saga are many, but foremost is James C. Dunn, the genial, free-spending Chicago contractor who assumed control of the franchise in early 1916. Longert's admiration of the Dunn stewardship, as well as his affection for the city of Cleveland and its often

struggling ball club, is evident throughout the work.

The core of the book consists of season-by-season accounts of the Indians ascent in AL standings, interspersed with brief but informative profiles of the important actors in Cleveland uniform. Some – Hall of Famer Tris Speaker, the ill-fated Ray Chapman, outfielder-turned-longtime Indians broadcaster Jack Graney – will be familiar to readers. Others, like fledgling physician/utilityman Joe Evans and fleet-footed

outfielder Charlie Jamieson, less so. But all played significant roles in the change in club fortunes. Particularly interesting in this vein is the author's account of how Smoky Joe Wood transformed from a lame-armed pitcher to a valuable part-time position player. The book also keeps track of the off-field maneuvers employed by Dunn and his managers (Lee Fohl through mid-1919, thereafter Speaker) to upgrade the club roster and its playing facility. The difficulties attending the onset of war and the military draft are chronicled, as well. For this reviewer, Longert's succinct but sound commentary on Jim Dunn's candor about war-caused baseball problems (pp. 86-87), the untimely salary demands of pitching ace Jim Bagby (pp. 88-89), and the uncertainties attending manager Fohl's resignation (p. 136) are among the book's highlights. More lighthearted events such as the lightning strike that temporarily flattened pitcher Ray Caldwell before he recorded the final out in his Cleveland debut (pp. 138-139) also provide the author with winning material.

The capstone of the book is a detailed exposition on the Cleveland Indians-Brooklyn Robins World Series of 1920, a best-of-nine games match won by the Indians, 5-2. Taking center stage here is the performance of Stan Coveleski, the closed-mouth spitballer from Pennsylvania mining country who posted three of

# Baseball at Home

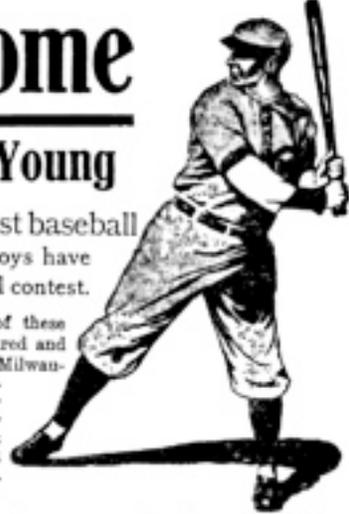
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*The Milwaukee Journal, April 1, 1914*

the Cleveland wins. With a world championship secured – the first of only two in the franchise’s 113-season history – the story ends abruptly, with triumphant and \$4,300-richer Indians players headed home, most to resume their off-season jobs. A postscript regarding the club fate in 1921 and/or the later fortunes of key Cleveland players would have been welcome. So, too, something more on club owner Dunn whom the author merely notes “passed away during the early part of the 1922 season” (p. 244).

Although highly readable, the book is not without flaws. Factual errors in the early chapters – Ban Johnson was president of the *Western League*, not the *Western Association* (p. 1), an altogether different minor league circuit; Cap Anson was the longtime first baseman/

manager of the *Chicago White Stockings*, later *Colts*, not the *White Sox* (p. 14) – may unsettle more exacting Deadball aficionados. Happily, these are aberrations in an otherwise sound history. Although a subjective assessment, sentences are at times freighted with unnecessary or exaggerated descriptives, and Longert’s resort to conjecture (phrases such as: *it is likely; must have; probably weighed*, and the like, periodically dot the text) undermines the authority of his narrative. The absence of footnotes, particularly for the book’s various quotes, is also regrettable. Still, these are minor quibbles. Taken as a whole, *The Best They Could Be* is a congenial page-turner, a fluidly-written and thoroughly researched account of an under-appreciated championship club. One need not be a die-hard

Cleveland Indians fan to enjoy it. Recommended.

*Bill Lamb is the current editor of The Inside Game. [We at the newsletter apologize to Scott Longert for the delay in publishing a review of this book – Gail Rowe, Book Review Editor.]*

### NEWSLETTER MATERIAL SOUGHT

To repeat something obvious stated in these pages before, *The Inside Game* does not write itself. It depends upon the research articles, book reviews, and other material supplied by its contributors. The editorial staff is indebted to Dennis Pajot, Herm Krabbenhoft, Ron Selter, and others in that small cadre of DBE Committee members who regularly provide us with informative and enjoyable stories of the Deadball Era. But we would also like to expand the roster of newsletter contributors. Those interested need not furnish a resume. All that is required is an interest in Deadball and a willingness to give writing a research article, player profile, book review, etc., a shot. Our editorial staff stands ready to assist with story ideas, development, and writing, as needed and/or desired. Just let me ([wflamb12@yahoo.com](mailto:wflamb12@yahoo.com)) or Book Review Editor Gail Rowe ([growes36@comcast.net](mailto:growes36@comcast.net)) know of your interest. We look forward to hearing from you. Thanks.

Bill Lamb, Editor

### DRAWS NO COLOR LINE

#### LAWSON TO PROMOTE NEW LEAGUE TO INCLUDE PHILADELPHIA

BOSTON—Dr. G. H. A. Lawson, baseball promoter, is in Boston in conference with persons who have become interested in the new baseball league proposed by last season’s backers of the Pennsylvania-New Jersey League. Mr. Lawson said:

“The circuit will consist of Boston, Providence, Brooklyn, Newark, Trenton, Paterson, Philadelphia and Baltimore. We have parks and capital in all cities except Boston, and three Roxbury business men are planning to take hold here.

“We will throw down the color line and take on crackajack players who are fast enough for the big leagues, but are barred from organized baseball on account of their color. A circuit meeting will be held in Boston within two weeks.”

*The Philadelphia Record, December 30, 1909*

# **MAYHEM IN INDIANAPOLIS: THE DANNY SHAY MURDER TRIAL**

by **Dennis Pajot**

On the afternoon of May 3, 1917, the Milwaukee Brewers lost the third game of a series in Indianapolis by the score of 3-1. The loss dropped the Brewers into fifth place in American Association standings with a 7-8 record.<sup>1</sup> Exactly what happened the evening of the game may never be known with certainty. But when the gun smoke at a local café had cleared, a black waiter named Clarence Euell lay dying and Brewers manager Danny Shay was facing imminent homicide charges. The narrative that follows is taken from newspaper accounts published shortly after the Shay-Euell incident. Later, accounts of the affair as recalled during the Shay murder trial will be provided. As usual, by that time stories varied.

