

BLACK SOX SCANDAL



Vol. 5, No. 1, June 2013

Research Committee Newsletter

Leading off ...

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Chairman's Corner

By Jacob Pomrenke
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I hope you all can make it to our fifth annual Black Sox Scandal committee meeting in Philadelphia next month. It will be my great honor to introduce Patricia Anderson, the 86-year-old niece and surrogate daughter of Buck Weaver, as part of our "50th Anniversary of *Eight Men Out*" panel discussion.

There are few people alive today who ever spoke to the Black Sox players, let alone grew up and lived with them like Pat and her sister, the late Bette Scanlon, did for 16 years until they graduated high school in the mid-1940s. Pat's close relationship with her beloved uncle Buck and aunt Helen is a story that I can't wait to finally hear about in person. This will be a special treat for all of us in attendance.

Special thanks goes out to committee member David Fletcher for helping to arrange for Pat's appearance. David knows the Weaver family well and has spent many years

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Charlie Robertson's perfect game in his fifth career start on April 30, 1922, was perhaps the most improbable of any pitcher in major league history. Maybe it shouldn't have been: Robertson was one of 10 pitchers on the 1919 White Sox staff to throw a no-hitter in his professional career. Read more on page 3. (Photo: Chicago Daily News negatives collection, SDN-063806, courtesy of Chicago History Museum.)

SABR 43: *Eight Men Out* panel

Special guest: Patricia Anderson, niece of Buck Weaver

At SABR 43 in Philadelphia this summer, we'll be commemorating the 50th anniversary of the publishing of *Eight Men Out* by Eliot Asinof with a special panel discussion that will feature one of the last living links to the Black Sox players.

The "50th Anniversary of *Eight Men Out*" panel discussion — which doubles as our annual committee meeting at the SABR convention — is scheduled for 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. on Friday, August 2 in Room 401/403 on the fourth floor of the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown (1201 Market St., Philadelphia, PA 19107.)

For more information or to register for SABR 43 in Philadelphia, visit SABR.org/convention. All baseball fans are welcome to attend.

The guest speakers on the panel are expected to include:

◆ **Patricia Anderson**, the niece and surrogate daughter of Buck and Helen Weaver. Patricia and her sister, the late Bette Scanlon, were raised by the Weavers in Chicago for 16 years after their father passed away in 1931. Now 86, Patricia lives in Branson, Missouri, and is devoted to clearing her beloved uncle's name. Patricia helped David Fletcher launch the ClearBuck.com campaign at the 2003 MLB All-Star Game at U.S. Cellular Field in Chicago.

◆ **Dr. David Fletcher**, founder and president of the Chicago Baseball Museum. In his day job, David is an occupational medicine specialist and

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Upcoming: Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum to celebrate 5th anniversary

The Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum in Greenville, South Carolina, will mark its fifth anniversary with a free public event on Saturday, June 22 from 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Fans will be entertained with appearances by former major leaguer Bob Bolin and longtime coach Randy Phillips; textile league baseball player Joe Anders; noted women's basketball and softball star Evelyn "Eckie" Jordan; and Ulis Broome, former Negro Leagues player. There may even be a few surprise guests in store for fans.

The not-for-profit museum, located at 356 Field Street in the home where Jackson lived and died, has become a popular destination for baseball fans from across the country and around the world. The museum displays artifacts, photographs, films, and other items of interest associated with the historic life and baseball career of Shoeless Joe Jackson.



Remembered through countless books, several movies, and even a Broadway play, Jackson continues to be one of the most publicized ball players in history. Featured inside the museum will be Jackson's 1917 World Series ring and his will showing his original signature, the rarest in sports collectibles.

A yard sale, raffle, and silent auction of baseball memorabilia are being planned as well. The silent auction will include a 1930s replica Boston Braves uniform; a collection of items once owned by major leaguer Sibby Sisti; and a Louisville Slugger Joe Jackson Model bat used in the documentary "Cards Against the Wall."

Highlights

- ◆ **10:30 a.m.:** Baseball Roundtable discussion: Moderator: Ron Scarborough, WRIX-FM 103.1. Guest speakers: Bob Bolin, Joe Anders, Ulis Broome, Eckie Jordan, author Tom Perry, and textile baseball historian, Don Roper
- ◆ **11:30 a.m.:** Meet the Drive players
- ◆ **11:45 a.m.:** Guest speaker Mike Nola, Shoeless Joe Jackson Official Historian: "Shoeless Joe and his Barnstorming Years"
- ◆ **1:00 p.m.:** Baseball clinic with longtime high school and professional coach Randy Phillips

The event includes tours of the museum; exhibits by the Greenville Drive and Greenville Textile Heritage Society; concessions. For information, visit ShoelessJoeJackson.org.