Shortly after 10:00 pm, Danny Shay, a widower with two young children<sup>2</sup> — his wife had been killed in an automobile accident three years prior — was in the café of the Hotel English (located in Indianapolis' Monument Circle) with a female companion. Shay, who had just finished dinner, was seated at a table and complained to a black busboy named Eugene James about the small amount of sugar in the bowl on the table. As Shay continued, Clarence Euell, a 30-year-old black waiter, was called over. Euell picked up two sugar bowls from nearby tables and placing them before Shay, said: "There is some sugar in the bowl," pointing to the receptacle already on the table. To this, Shay replied, "Now, Smarty, the bowl is empty," after which words were exchanged. Shay then allegedly rose, drew a small revolver from his pocket, placed it a few inches from the waiter's abdomen, and fired. Although he had been shot, Euell knocked Shay to the floor and then, grasping Shay by the head, pummeled him. He raised Shay to a sitting position and, with his foot against Shay's neck, shoved him down several times, Shay's head striking the floor. Café manager Herbert Miller rushed to the fracas and commanded Euell to

stop. Letting Shay drop to the floor, a dazed Euell turned to Miller and said: "Mr. Miller, why shouldn't I treat him that way, he just shot me." According to Miller, this was the first that he knew that there had been a shooting in his café. Euell then staggered and fell to the floor, spawning a pool of blood. Apparently at this point, another waiter named Mark Byrd responded to the commotion and took possession of the revolver, which the prostrate Shay was still holding. A hurry-up call was sent for an ambulance, and Euell, weak from loss of blood, was taken to the hospital. Shay was arrested on the hotel premises and removed to police headquarters. Investigators intended to take Shay to the hospital to be identified by Euell. But just after the squad car left headquarters, word was received that Euell had died.

Besides Shay, his female companion, busboy James, and the late Clarence Euell, the only people believed present in the café at the time of the incident were some other waiters, manager Miller, and café cashier Elizabeth Braskett. And by the time that the police arrived at the café, Shay's female companion had disappeared. When questioned, the waiters said that they had never seen the woman before. However, a guest at the hotel said that he knew the woman by sight. She was a "manicurist," but he did not know her name.

At police headquarters, Shay maintained that he had acted in self-defense. According to Shay, "the Negro" [meaning Euell] had used language of the vilest kind after Shay had ordered him to bring some sugar. When Shay attempted to dress down the waiter for uttering such words in the presence of a woman, the Negro came toward Shay with clenched fists. To Shay, the waiter appeared greatly angered and Shay shot him because he believed that he was about to be injured. When shown the seized revolver, Shay stated that it looked like his gun. Published press reports later alleged that Shay had said that he carried a gun as he usually had a large sum of money with him. Regarding his condition that evening, Shay denied that he had been drinking. If the woman who was sitting with him in the

café could be found, she would corroborate this. As for her whereabouts, Shay was of little help. He claimed that he had met the woman at the hotel only a short time before they had entered the café for dinner, that he had never seen her before, and that he did not know her name.

That night, team managers Jack Hendricks of the Indianapolis Indians and Mike Kelley of the St. Paul Saints [his team in Indianapolis, as the next day's opponents] appeared at police headquarters to see what assistance Shay needed. Shay asked his close friend Kelley to find the woman who had been with him, as she could confirm what he was saying about the shooting. The next day, Danny Shay's companion was

located. She was Mrs. Gertrude Anderson, reported to be a local manicurist but likely the practitioner of an older profession. Her statement supported Shay, saying she thought the waiter intended to attack Shay. Anderson described the waiter as surly in his manner, and stated that he had made a threat against Shay when reprimanded about the service. She further asserted that the waiter started toward Shay with his fist clenched. At this point in the incident, Anderson got up from the table and ran. She did not witness what had followed.<sup>3</sup>

As for the deceased, not much was published about Clarence Euell. But after his death, *The Freeman*, an Indianapolis newspaper published



*Hotel English*

*Historic Indianapolis.com*

by and for the local black community, stated that “everyone, both the guests and employees, spoke highly of Euell, saying he had always conducted himself properly and bore a good reputation.”<sup>4</sup> For its part, the Milwaukee club brass said little. When informed of the shooting, Brewers president A.F. Timme said that he regretted the tragedy “keenly.” But his statement to the *Milwaukee Sentinel* was opaque: “I have heard nothing except what I read in the newspaper reports. The Milwaukee club will assist Shay in every way possible. There is nothing to say until we hear all of the facts.” Timme also said that he would make a thorough investigation of the affair. He then conferred with the club attorney L.S. Pease, who left for Indianapolis the next day to take charge of Shay’s case. By that time, however, the Indianapolis law firm of Ruckelshaus & Ryan had already been retained by Danny Shay [or his friends]. On advice of counsel, Shay invoked his right to remain silent.<sup>5</sup>

Brewer’s club secretary Louis Nahin was broken up over the tragedy in Indianapolis. He told a *Milwaukee Sentinel* reporter: “For the first time since 1910 I failed to take the ball club out of a city upon finishing the last game of a series. When we went into Indianapolis I asked Manager Shay if he didn’t want to leave for Louisville immediately after Thursday’s game and he told me that he would rather wait until Friday morning and go on the morning train. For the first time since the season opened, I failed to meet Danny after the ball game and ride back to the hotel, and for the first time this season I didn’t room with Shay in Indianapolis. ... I feel as if I might have prevented all the trouble if I had met Shay after the game and gone to the hotel with him as I generally do.”<sup>6</sup>

Within days it was reported that a fund to defray the expense of Shay’s defense had been started by a half-dozen American Association managers at an informal meeting in Chicago. Columbus Senators skipper Joe Tinker announced that AA players, managers, and club owners had subscribed to the fund. League President Thomas Hickey, who was chosen as chairman of the fund, said that it would probably cost over



*The Bismarck Tribune, May 11, 1917*

\$10,000 for Shay’s defense. It was also reported that several thousand dollars had already been pledged by Milwaukee club officials and players. To the *Ogden City (Utah) Standard*, this demonstrated how the men who follow sport stuck together when one of their members got into trouble. Even George Tebeau, owner of the Louisville Colonels and someone who had not been on speaking terms with Shay, offered to contribute to the Shay defense fund. The *Standard* commented: “The skies are beginning to clear for Danny and if luck favors him a little he might escape altogether from the clutches of

the law. It may prove a wholesome lesson to his fiery temper in the future.”<sup>7</sup>

Regarding Shay’s future with the Brewers, club president Timme was at first non-committal, saying, “Should I be compelled to obtain a new manager you can rest assured that he will be a capable one.” But days later Timme said that Shay would not manage the Brewers again, even if acquitted of the charge. Timme was reported to be negotiating with several managerial candidates, while scout Billy Doyle was temporarily placed in charge of the team. On May 10, 1917, Billy Friel was announced as new and permanent manager of the Milwaukee Brewers.<sup>8</sup>

Back on the legal front, Shay’s case was called before a police court, where a continuance was granted at the request of his attorneys. The next day, the Shay defense waived preliminary examination, and Shay was ordered held without bond pending grand jury action.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, the Indianapolis Coroner’s Office began its investigation of the shooting. Café cashier Elizabeth Braskett was the chief witness at the ensuing inquest. Braskett testified that Euell and Shay had quarreled about some sugar, and that Shay had become angry when the waiter brought two bowls of sugar and placed them at the table where Shay and a woman were sitting. Euell then walked away, but was called back by Shay. Braskett had not heard the conversation that followed, but she observed Shay rise from his chair and fire a gun at Euell.<sup>10</sup>

On May 11, 1917, the Marion County Grand Jury indicted Shay on the charge of second degree murder. If convicted, he faced a potential sentence of life imprisonment, prompting Judge James H. Collins to deny Shay release on bail.<sup>11</sup> On June 4 Shay was formally arraigned on the indictment. As customary at such proceedings, preliminary examination was waived and a plea of not guilty was entered on the defendant’s behalf. Shay was then remanded to jail to await trial at an unspecified future date. At some point, it was revealed that the accused would interpose a claim of self-defense. In Indiana as elsewhere, such a claim, if valid, was a complete defense

that would shield Shay from conviction. In support of that defense posture, it was asserted that victim Euell had been in several previous scrapes, and that being a powerful man, Euell had been fully capable of doing bodily harm to Shay. Gertrude Anderson, seated with Shay in the café, was again reputed to be an important defense witness, and Shay was said to be confident that he would be acquitted. He even predicted that he would be freed. In the meantime, prison life was made as comfortable as possible for the accused.<sup>12</sup>

The Shay case did not go to trial for months. In August an application for release via a writ of habeas corpus was filed by the Shay defense but denied by the court, and Shay remained incarcerated. Thereafter, the unavailability of chief prosecutor Alvah J. Rucker,<sup>13</sup> and later, the illness of attorney Eph A. Inman, an Indianapolis lawyer who had been engaged by the “colored waiters of Indianapolis” to assist the state attorneys in the prosecution,<sup>14</sup> occasioned further delay. On October 2, the case was adjourned yet again due to the illness of an attorney.<sup>15</sup>

On November 12, 1917, the second degree murder trial of Danny Shay began with jury selection. Among the questions asked prospective jurors was whether they had contributed to a fund being raised for Shay’s defense, and whether they were baseball fans. A political motivation behind the Shay prosecution was insinuated by the defense. In its reportage, the *Logansport (Indiana) Pharos Reporter* observed that: “The questions asked indicated Shay’s attorneys would attempt to show the strong case against Shay was a bid of politicians for the Negro vote here [in Indianapolis].” Jury selection took two days and attracted throngs of interested spectators.<sup>16</sup>

On November 14 opening statements were made by the attorneys. Predictably, the two sides differed about who started the trouble between Shay and Euell; how much liquor Shay had drunk, and its effect upon him. The prosecution declared it would prove that the defendant was under the influence of four Bronx cocktails

[essentially a Perfect Martini with orange juice added] downed at dinner and other liquor consumed earlier. Prosecutor Rucker told the jury that waiter Euell had rendered respectful service to Shay and his companion until the fatal shot was fired. "The state will show the attack was vicious and unprovoked and that Euell was unarmed," were Rucker's final words.<sup>17</sup>

Lead defense counsel Michael Ryan began his opening by declaring that no attempt would be made by the defense to drag color or politics into the case. He sketched the 40-year-old Shay's background, from his boyhood in "Sunshine Alley" in Springfield, Ohio, through his working days, to his professional baseball career, and said that Shay had never had trouble before with either a waiter or a colored man. Regarding the fatal encounter, the defense would offer testimony to show that Shay's companion Gertrude Anderson had preceded him into the café by several minutes. And that while at the table alone, Euell had "smiled at her and practiced arts of coquetry." Ryan then related that Shay was attacked by Euell before Shay had said anything to arouse the anger of the waiter. Nor had Shay drawn a weapon until he had first been struck by the deceased. Ryan further declared that Euell was employed at the café because of his ferocious strength and his ability to fight, an asset to management in quelling disturbances among its employees. The defense attorney declared that Euell was insolent; that he had quarreled several times with other patrons that day, and that Shay did not shoot until the Negro had attacked him. The defense admitted Shay had taken several drinks, but insisted that the liquor had not been sufficient to disturb his normal condition.<sup>18</sup>

As in all criminal cases, the prosecution went first, leading with Deputy Coroner Edwin S. Knox. Autopsy established that Euell had died from a gunshot wound in the abdomen. The State then moved on to its fact witnesses. Café cashier Elizabeth Braskett testified that Euell had shown no disrespect toward Shay or his companion. Nor had there been loud talking between the two before Shay rose from his place

at the table and shot the waiter.<sup>19</sup> Dr. William Barnes of Evansville, Indiana, was inside the café at the time of the shooting, but had observed no trouble until he heard the shot from Shay's revolver. Dr. Barnes said the waiter then attacked Shay, took the revolver from him, and knocked Shay down.<sup>20</sup> Café waiters Mark Byrd and John H. Johnson each testified that they did not see Euell strike Shay before the shot was fired. The Byrd testimony, however, may have been compromised by the admission that he had contributed to a fund raised by colored people to hire additional counsel for the prosecution.<sup>21</sup>

Café manager Herbert Miller stated that he saw Mrs. Anderson enter the café alone, and that she was joined a few moments later by her escort, Shay. Miller approached the couple, and offered to buy drinks, whereupon Shay ordered two Bronx cocktails. Thereafter, Shay had refills, but Miller did not know whether the baseball man drank all four of them. The witness did not see the shot fired, but turned upon hearing it and immediately followed cashier Braskett into the kitchen. When Miller returned, Shay was lying on the floor. Euell had hold of Shay's left hand and had his foot on the prostrate man's neck. Euell was pulling Shay's head up by the arm and shoving it back to the floor with his foot. Shay appeared unconscious. Miller then intervened. He quoted the waiter as saying: "Why shouldn't I kill him, Mr. Miller? He's shot me and I'm bleeding to death inside. I haven't a chance to live." Miller then sent Euell to the kitchen. A moment later, Euell returned and asked: "Won't you send me some place to die?" Miller directed

**TENER WOULD HAVE  
PLATE MADE WIDER**

NEW YORK—In an interview here today, John K. Tener declared himself in favor of allowing a batsman first base on three balls, and for changing the width of the plate from 17 to 18 inches. He believes batting would be increased by the change.

*The Seattle Star, January 31, 1917*

him to go to the lobby and sit in one of the big chairs, which the dying man did.<sup>22</sup>

On cross-examination, the café manager testified that at no time during the evening did he hear Shay act boisterous or talk in a loud voice, or otherwise behave in a way that indicated that Shay was under the influence of liquor. Defense lawyer Ryan then compelled Miller to reiterate a portion of previously-rendered testimony helpful to the defense. At the coroner's inquest, Miller had stated that upon hearing the shot, he turned and saw Euell strike Shay and knock him down.<sup>23</sup>

Ohio Street saloonkeeper John Heinlein testified that Shay was in his establishment twice on May 3, at about noon and again between 6:00 and 6:30 pm. On the second occasion, Heinlein accompanied Shay to the manicure parlor of Gertrude Anderson in the Stewart Building. Opposing counsel then sparred over the admissibility of testimony related to Shay's earlier activity. In the end, the prosecution managed to introduce grand jury testimony by Heinlein that implied that Shay had been drinking earlier in the day.<sup>24</sup> Police Lieutenant Herbert R. Fletcher and Police Sergeant John Sheehan testified that after they had arrested Shay at the hotel, the accused stated that he shot Euell because the waiter had called him an unprintable epithet. "The nigger called me a \_\_\_\_\_, made a pass at me and I shot him." Lt. Fletcher further stated that Shay was bleeding slightly from the lips, and that there was an abrasion on one temple about the size of a 25-cent coin. In Fletcher's estimation, Shay had been intoxicated at the time, while Sheehan testified that Shay was either under the influence of liquor or dazed when arrested. Sheehan said Shay fell down twice while dressing. Neither officer saw any bruises or reddened skin on Shay's neck, the place where Euell had put his foot following the shooting.<sup>25</sup>

The remainder of the prosecution case was devoted to tying up loose ends. Louis Baseman, a bartender at Heinlein's saloon, testified that he saw Shay remove a revolver from his overcoat when he left the saloon at 6:30 pm and put the

weapon in his hip pocket. Euell's father identified the deceased. Blanche Clark, director of the café orchestra, was also called by the state, but said that she did not see Shay, his companion, or the shooting.<sup>26</sup> At the conclusion of this fairly useless bit of testimony, the State rested.