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co-founder of SafeWorks Illinois, a private medical practice which he operates in downstate Illinois. He is an avid baseball fan and SABR member who was married in 1998 at home plate of the original Comiskey Park. In 2005, he was the recipient of the Hilda Award from the Baseball Reliquary, honoring baseball fans and their importance to the game.

◆ **Bill Lamb**, author of the groundbreaking book *Black Sox in the Courtroom: The Grand Jury, Criminal Trial and Civil Litigation*, published by McFarland in spring 2013. Bill is a retired New Jersey prosecutor who spent more than three decades in the courtroom. His book is the first comprehensive account of the various legal proceedings involved in the Black Sox Scandal. In 2012, he served as guest editor of a special Black Sox edition of McFarland's *Base Ball: A Journal of the Early Game*. He lives in Meredith, New Hampshire.



Patricia Anderson

◆ Moderator **Jacob Pomrenke** is the chairman of SABR's Black Sox Scandal Research Committee and the full-time Web Content Editor/Producer for SABR at its Phoenix-based national office. He moderated a panel discussion on Shoeless Joe Jackson at the 2010 SABR convention in Atlanta and has appeared on an MLB Network special on the Black Sox Scandal. Before joining the SABR staff in 2011, he worked for 10 years as a reporter, page designer and copy editor at various newspapers in California and Georgia.

The 43rd annual SABR convention will be held July 31-August 4, 2013, at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown, 1201 Market St., Philadelphia, PA.

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No, No, No-hitters: Gems from the 1919 Sox pitchers

By Jacob Pomrenke
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The Chicago White Sox were decided favorites entering the 1919 World Series against the Cincinnati Reds. Most experts at the time, such as writer Hugh Fullerton and umpire Billy Evans, considered the Sox to have a stronger lineup and a stronger defense, and the American League champion had won eight of the last nine World Series. The 1919 Series was expected to be no different.

The White Sox's one known weakness was pitching depth. With future Hall of Famer Red Faber stricken by influenza and arm injuries, manager Kid Gleason relied heavily on his two aces, Eddie Cicotte and Lefty Williams, with rookie Dickey Kerr picking up most of the slack in Faber's absence.

Before the Series began, Evans wrote: "During the last two months of the season, most American League managers and players have been predicting that one or other of the Sox veterans would crack. ... At certain stages of the race, it was absolutely necessary that Gleason work both of these stars to the limit."

One of the great "what-if" questions about the 1919 White Sox is how a healthy Red Faber would have changed their fortunes in the tainted World Series against the Reds. Had Gleason been able to use Faber — who had won a record-tying three games in the 1917 World Series — might the Sox have been able to win it all even with their top two pitchers trying to throw the games? Reds fans would (rightfully) tell you no way, but we'll never know.

The White Sox may have lacked depth, but they had an abundance of talent on the mound. Alas, most of those talented pitchers were either too old or too young, or too injured or too erratic, for Gleason to count on in 1919. Some were past their prime in the major leagues (Joe Benz, Reb Russell, Bill James), some later became stars in lesser leagues (Frank Shellenback, Lefty Sullivan.) None were particularly useful to Gleason in the World Series, but it was not for lack of talent.

Here's one fascinating way to tell: Of the 17 pitchers who made an appearance for the White Sox in 1919, 10 of them threw no-hitters during their professional baseball careers. Even in the Deadball Era, that's a remarkable feat. (For some context, only one of the 1919 Reds' 10 pitchers ever threw a no-hitter in organized baseball. Five of the 14 pitchers on the 1920 Cleveland Indians staff did.)

No-hitters were pretty common in the minor leagues during the pitching-rich Deadball Era. There were more minor

league no-hitters thrown (108) in 1910 than in any other season in baseball history. Second on the list is 1909 with 97 no-hitters, then 1908 with 91 and 1911 with 87. It's a record that may never be broken. In 2009, 36 minor league no-hitters were thrown across all levels, the most in nearly 40 years.

Here's a list of the no-hitters thrown by 1919 White Sox pitchers:

Joe Benz

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
5/31/1914	Chicago	Cleveland	6-1	American

Eddie Cicotte

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
4/19/1905	Augusta	Savannah	2-1	S. Atlantic
8/16/1906	Des Moines	Omaha	3-1	Western
4/14/1917	Chicago	St. Louis	11-0	American

Red Faber

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
8/18/1910	Dubuque	Davenport	3-0*	Three-I

* Perfect game

Dickey Kerr

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
7/25/1914	Paris	Denison	12-0	Tex.-Okla.