Recalled to the stand for further cross-examination by the defense, café manager Miller denied that he had contributed to the fund to procure additional counsel for the state, or that he had solicited for such a fund. The defense then sought admission of an out-of-court statement by Miller that there had been trouble between Euell and other guests in the café earlier in the evening, but inquiry into the subject was excluded by the court. Thereafter, Miller was asked if Shay was under the influence of liquor on the night of the shooting. He answered: "No, sir, he was not intoxicated." The defense thereupon sought to tarnish the character of the deceased. But efforts to portray Clarence Euell as a dangerous man, and to admit evidence that Miller had told the police that he had employed Euell to handle "bad niggers" were barred, as was inquiry into whether police officers had been called to the café a short time before the shooting to separate Euell and another man who were fighting.<sup>27</sup>

On November 17, the Shay defense began its case with testimony by Brewers pitcher Cy Slapnicka. He was in the café shortly after the shooting, and stated that Shay had told him that it was a case of either "shooting Euell or be killed." Brewer's club secretary Louis Nahin then testified as to Shay's good character. Thereafter, the defense presented a previously undisclosed eyewitness named Mary Archibald, a public health nurse for the city of Cairo, Illinois. Archibald said that when she heard the shot, she looked toward the Shay table. Shay was just rising from his chair and Euell was bending toward him in a threatening manner.<sup>28</sup>

Star defense witness Gertrude Anderson testified next. Under questioning by co-defense counsel John Holtzman, the 36-year-old "hairdresser and manicurist" provided the following account

of events. On the evening of May 3, Shay came into her store for a manicure. Later, the two went for dinner at the Hotel English café. They entered separately, with Anderson being seated first. After Shay's arrival, Anderson noticed that their table waiter, identified as the now-deceased Clarence Euell, was smiling at her, and immediately averted her face. Thereafter, Euell appeared hostile to her dinner companion. When Shay requested napkins, the waiter "threw them down without opening them." He then stood a short distance away, arms folded and "sneering" at Shay. More serious problems arose when Shay wanted sugar for their after-dinner coffee. After words were spoken, an angry Euell leaned toward Shay and said, "You are a \_\_\_\_\_. I'm a smart fellow. You want to be careful." Shay did not reply. Euell then hastily cleared the table and "shoved" the bill at Shay. At this point, the waiter "came closer to the table. [Anderson] saw his fist going past his body and I ran. When I was about a third of the way to the kitchen entrance I heard the shot."<sup>29</sup>

Motivated by either strategy or chivalry, co-prosecutor Inman avoided directly accusing Anderson of being a prostitute. Rather, he began his cross-examination by focusing on Anderson's marital experiences – two hazily-recalled, four-month long marriages – and her frequent changes of address. Inman then probed the particulars of the pre-shooting "manicure" provided to Shay, such as Anderson's proximity to Shay during service [about 36 inches, chest-to-chest], the price [\$1, including tip], the absence of liquor on Shay's breath, and the "rosy, healthy looking" glow of Shay's complexion. Anderson's imprecision regarding the time of ensuing events was attributed to her "aversion to clocks." Anderson thought it "poor business to have clocks in a place where customers have to wait to be served."<sup>30</sup>

During a break in the Anderson testimony the *Indianapolis Star* provided readers with the following impression of the witness: "Mrs. Anderson was dressed modestly in black, the somberness of the costume being relieved by touches of white at the collar and sleeve edge.

She spoke with a slight lisp and had to be instructed by the court to speak sufficiently loud to hear her on several occasions. There was no trace of embarrassment in her manner in either direct or cross examination, and to many of Attorney Inman's questions, particularly relating to time of occurrences and to periods between events, her answer was 'I don't remember.'<sup>31</sup>

More defense witnesses were then called. Physicians Charles Root and Charles McNeal both testified that Herbert Miller had told them he did not see the shooting or hear the shot. Miller had gone to the newsstand and was returning when the shot was fired. Edward Tutt, night beat police reporter for the *Indianapolis Star*, testified similarly. Miller had told him that he did not see the shooting. Miller told Tutt, "The first I knew there had been any shooting was when I rushed up to Euell and told him to stop beating Shay."<sup>32</sup>

The following Monday, Gertrude Anderson retook the stand for additional cross-examination. Under questioning by lead prosecutor Rucker, Anderson said that she had been to the jail on several occasions, but had visited Shay only once. The other jail visits had been to distribute religious literature. Anderson admitted having visited the office of an attorney for the defense, and that another of Shay's counsel had visited her place of business in order to secure a statement from her. When queried about her grand jury testimony, Anderson replied she did not remember saying that Euell had smiled at her. After several more "I don't remember" answers, prosecutor Rucker asked: "Is your memory faulty?" Anderson replied: "Not to my knowledge." Co-prosecutor Inman then asked her: "Do you consider yourself a forgetter?" The

In the Cotton States League a salary limit of \$1,100 per month has been fixed, to be divided among the 12 men on each team. There will be rather thin picking for the small fry of each club if the rule is strictly adhered to.

*The Pittsburg Press, January 3, 1906*

witness answered: "When approached in the proper way, according to my temperament, my memory is excellent. Otherwise it may temporarily be stunned." The prosecuting attorney then said to the witness: "Did you not say to the grand jury 'I don't remember. I have a good forgetter'?" This query precipitated an objection by defense counsel Holtzman, followed by attorney wrangling about Anderson's treatment during her grand jury appearance.

When cross-examination resumed, Anderson admitted that she had not known Shay before the evening of May 3, and that Shay had later told Anderson that she talked too much, "but in a nice way." She also recanted portions of her grand jury testimony about the fatal incident. Anderson now stated that she had not heard Shay call Euell "Smarty," or say to him, "I'll show you what I meant." The prosecution concluded its interrogation with a dismissive comment about Anderson's testimony that was stricken by the court.

Defense efforts to rehabilitate Anderson in the eyes of the jury prompted testimony by her attorney, John Engelke. The day after the shooting, Anderson had called him for a conference and he saw her that night. Presumably invoking the attorney-client privilege, Engelke declined to state if Anderson had told him that she was the woman present at the café shooting, or if he had later conveyed any information obtained from her to the coroner. But such revelations were not the point of the Engelke appearance. As Engelke was also a deputy prosecutor under Alvah Rucker, the defense argued that the Anderson-Engelke consultation refuted the prosecution claim that Gertrude Anderson had gone into hiding after the shooting. Rather, she had made her connection to the affair known to a prosecution official at the first opportunity. Thereafter, the defense proffered a witness named Chester Roberts to testify about quarrels between waiter Euell and members of his party in the café prior to the trouble with Shay. The defense wanted to get on the record the fact that Roberts [who was a cousin of prosecutor Rucker] and a companion

had been attacked by the waiter. Unhappily for the defense, Roberts was not permitted to testify. Finally, city Detective William Feeney was put on the stand to impeach the credibility of café manager Miller. The day after the incident, Miller had told Feeney that he had not heard the shooting.<sup>33</sup>

On November 20, 1917, Danny Shay took the witness stand on his own behalf. Lest the jury forget his status as the father of young children, the defense had Shay's 13-year old son Daniel, Jr. make his first courtroom appearance that day. The defendant's namesake, who had been living in Kansas City since the death of his mother, was described in the press as "a stocky, clean limbed, red cheeked lad with clear skin and direct eyes." Shay gave his testimony quietly, seemingly with perfect assurance. In some ways his testimony conflicted with that of Gertrude Anderson. For example, Shay said that the waiter was insolent during the meal, and when he asked Euell what he meant by vile epithets directed at him, the waiter struck him with his fist on the left side of the head. Euell then picked up a sugar bowl and said, "I'll kill you." During his direct testimony, Shay would have been obliged to describe his encounter with Euell in detail, and to provide the predicate for his self-defense claim. Regrettably, such particulars are not provided in surviving newspaper accounts of the Shay testimony.

On cross-examination, Shay admitted having drunk a gin fizz in the Heinlein saloon on the morning of the shooting, and a glass of beer in the same place between 5:30 and 6 o'clock that evening. He also admitted having consumed three or four Bronx cocktails at his table during dinner. But Shay denied that he had been intoxicated.<sup>34</sup> Further prosecution attempts to undermine Shay's credibility were ineffectual. Shay denied or deftly deflected insinuations about his drinking and "ungovernable temper," and he remained composed in the face of prosecutor efforts to contradict his account of the events on May 3. Once Shay had completed his testimony, the defense proffered several witnesses intended to besmirch Euell's general reputation for peace and quiet. However, such

testimony was ruled inadmissible by the court.<sup>35</sup> With that, the defense rested.

On November 21, prosecutors began their closing arguments to the jury. Deputy prosecutors Claris Adams and Eph Inman attacked the testimony of Gertrude Anderson, emphasizing the contradictions between her trial testimony and her earlier statements before the grand jury and at the coroner's inquest. Although prosecutors conceded that Shay had the legal right to carry a revolver under Indiana law, they asserted that Shay had had no need of a weapon when he went to the café. Prosecutor Adams told the jury, "Mixed drinks and gunpowder" were responsible for the killing. "Every man who deliberately totes a gun is an incipient murderer. Murders are nearly always the result of drunken brawls. It is the combination of a gun and a drink that results in death to some innocent person. And the fact that our laws are antiquated and date back to the time of the stage coach, as far as carrying concealed weapons is concerned, is no reason why a sane man, living in a civilized community, should resort to the practice of carrying a gun. Our laws may be faulty and there may be a need of bringing them up to date, but that doesn't excuse the man who carries a gun. Shay carried the deadly weapon and he drank while it was in his possession."<sup>36</sup> In the State's final remarks, lead prosecutor Alvah Rucker demanded a conviction for second degree murder.<sup>37</sup>

When its turn came, Shay's defense team argued that the testimony of Shay and Mrs. Anderson established self-defense. Regarding Shay's admitted drinking, defense attorney Holtzman argued that the prosecution had failed to demonstrate that Shay had been intoxicated. Holtzman declared, "They did not prove it by putting John Heinlein, poor, besotted John Heinlein, on the stand ... I wouldn't convict a sheep-killing dog upon the testimony of such a man as John Heinlein."<sup>38</sup> All the while, the gun that Shay had used to slay Clarence Euell lay on the court reporter's desk, in plain sight of the jury. The only exhibit offered by the defense was the cashier's check served upon Shay that fatal night. It denoted two Bronx cocktails, a single

steak and potatoes dinner, and two cups of coffee. During closing arguments, Shay's son sat with his father. Later, it was reported that prosecutor Inman had commented that "the lad's resentment was evident, as was his lack of understanding of courtroom procedure at this stage of the trial." Meanwhile, Clarence Euell's parents sat silently behind the State's attorneys.<sup>39</sup>

The case went to the jury at 11:00 p.m. on November 21. Under Indiana penal statutes, three verdicts were placed in the jury's hands: Guilty of murder in the second degree, with a penalty of life imprisonment; Guilty of manslaughter, with exposure to an indeterminate prison sentence fixed by law from two to 21 years; and Not Guilty.<sup>40</sup> The next morning, the jury returned a Not Guilty verdict. It was subsequently reported that three ballots had been required for the jurors to reach a unanimous decision.<sup>41</sup> As the verdict was announced, a demonstration by Shay's friends erupted in the courtroom, while the many black spectators seated in the gallery remained impassive. Judge Collins stopped the demonstration at once, threatening to jail any man who violated the decorum of the courtroom. When interviewed by the press, Shay stated, "I knew I would be acquitted. I felt any fair-minded man would look at the case in the same light the jury did. I want to thank the jury publicly for their verdict; the judge, for his many courtesies extended; my attorneys who so diligently defended my position and the people in general, the people of Indianapolis, who understand the situation. Of course it was in some respects an unusual case, but now I am glad it is all over."<sup>42</sup>

Within a week, complaints that race prejudice had been involved in the outcome were voiced.<sup>43</sup> Race had been a factor in the Shay case from the start. It seems safe to say that the black community in Indianapolis did not trust the prosecutor's office to vigorously pursue the case on its own, as months before the trial began, a group of black citizens met at a local A.M.E. chapel "for the purpose of both raising the necessary funds and hiring legal talent to take

charge of the prosecution in the Clarence Euell case.”<sup>44</sup> The engagement of attorney Inman to safeguard community interests resulted from this effort. Indeed, the specter of race prejudice loomed throughout the proceedings. In his closing statement, prosecutor Claris Adams excoriated the Shay defense for playing the race card. Adams said, “Here comes the defense and seeks to color the facts with the prejudice the man who was shot was colored. And now, mark you, what I am about to say and mark how I say it. I scarcely know how to vouch what I hope to say. Michael Ryan violated every precept of law that defines the duty of an attorney for the defense in a case like this. The defense sought to introduce into the case the lust of conquest of white women on the part of the dead man. Ah, they seek to prejudice you in that respect.”<sup>45</sup>

Of course, not all things are seen by all people the same way. When Brewers team secretary Louis Nahin returned from Indianapolis after the first few days of the trial, he told the *Milwaukee Sentinel*: “If the case is decided on the testimony given, Dan will be acquitted. [However] the Negroes are strong politically in Indianapolis and the state is making every effort to convict Dan. I doubt whether it can be done, however, in view of the testimony given.”<sup>46</sup> Interestingly, the black Indianapolis newspaper *The Freeman* recognized that the odds had favored Shay’s

acquittal, commenting that “there was the thing of facts and the evidence, making a very hard row for the prosecution to hoe. The witnesses are the thing in law, meaning sometimes the miscarriage of justice. Clarence Euell had no witnesses that were strengthful (sic). Without being discourteous to those who were supposed to be on his side it may be said he had none.” *The Freeman* deemed the trial “a farce,” but added that “we do not wish to have it appear that our race is without hope in our courts. Nor do we wish it to appear that our white people are wholly free from prejudice when such is not the case. We do wish it to appear that everything considered, the Negroes’ relation to the courts in Indiana is nearly ideal.”<sup>47</sup>

The *Indianapolis News* saw the not guilty verdict as not so much a white/black result, per se. Rather, it concluded that a more general miscarriage of justice had occurred. An editorial in the newspaper gave this take on the case:

We have heard much in the last few years of trail by jury as one of the greatest inheritances of our inheritances as a people. After the verdict of the jury in the Danny Shay case — and there have been many such miscarriages of justice of recent years — a man may perhaps be pardoned for withholding from the institution unqualified admiration. This



*Indiana Newsroom website*

**Danny Shay**



*Find a Grave website*

**Clarence Euell gravestone  
Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis**

man Shay killed a waiter in a hotel. There is no doubt about that. Thousands of men visit our cafés every year, but we do not recall that there was ever one who found it necessary to shoot a waiter — great as the provocation may sometimes be. The average restaurant patron has no troubles that cannot be adjusted by an appeal to the head waiter or manager.