Grover Lowdermilk

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
8/14/1908	Decatur	Peoria	6-2	Three-I

Erskine Mayer

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
5/23/1911	Albany	Augusta	2-0	S. Atlantic
5/30/1912	Portsmouth	Norfolk	6-0	Virginia

Win Noyes

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
8/2/1910	Red Cloud	Kearney	4-0 or 6-0	Neb. State
7/12/1915	Spokane	Vancouver	11-1	N'western

Pat Ragan

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
6/26/1907	Omaha	Lincoln	4-1	Western

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► NO-HITTERS

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Charlie Robertson

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
4/30/1922	Chicago	Detroit	2-0*	American

* Perfect game

Reb Russell

Date	Team	Opponent	Score	League
7/3/1912	Bonham	Sherman	3-1	Tex.-Okla.

Charlie Robertson's perfect game for the White Sox in 1922, in just his fifth career major league start, was the highlight of an otherwise mediocre career. He had never shown much promise with the White Sox before blanking the Ty Cobb-led Detroit Tigers that day, and the instant fame reportedly went to his head. He finished his major league career with a 49-80 record over eight seasons.

As noted, Red Faber's no-hitter for Dubuque in 1910 was also a perfect game. Only one ball reached the outfield and the Pittsburgh Pirates immediately bought his contract the next day, although he never pitched for the Bucs.

Robertson, Cicotte and Benz were the only three to throw no-hitters in the majors. Cicotte also threw two in the minor leagues. (His great-nephew, Al Cicotte, repeated the feat many years later. Al, who spent parts of five seasons in the big leagues between 1957 and 1962, threw a no-hitter in 1950 for Norfolk of the Piedmont League and again in 1960 for Toronto of the International League.)

One interesting omission from this list is Frank Shellenback, who never threw a no-hitter in organized ball, although he did throw one in high school. The spitball specialist from California was just a 20-year-old rookie with the White Sox in 1919. When major league owners banned the spitball the following year — Shellenback was not among the 17 veteran pitchers who were allowed to continue throwing the wet one — he went down to the Pacific Coast League and became a star with the Hollywood Stars, winning 295 games over the next 19 seasons.

Speaking of Hollywood, another omission on this list is manager Kid Gleason — who somehow gained post-humous credit for pitching a no-hitter in John Sayles' film *Eight Men Out*. Gleason was indeed a star pitcher in the National League in the 1890s, but he never threw

a no-hitter professionally, with or without a young Dickey Kerr in the stands, as the film claimed.

But two other 1919 White Sox players did throw no-hitters “professionally” — albeit in outlaw and semipro leagues after they were banned in the Black Sox Scandal. After their exile from the major leagues, most of the Eight Men Out continued to earn a nomadic living by playing baseball all across the country.

In 1926, Lefty Williams, now the star pitcher for the Fort Bayard (New Mexico) Veterans in the four-team Copper League — which also included Hal Chase, Chick Gandil and Buck Weaver — no-hit the Weaver-managed Douglas Blues on August 8 in the border town of Douglas in southeastern Arizona. He reportedly hit the first batter, then retired 20 in a row. It was Williams' last hurrah.

He had separated from his wife, Lyria, and usually spent more time drinking than pitching. The following year, he stopped playing ball and moved back to Chicago, where he eventually sobered up and reunited with Lyria.

The most unlikely no-hitter of all — and the last thrown by anyone associated with the 1919 White Sox — was authored by Swede Risberg. Risberg had been a strong-armed pitcher growing up, but converted to shortstop in the minor leagues. In the outlaw leagues, he discovered he could earn more money as a starting pitcher and only played the infield when his arm needed a rest.

The quality of these teams varied widely, but on at least three documented occasions, Risberg struck out 16 or more batters in a nine-inning game, including a 21-strikeout game in Wisconsin in 1923.

On July 11, 1930, the 35-year-old Risberg, pitching for Jamestown, North Dakota, struck out seven in a no-hitter against nearby LaMoure. He also went 2-for-4 at the plate and scored a run. His fastball wasn't what it once was and his White Sox days were long behind him, but even the best local hitters in the Northern Plains were no match for his major league-caliber skills.

Risberg continued playing ball until he was in his mid-40s, first in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in the early years of the Great Depression, then in southern Oregon and northern California, where he opened a successful tavern and raised his two sons.

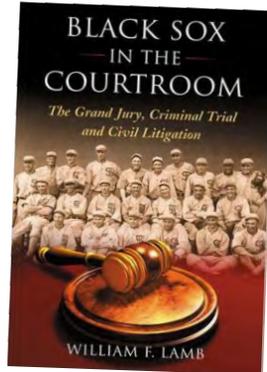
No-hitters aren't always thrown by the best or most dominant pitchers, as many years of baseball history can attest. An unlucky bounce or a badly positioned fielder can mess one up. But it's striking that the 1919 White Sox had so many pitchers with the capability to throw a no-hitter in the professional ranks.

FURTHER READING

There's been a lot of new writing about the Black Sox Scandal published this spring and we highly encourage you all to check it out. Here are some of the highlights:

Black Sox in the Courtroom: The Grand Jury, Criminal Trial and Civil Litigation

By William F. Lamb
McFarland & Co., 229 pages
ISBN: 978-0-78647-268-0
Link: Amazon.com



Bill Lamb's new book is the first comprehensive account of the legal proceedings surrounding the Black Sox Scandal. Lamb, a retired New Jersey prosecutor, was able to use surviving fragments of the grand jury and criminal trial record, newspaper coverage of the proceedings, and the transcript of Joe Jackson's 1924 Milwaukee back-pay lawsuit to explain in plain English the complicated drama that played out in various courtrooms. His legal background enabled him to offer valuable insight as to why the initial Grand Jury proceedings were so unusual and why the judges and juries ruled the way they did. It's an important book that helps fill a void in Black Sox scholarship.



The National Pastime Museum

Link: TheNationalPastimeMuseum.com

Curator Frank Ceresi has compiled an all-star lineup of writers and historians to contribute to a new website that launched on Opening Day, March 31, called The National Pastime Museum.

The online museum is dedicated to sharing the artifacts, history and stories of baseball.

It regularly features columns by some of the game's finest writers, including SABR members Rob Neyer, Paul Dickson, Larry Lester, Bill Ryczek, Gabriel Schechter, Tim Wendel and Jacob Pomrenke, along with Lawrence Hogan, Molly Lawless and a host of guest columnists such as John Holway, Luis Munoz and Stacy Pratt McDermott.

The site is edited by Dick Heller, who has covered sports for more than 50 years at the *Washington Star*, the *Miami Herald* and the *Washington Times*.

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advocating for Buck Weaver's reinstatement to baseball's good graces. He'll be joining us on this panel, along with author Bill Lamb, to share their knowledge and perspective on the Black Sox Scandal.

Although this won't be a featured panel in Philadelphia (it doubles as our annual committee meeting), this will be the third Black Sox-related panel at a national SABR convention.

The most recent was in 2010 at SABR 40 in Atlanta, where we discussed the legacy of Shoeless Joe Jackson with the last sports writer to interview him, the colorful newspaper columnist Furman Bisher. Jackson historian Mike Nola, biographer David Fultz, and Chicago attorneys Daniel Voelker and Paul Duffy were also on the panel.

At the 2004 SABR convention in Cincinnati (SABR 34), Gene Carney, Jim Sandoval, Alan Nathan, Fultz and moderator Alan Schwarz discussed the 1919 World Series with a special focus on the hometown Reds' chances of winning on the square.

I hope you'll join us. You can register for SABR 43 online at SABR.org/convention.



Speaking of folks who knew Buck Weaver ...

A while back, I was contacted by the son of Chicago author James T. Farrell, who told me that an uncatalogued collection of his father's papers were housed at the University of Pennsylvania's Rare Book and Manuscript Library in Philadelphia. Kevin Farrell said he thought there was some baseball-related correspondence included in the collection, but he hadn't had a chance to check it out yet.

I'll be pretty swamped once the convention begins as part of my SABR staff duties, but I'm planning to head over to the Penn library on Tuesday, July 30 to see if there are any Black Sox items of interest in the Farrell Collection. If any of you are in town early and would like to join me, please let me know. The more, the merrier.



A brief update on our 1919 White Sox BioProject book project, which is making some serious progress:

◆ All the player bios are now being edited by myself, Bill Nowlin, Rick Huhn and Len Levin, so if we haven't been in contact with you about your bio, we will be soon.

◆ The 1919 season recap and World Series essays have been assigned, but we're still seeking any additional essay topics. Any essay exploring specific aspects of the team, season or scandal is welcome. If you have an interesting idea, get in touch with me and let's discuss it.

For more information about SABR's Black Sox Scandal Research Committee, contact chairman Jacob Pomrenke at buckweaver@gmail.com.

Des Moines' connection to the Black Sox

By Ralph J. Christian
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Editor's note: This paper was first presented at the 2003 SABR convention. It is reprinted here with the permission of the author.

Most people's visions of Iowa and its connection to the Black Sox scandal have been shaped by the movie *Field of Dreams*. Shoeless Joe Jackson's query "Is this Heaven?" to Ray Kinsella, and his response "No, it's Iowa," and the emergence of the Black Sox ghost players from Kinsella's Iowa cornfield are among this baseball fantasy's most memorable highlights.