Shay, of course, had no right even to carry a revolver. That act itself was a violation of the law. [Author Note: This is a plain misstatement of then-existent Indiana law.] But having it, he had no right to use it unless he had good reason to believe that his life was in danger. The only evidence that even tends to sustain that theory was his own. Other witnesses swore that the waiter did not attack Shay until after he had been shot. Shay and the woman had been drinking. But it seems that the waiter “smiled” and even “leered” at the woman with Shay, that he was inattentive, etc. The penalty for these affronts is not death. Yet the verdict warrants the killing.

More and more our murder trials are coming to be trials not of the slayer but of his victim. It was so in this case. One would have thought that the dead waiter was in the dock and that Shay was the prosecutor. No doubt it will be the same with the trial of the woman in New York — which is now in progress — on the charge of having murdered her husband. In England where trial by jury originated, it does not seem difficult to convict murderers or manslaughterers. But in this country it is almost impossible. Yet men wonder why there should be more killings in this country than in any other. Perhaps one reason is that the chance of conviction is very slight. And when conviction is had, movements for pardon are at once begun. There is room for the fear that trial by jury, outside the federal courts, no longer serves to protect the rights of society, but is rather the shield of the criminal. It has

in this country been the subject of development and on false and dangerous lines. There must be a change if the institution is not to fall into contempt. Possibly it may be found wise to give the state, as well as the prisoner, the right of appeal in murder trials.<sup>48</sup>

It was reported immediately after the trial that Shay would go south for a hunting trip before announcing his baseball plans for the future.<sup>49</sup> That future was a meager one. Shay would not manage again. He moved to Kansas City, where his World War I registration card listed him working as a deputy in the county surveyor's office. He did some scouting, but after a season or two working for Columbus of the American Association, he severed his active connection with baseball. In late 1926, Shay suffered a stroke and some paralysis, which rendered his right arm and side useless. Friends said he had been in ill-health and despondent since that time. On December 1, 1927, Danny Shay was found in his Kansas City hotel room, dead from a self-inflicted gunshot. He was 51.<sup>50</sup>

In the early 2000s, former SABR member David Jones made a trip to Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis. He discovered that the Euell remains were interred in a common grave, wherein hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other poor Indianapolis black citizens had been buried.<sup>51</sup> Sometime thereafter, a simple stone marker bearing the inscription *Clarence H. Euell, 1886-1917*, was placed over Euell's final resting place by a benefactor unknown.<sup>52</sup> To this day, Euell's ghost is said to haunt the establishments located on the former Hotel English site.<sup>53</sup>

*Author's Note: I need to thank Bill Lamb for his help on this article. His clarification of many legal points and procedures during the trial has certainly made this story easier to follow and comprehend. Bill has edited a good number of my articles published in The Inside Game, and my thanks and appreciation certainly go to him, as he makes my works much more articulate than when they are given to him. Shakespeare was wrong in Henry VI, Part 2.*

## NOTES

1. *Milwaukee Journal*, May 4, 1917.
2. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 5, 1917.
3. Above paragraphs put together from reports in the *Indianapolis Star*, May 4, 1917; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 4-6, 1917; *Milwaukee Journal*, May 4-6, 1917; *Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) Telegraph*, May 5 and 7, 1917, and *Ogden City (Utah) Standard*, May 9, 1917.
4. *The Freeman*, May 12, 1917, as re-printed in David Jones, "An Unusual Case: Dan Shay, Clarence Euell, Gertrude Anderson, and the Limits of Hoosier Progressivism," *Indiana Magazine of History*, December 2007.
5. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 4-5, 1917; *Milwaukee Journal*, May 4, 1917; *Indianapolis Star*, May 5, 1917.
6. *Milwaukee Sentinel* May 5, 1917
7. *Milwaukee Journal*, May 7, 1917; *Tacoma Times*, May 8, 1917; *Ogden City (Utah) Standard*, May 15, 1917.
8. *Milwaukee Sentinel* May 4, 10, and 11, 1917.
9. *Indianapolis Star* and *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 10, 1917.
10. *Indianapolis Star*, May 5, 1917.
11. *Indianapolis Star*, May 12, 1917.
12. *Lebanon (Indiana) Daily Reporter*, June 4, 1917; *Milwaukee Sentinel* and *Logansport (Indiana) Pharos Reporter*, June 5, 1917.
13. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 24, 1917.
14. *Shelbyville (Indiana) Democrat*, May 17, 1917.
15. *Logansport Pharos Reporter*, September 25, 1917; *Fort Wayne Sentinel* and *Milwaukee Journal*, October 2, 1917; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, October 3, 1917.
16. *Milwaukee Sentinel* May 13, 1917; *Fort Wayne Journal*, November 13, 1917; *Logansport Pharos Reporter* and *Indianapolis Star*, November 14, 1917.
17. *Indianapolis Star* and *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 15, 1917.
18. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, *Indianapolis Star*, and *Milwaukee Evening Sentinel*, November 15, 1917.
19. *Indianapolis Star*, November 15, 1917.
20. *Fort Wayne Sentinel*, November 15, 1917; *Indianapolis Star*, November 16, 1917.
21. *Indianapolis Star*, November 16, 1917.
22. *Milwaukee Sentinel* and *Indianapolis Star*, November 16, 1917.
23. *Indianapolis Star*, November 16, 1917.
24. *Indianapolis Star*, November 17, 1917.
25. *Indianapolis Star*, November 17, 1917.
26. *Indianapolis Star*, November 17, 1917.
27. *Indianapolis Star*, November 17, 1917.
28. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 18 and 19, 1917.
29. *Indianapolis Star*, November 18, 1917; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 18 and 19, 1917.
30. Above testimony all taken from the *Indianapolis Star*, November 18, 1917.
31. *Indianapolis Star*, November 19, 1917.
32. *Indianapolis Star*, November 18, 1917.
33. Above testimony all taken from the *Indianapolis Star*, November 20, 1917.
34. *Indianapolis Star*, November 21, 1917; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 21, 1917.
35. Above testimony from *Indianapolis Star* and *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 21, 1917.
36. *Washington (Indiana) Democrat*, November 22, 1917; *Daviess County (Indiana) Democrat*, November 30, 1917.
37. *Fort Wayne Sentinel*, November 21, 1917; *Indianapolis Star* and *Milwaukee Journal*, November 22, 1917.
38. *Indianapolis Daily Times*, November 21, 1917, found in Jones, 376.
39. *Fort Wayne Sentinel*, November 21, 1917; *Indianapolis Star* and *Milwaukee Journal*, November 22, 1917.
40. *Indianapolis Star*, November 22, 1917.
41. *Indianapolis Star*, November 23, 1917; *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*, November 24, 1917.
42. *Milwaukee Sentinel*, November 23, 1917; *Fort Wayne Gazette*, November 24, 1917.
43. *Shelbyville (Indiana) Republican*, November 29, 1917.
44. *Colored World*, May 19, 1917, found in Jones, 364.
45. *Indianapolis Daily Times*, November 21, 1917, found in Jones, 376.
46. *Milwaukee Evening Sentinel*, November 19, 1917.
47. *The Freeman*, December 1, 1917, found in Jones, 377.
48. *Indianapolis News*, November 23, 1917, reprinted in the *Fort Wayne News*, December 1, 1917.
49. *Indianapolis Star*, November 23, 1917.
50. *Milwaukee Journal*, December 1 and 2, 1927; *Milwaukee Sentinel*, December 2, 1917; Brian McKenna's biography of Danny Shay at SABR Bio-Project.
51. *The Inside Game*, November 2004, 3.
52. A notation with photo of the Euell gravestone was added to the Find A Grave website in December 2009.
53. According to the Find a Grave entry on the Euell grave.