The subsequent preservation of the Kinsella farmstead and the ballfield where the movie was filmed, and its development into a destination for baseball fans and tourists from around the world has further cemented Iowa's popular image to the Black Sox story and what Brett H. Mandel has described as "the magic of the Field of Dreams."

Had author W.P. Kinsella desired to insert more realism into *Shoeless Joe*, the novella that was the basis for the film, or make it into a broader morality tale, he might have had the gamblers, all "dressed to the nines," emerging from the cornfield with the players.

Such an action would have not only had great dramatic effect but would have been in keeping with the historical record, because three of the four gamblers tried with Jackson and the other Black Sox players were from Des Moines, Iowa's capital city and approximately 170 miles southwest of the pastoral setting where the movie was filmed.¹

When the Black Sox Scandal first came to light and for many years afterward, the view prevailed that the fix originated with big-city Eastern gamblers such as Arnold Rothstein, whose



David Zelcer, a gambler from Des Moines, Iowa, played a key role in fixing the 1919 World Series. He roomed with Abe Attell during the Series, when he went by the alias "Bennett," and helped raise money to pay the Black Sox players. (Photo credit: Chicago Tribune; courtesy of Bill Lamb.)

ill-gotten gains allowed him to corrupt eight ballplayers. In the words of F. Scott Fitzgerald's narrator, Nick Carraway, in *The Great Gatsby*, he "played with the faith of fifty million people — with the single-mindedness of a burglar blowing a safe."

In more recent years, the view has prevailed that Rothstein had little direct involvement in the fix, and that it originated with a group of White Sox players frustrated with the tight-fisted ways of team owner Charles Comiskey.

Largely ignored in all these discussions, however, were the activities of a rather loosely organized group of gamblers in Des Moines, Denver, Kansas City, Minneapolis and Omaha, who moved freely around the country posing as traveling salesmen and legitimate businessmen and wagering considerable sums of money on major league baseball games.²

Des Moines' contribution to this contingent were the Zelcer brothers, David, Abraham, Louis, and Nathan. Dave and Abe Zelcer headed the family's gambling activities, which were masked by seemingly legitimate business fronts.

Born in 1877 and 1879 respectively to Polish immigrant parents in Des Moines, both, by their mid-teens, were working full-time and holding positions as clerks and salesmen in local dry goods and clothing stores. By 1902, David Zelcer appears to have entered the ranks of Des Moines' "sporting men," listing his occupation only as "clerk" and not identifying his place of employment. Two years later, Abe likely became a professional gambler as well, listing his occupation only as "traveler."

In 1905 and 1906, David apparently left Des Moines to gamble elsewhere before returning home in 1907 with enough money to enter the loan business and likely assist his brother Abe in opening a combination cigar store and pool room in the downtown area.

Des Moines in this era had a reputation as a "wide open" city, and its cigar stores and pool rooms were notorious for illegal sales of alcoholic beverages, gambling of all varieties, and generally rowdy behavior, all under the watchful and protective eye of the local police department.³

By 1911 David Zelcer had assumed the persona of a legitimate businessman with his Success Sales System, an enterprise in which he partnered with his younger brother Nathan. According to Des Moines city directories, the Zelcer brothers were "merchandise brokers" but provided no further details about their operations.

What the directories did reveal, however, was that Success Sales System offices were located at 714 Locust

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Street, the same address as the cigar store and pool room operated by Abe Zelcer and the youngest brother Lou. Apparently, the Zelcer's combination of legitimate and illegal activities paid them well.

In 1916 they purchased a large home at 1706 6th Avenue and moved from the downtown area with their widowed mother Rachael into what was then a fashionable upper-middle-class neighborhood on Des Moines' near north side.⁴

Although Dave Zelcer maintained a residence in Des Moines, he likely spent relatively few days in the city as he traveled the country in pursuit of gambling opportunities, whether they be sporting events or various games of chance with other individuals and groups. By 1919, he had been plying his trade for 17 years, largely in the guise of a sales representative, and had become part of a rather loosely organized group of gamblers, mostly from mid-sized midwestern cities with a similar modus operandi.

In addition to his brothers, Dave had begun to work closely with Ben and Lou Levi, who divided their free time between Des Moines and Kokomo, Indiana. During the winter months, he and the Levi brothers made their headquarters in San Francisco and carried on gambling activities in several California cities.

They also made the acquaintance of many sports figures like boxer Abe Attell and baseball players like Hal Chase and "Sleepy Bill" Burns, who also had a penchant for gambling and who could furnish them with inside information not readily available to others. Zelcer and the Levi brothers also ingratiated themselves with baseball management as well, persuading them to hold bets and pay off winners.⁵

David Zelcer's role in the fixing of the 1919 World Series has been subject to various interpretations.

In some accounts, he is viewed as a lieutenant of Arnold Rothstein while others treat him as an assistant to Abe Attell or even Hal Chase, but none have gone so far as to suggest that he served as the ringleader of the gamblers.

What has been overlooked in these interpretations is Zelcer's tendency to avoid the limelight; his ability to team up with other gamblers; and the relationships he and his cohorts were able to establish with ballplayers and team management, enabling them to obtain insider information that gave them a decided advantage in their betting activities.

According to Tom Fairweather, owner of Des Moines' entry in the Western League and the city's mayor at the time, the Zelcer and Levi brothers were "ardent White Sox fans" and had been for some time. Given the fact that they earned their livelihood from gambling, however, their interest and support for the team would have been based more on financial than sentimental considerations.

Their ability to acquire insider information about the White Sox likely was enhanced by their acquaintance with Mayor Fairweather, a personal friend of Charles Comiskey, and whose Des Moines team had a close working relationship with the Chicago club, and by the fact that two of the team's star pitchers, Eddie Cicotte and Urban "Red" Faber, had toiled for the Des Moines franchise.⁶

While Dave Zelcer and his cohorts were probably aware by early September, if not earlier, of Eddie Cicotte and Chick Gandil's willingness to throw the World Series and salivated at the prospect of getting in on the action, they faced a decided handicap.

Because they were based primarily in small- and medium-sized cities in the Midwest, Zelcer and company did not

possess the credibility to be taken seriously for such a large scale enterprise, nor did they possess sufficient capital to carry it out, especially after five other players expressed a willingness to participate.

Faced with this challenge, Zelcer, after receiving considerable financial backing by a prominent Des Moines realtor and teaming up with Abe Attell, went on the road in a whirlwind of activity that eventually would make it appear that the fix was emanating from New York and St. Louis, the easternmost and westernmost bastions of major league baseball.

Zelcer likely enlisted Ben Franklin, who was a well-known gambler in Omaha, to go to St. Louis. Franklin, whose real last name was "Frankel," may have been a relation of the Frankel family of Des Moines in whose clothing store Abe Zelcer had worked for several years. Masquerading as a "mule buyer," Franklin enlisted the support of Carl Zork, a St. Louis clothing manufacturer and gentleman gambler, who was a close friend of Abe Attell and who likely knew Dave Zelcer as well. In the meantime, Ben and Lou Levi, operating out of Des Moines, were placed in charge of operations in the Upper Midwest.⁷

Zelcer's biggest headache was the East Coast where his agents "Sleepy" Bill Burns, Joseph "Sport" Sullivan, Rachael Brown and Billy Maharg encountered problems finding backers for the scheme. On September 16 and 18, 1919, Burns met with Cicotte and Gandil in New York City, where they informed him that it would cost \$100,000 to throw the World Series.

A few days later, armed with this figure, Burns and Maharg met with famed New York gambler Arnold Rothstein at a racetrack, but he turned them down. At this juncture, Zelcer and Abe Attell, assisted to some degree by Hal

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Chase, took charge in a scene somewhat reminiscent of Paul Newman and Robert Redford in the movie *The Sting*.

A few days before the October 1 start of the World Series in Cincinnati, Zelcer traveled to New York City for a September 29 meeting with Attell, Chase, Burns, Cicotte and Gandil at the Ansonia Hotel to finalize the details of the fix. Attell and Chase introduced Zelcer as "Bennett" to Burns and the two White Sox players — possibly because Cicotte may have been acquainted with Abe Zelcer during his years pitching in Des Moines, but most likely because of the scam they planned to utilize to make the fix happen.

According to Burns, "Bennett said he represented Rothstein" who had agreed to put up the \$100,000. Burns then "asked Bennett why Rothstein didn't go through with the deal with me. Attel[sic] spoke up and said that he once saved Rothstein's life, and that Rothstein was indebted to him. Bennett said Rothstein authorized him to handle the financial end and that Attel[sic] was to handle the players."

Satisfied with Attell and Zelcer's explanations, Cicotte and Gandil agreed to put the proposition before the other White Sox players in Cincinnati.⁸

Zelcer then took a train to Cincinnati where he had registered himself, Attell and the Levi brothers at the Sinton Hotel. Due to some sort of mix-up, Attell's reservation had been lost, and he and Zelcer ended up rooming together. Zelcer, still utilizing the pseudonym of "Bennett" and claiming to be "Rothstein's right-hand man," accompanied Abe Attell to the meeting with the players in Eddie Cicotte's room on the eve of the World Series, where they agreed to throw the Series for \$100,000 or \$20,000 a game.