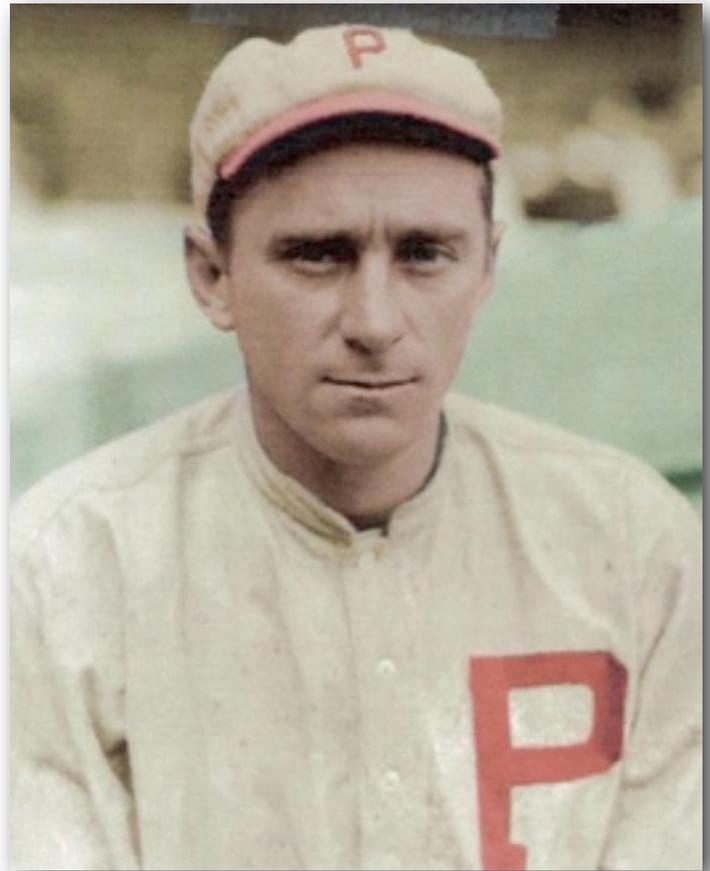
## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

*continued from page 1*

putting people in if they really, clearly belong in," said Morris. "If instead the narrative is 'well, this guy is the best guy not in the Hall of Fame,' that's not a good reason at all to put somebody else in. So I think it's very important to avoid, 'let's find the most qualified guy who hasn't gotten in so far,' and just keep electing players until the Hall of Fame is cluttered with guys who are marginal candidates, or even worse. That would be the worst thing you could possibly do."

A further consideration is that the Deadball Era players who have not been elected were voted upon many times by people who actually saw them play and still were not chosen. That stands in contrast to many 19th century stars, most of whose contemporaries were deceased when the first group of Hall of Famers was elected in 1936. Bill Deane, former Senior Research Associate at the National Baseball Library, author of *Baseball Myths*, and recognized authority on the Hall of Fame voting process offers this perspective: "One could make a valid case that there's not much point in going back and looking at Deadball Era candidates any longer, and instead to focus on the 19th century players, since there were not too many people alive who had actually seen them play when the elections started, as well as Negro League players, who weren't even eligible until 1971. So it's probably more challenging for Deadball Era players to get elected at this point, especially considering that their contemporaries didn't vote them in."

Whereas Deacon White, a star from the 19th century who was inducted in 2013, appears to have been a glaring omission from the Hall of Fame, none of the remaining Deadball Era players has as clear cut of a case. Sherry Magee is a representative example. Magee, who is described in his SABR BioProject biography written by Tom Simon as a "five-tool player" and as the Phillies' "greatest offensive star," is credited with having the most RBI in the National League in four different seasons (although RBI was not recorded as an official statistic until 1920). His Hall of Fame candidacy,



***Sherry Magee***

however, has been hindered by other factors. "There are two things that stand out on a negative side of Magee's candidacy," said Simon, editor of *Deadball Stars of the National League* and a member of the same 2012 Hall of Fame Pre-Integration Committee which included Peter Morris. "Magee was a very good player for a pretty long time, but he never played on a championship team until he was with Cincinnati in 1919, when he was a part-timer. So he was never an important part of a pennant-winning team. In fact, it was only after he was traded that the Phillies ended up making it to the World Series in 1915. Number two, Magee had that terrible incident with the umpire (a confrontation with Bill Finneran in 1911), which actually reminds me a little of the Roberto Alomar situation. I don't think that one bad incident should necessarily prevent him from getting in to the Hall of Fame, but I do question how good a teammate Magee was. I mean, the character factor is an issue for him."

So with the rise of advanced metrics, which may lead voters to consider the statistical accomplishments of particular players in a new light, it is conceivable that the non-quantitative factors — which are also important — may be crowded out by the quantitative ones. That issue is a factor in considering the case of Dahlen, for instance: “Defense is hard to measure, and so that’s where a guy like Bill Dahlen has really been recognized more since the advanced metrics are now giving him a ton of credit for his defense,” said Morris. “It seems to me that Dahlen is getting more credit from the advanced metrics than he got from contemporaneous accounts of his defense. You are really balancing two things there: if people who saw him play didn’t seem that excited about him but these metrics are giving him all this credit, then which way do you go? So I think that’s a tough dilemma when it comes to deciding if Dahlen is worthy of the Hall of Fame.”

Deane offered a complementary assessment: “There may be valid reasons why voters of a certain period didn’t put somebody in the Hall of Fame,” said Deane. “Albert Belle is a more modern example. I am not saying that they’re right or wrong, but the voters of his era decided that Belle was not worthy of the Hall of Fame, even though he has some impressive numbers. And fifty years from now, when you’ll have lost most of the contemporary observers, voters then might just look at the numbers and say, ‘why isn’t Albert Belle in the Hall of Fame?’ In a way, it could wind up being dismissive of the contemporary observers because those voters had their reasons for not putting him into the Hall.”

Lyle Spatz evaluated both the strengths and weaknesses of Dahlen’s (pronounced DAY-len, according to Spatz) case for the Hall of Fame in his 2004 biography *Bad Bill Dahlen: The Rollicking Life and Times of an Early Baseball Star*, where Dahlen’s ferocious temper was on full display. In terms of evaluating playing skill, Spatz emphasizes that where a player ranked relative to his contemporaries is key: “As we seem to be moving more and more to voters depending on the analytics of today to judge



**Bill Dahlen**

players, I still like to judge them in their own time,” said Spatz. “I think that Dahlen was the best shortstop of the decade of the 1890s. He and George Davis, and then, of course, Wagner. You look at the number of errors Dahlen made, and you’d say he couldn’t make a high school team now. But, of course, putting it in context, people realize that you made a lot more errors in those days playing on those fields with those gloves.