It was probably after this meeting



On September 29, 1919, six men met at the Ansonia Hotel in New York. Abe Attell, Bill Burns, David Zelcer, Hal Chase, Eddie Cicotte and Chick Gandil finalized a plan to fix the upcoming World Series between the Chicago White Sox and Cincinnati Reds. (Photo: Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)

that Zelcer reportedly telegraphed his brother Abe in Des Moines to "pawn the family heirlooms and gamble it all on Cincinnati." In addition to meeting with the players, Zelcer and his associates devoted substantial time to working the lobby of the Sinton for bets.

Attell and Lou Levi even managed to persuade Washington manager Clark Griffith and Chicago Cubs Secretary John O. Seys to hold the stakes for some of their bets. Seys ended up holding \$2,250 in bets for the pair, and actually paid off on some of them on his return to Chicago after the second game.⁹

Although Zelcer and his cohorts appeared to be in the driver's seat after the Reds won the first two games of the Series, serious problems quickly developed with their scheme. First of all, the heavy amount of betting on Cincinnati in the days immediately preceding the Series caused the odds in favor of Chicago to narrow considerably, thus, reducing the potential payoff. Also, the fact that so many people seemed to be aware of the fix caused many gamblers to become reluctant to bet, believing

that the whole affair was a scam in which a band of "touts" were playing "sure thing bettors for suckers."

Concerned about cash flow and their own return on the scheme, Zelcer and Attell reneged on their promised payoff to the players, first claiming that all their money was out on bets and then only reluctantly distributing \$10,000 after the second game. After Chicago won the supposedly fixed third game and many in the gambling community lost heavily, the odds shifted yet again.

On the eve of the fourth game, starting pitcher Eddie Cicotte is said to have found \$10,000 under his pillow, and Claude Williams and Joe Jackson each received \$5,000 with the result that the Reds won the fourth and fifth games. Although no more payoffs supposedly occurred, White Sox victories in games six and seven shifted the gambling odds once again away from the Reds toward the White Sox, thus setting the stage for Cincinnati's victory in the eighth and final game of the Series.¹⁰

One might reasonably concur that Zelcer and Attell, realizing they did

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not have the financial wherewithal to engineer a five-game Cincinnati sweep shifted their strategy to one of fixing a limited number of games so as to manipulate the odds on the two teams as they saw fit. Likely, it was this strategy that seemed like a fix on the installment plan that earned them the disdain of Arnold Rothstein, who later described the fix as the work of "cheap gamblers."

Although Zelcer and Attell initially claimed to have lost heavily when Chicago won the third game, it is highly likely both profited betting on Cincinnati. Dave Zelcer covered up his duplicity by not informing his brother Abe of the change in strategy and allowing him to lose most of the money they had won on the first two games in Des Moines, apparently a small price to pay for a bigger payoff and to ease any suspicions of his local financial backer, who lost heavily on the game as well.

According to a report published in the *Des Moines News*, Dave Zelcer, Abe Attell, Carl Zork, Ben Franklin and Ben and Lou Levi met in a Chicago hotel where "they made the final distribution of the 'jack pot'." Zork and Franklin were said to have "cleaned up" between \$70,000 and \$80,000 by the manipulations" and "the two Levis and Zelcer ... making almost as much."¹¹

Cincinnati's winning of the World Series on October 9 did not quiet the clamor about the games being fixed, but since so much of the complaints came from the gambling community, there was a general tendency on the part of most sportswriters to downplay the gambling rumors and focus on the overall play of the White Sox team instead.

Des Moines Register sportswriter Sec Taylor, who had covered several of the games in person, probably typified this point of view. Writing under his own byline on October 14, 1919, Taylor

stated his own belief that it had not been fixed for two reasons.

First of all, "it would have cost so much to make the 'arrangements' that no syndicate could have afforded to undertake the proposition unless it planned to bet several hundred thousand dollars, and if that much money was to be at stake, Kerr and every other player would have been 'fixed' so that there would have been no misfire."

Secondly, "had it really been 'framed' the Des Moines contingent and other gamblers all over the country would not have known about it. The news would not have been telegraphed all over the country." In Taylor's opinion, "it seems more probable that the boys who thought the games were prearranged were the victims of a band of 'touts' who spread the report for their own benefit and who covered most of the Cincinnati bets on the third game themselves ... the White Sox played their best but were demoralized and upset following Cicotte's miserable showing in the opening game of the series."