“I really like to judge players in the context of their times, as best as I can. And when you’re researching a book on a player and you’re reading what so-and-so said about him in real time, it gives you a different look. Sometimes, people say online that Derek Jeter, for instance, is not really that good based on the measurable factors. But if I have a team, I want Derek Jeter as my shortstop. And, of course, it’s so obvious that perhaps some people don’t believe it, but you cannot judge a player specifically on his numbers. There *are* intangibles.”

Rob Neyer, Senior Baseball Editor at FoxSports.com, suggests that advanced metrics can link Deadball Era players to modern ones, perhaps benefiting the candidacies of the former: “The numbers I’ve seen suggest that Dahlen was an outstanding shortstop,” said Neyer. “That’s where Dahlen’s case is: as the Ozzie Smith or the Omar Vizquel of his era. Someone needs to make that case. The minute you can say that Bill Dahlen was Ozzie Smith by using analytic methods, you can generate some real traction for his Hall of Fame candidacy.”

Then there is Sheckard, who is clearly overshadowed by many of his better-known Cubs teammates. Sheckard is perhaps best remembered for his 1903 season, when he led the National League in home runs (9) and in stolen bases (67), though he was never the most important player on a championship team: “Jimmy Sheckard was a good ballplayer. He was an on-base guy, and I think that would be one of the narratives, as bases on balls weren’t really appreciated as much as they should have been,” said Morris. Spatz, though, considers Sheckard to be the least-worthy of the players who are commonly mentioned as Deadball Era Hall of Fame candidates, and there seems to be only modest support for Sheckard’s election.

The scope of names of players with Deadball Era links mentioned by Deane, Morris, Neyer, Spatz, and Simon as at least potential Hall of Fame candidates is broad. They include Babe Adams, Ray Chapman, Wilbur Cooper, Larry Doyle, Larry Gardner, Fielder Jones, Tommy Leach, Sam Leever, Carl Mays, Deacon Phillippe, Jimmy Ryan, Wally Schang, Wildfire Schulte, Urban Shocker, Bobby Veach, and Hooks Wiltse. Another commonly cited Deadball Era Hall of Fame omission is Gavvy Cravath. “Cravath is a guy whom I always think is in, but he’s not,” said Spatz.

The inclusion of baseball historians on the 2012 selection committee for pre-1947 players emphasizes a heightened level of rigor in examining early-century candidacies. With the chance to have other Deadball Era players elected to the Hall of Fame in 2015, it is also



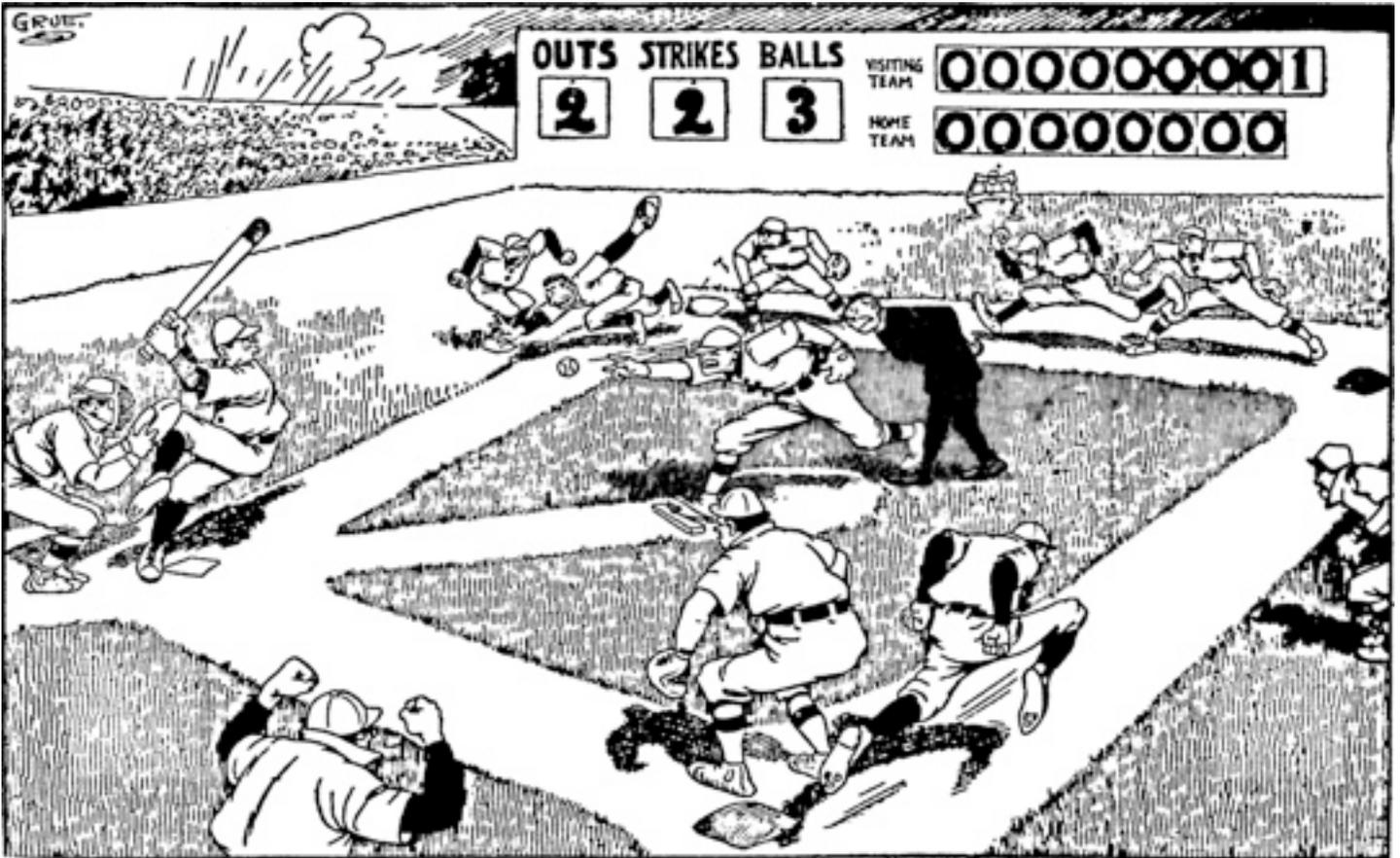
*Jimmy Sheckard*

conceivable that many of these players will be considered for decades to come. “The Hall of Fame has never formally said, ‘okay, we’re going to look at this group one more time, and that’s it,’” said Deane. “And,” continued Deane, “no matter what you do, you’re going to have people saying, ‘well, it’s good Sherry Magee’s in, but why isn’t Jimmy Ryan in?’ As you might expect, you’re going to make some people happy and some people unhappy. I’ve always been a hard-liner when it comes to Halls of Fame — they should be for the best of the best.”

The Federal League surely is a failure. Not one of its players has received an offer to go into vaudeville.

*Iowa State Bystander, July 17, 1914*

THERE ARE THREE GREAT MOMENTS IN LIFE, BIRTH AND DEATH ARE THE OTHER TWO



*The Pittsburg Press, May 1, 1910*

Editor's Note: The above was drawn by Johnny Gruelle, who later "invented" Raggedy Ann. In his early career, he drew many sports cartoons, signing as *Grue*.