Taylor closed his piece with a challenge to "those who believe the series was prearranged ... to pick up the \$20,000 offered by Charles A. Comiskey for proof that his players agreed to throw games."¹²

Among those willing to accept Taylor's challenge and attempt to get Comiskey's reward money was Abe Zelcer, who appears to have been largely unaware of the extent of his brother's involvement in the fix until several days after the World Series, when Dave patiently filled him in on how events had transpired.

Then, about two weeks after the publication of Hugh Fullerton's sensational article on the fix in the *New York World* on December 15, 1919, Des Moines Mayor Tom Fairweather, who also owned the city's Western League franchise, telegraphed Comiskey around New Year's Day "regarding

rumors in Des Moines that the world series had been 'fixed' and also telling about actions of local gamblers."

Although Comiskey and Fairweather were good friends, Comiskey did not respond directly to him, delegating that task to former Western League president "Tip" O'Neill, who sent Fairweather a letter requesting more specific information. On January 7, 1920, Fairweather wrote Comiskey, telling how just before the start of the World Series Abe Zelcer had received a telegram at his cigar store from his brother Dave instructing him "to 'pawn the family heirlooms' and gamble it all on Cincinnati."

Later, "while watching the score board of the game," Zelcer, "who was always a White Sox fan" informed Fairweather about "the information he had 'on the inside' that Cincinnati was to win."

At the time, however, he paid little attention to these remarks, Fairweather declared, because Zelcer "was under the influence of liquor, and because of his boastful attitude." Fairweather then related how several local businessmen and professional gamblers, who had received this tip, won substantial sums of money before losing practically all of it on the third game.¹³

The general public would not become aware of a possible Des Moines connection to the Black Sox Scandal until late September 1920 when it was rumored that the Cook County Grand Jury would return indictments for at least two Des Moines men. Contacted by a reporter from the *Des Moines Evening Tribune*, Dave Zelcer declared that "to his best knowledge he did not know of anyone in Des Moines who was on the inside" and when asked about his brother Abe, who was said to have received the tip, he stated that he "positively knew that Abe was not on the inside."

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Zelcer undoubtedly breathed a sigh of relief on October 22 when the grand jury handed down final indictments for the eight White Sox players and Abe Attell, Bill Burns, Sport Sullivan, Hal Chase and the mysterious Rachael Brown.¹⁴

Zelcer's sense of relief would be brief, however, because of new information provided to the grand jury by American League President Ban Johnson. On March 26, 1921, a second Cook County Grand Jury handed down 144 indictments against 18 men. The eight players and five gamblers in the previous investigation were re-indicted, but this time Zelcer, Ben and Lou Levi, Carl Zork and Ben Franklin were included in the indictments.

Each person received eight separate indictments containing three counts "charging conspiracy to defraud, obtaining money under false pretenses and conspiracy to do an illegal act." Bonds were set at \$3,000 for each indictment or \$24,000 per person. Zelcer's name was misspelled as "Zelser," in the indictments, which may explain why the Associated Press listed him as "address unknown," although that was not a problem for most of the Des Moines press.

At the time the indictments were announced, Zelcer and the Levi brothers were in California where they had been spending the winter. In an interview with the *Des Moines News* that same day, Abe Zelcer said "unless they are arrested and brought back by officers it will be a month before they return ... I know nothing about my brother being indicted or anything about his being implicated in the scandal ... There were rumors that the Cincinnati club would win the series and naturally the persons that heard of these rumors placed their money on what they thought would be



Defendants, attorneys and jurors (in shirtsleeves) gather for a group photo following the not-guilty verdicts on August 2, 1921. Identified in photo are: 1) Eddie Cicotte; 2) Chick Gandil; 3) David Zelcer; 4) Michael Ahern; 5) Max Luster; 6) James O'Brien; 7) Swede Risberg; 8) Lefty Williams; 9) Joe Jackson; 10) Henry Berger; 11) Carl Zork; 12) J.J. Cooke; 13) Daniel Cassidy; 14) Ben Short; and 15) Thomas Nash. (Photo: Chicago Tribune)

the winning team."

Two days later, however, Abe told the *News* reporter that his brother and the Levis would be returning to Des Moines in a few days and adamantly denied "his kinsman had any connection with the deal which brought eight members of the White Sox team to grief" and asserted that "Dave will be freed when he comes to trial."¹⁵

On July 18, 1921, opening arguments were made in the Black Sox trial in Chicago with the eight White Sox players and four gamblers, David Zelcer, Ben and Lou Levi, and Carl Zork as defendants. Of the other six gamblers indicted in March, Bill Burns had agreed to testify for the prosecution in return for immunity; Abe Attell managed to escape extradition by claiming he was a victim of identity theft; Hal Chase by a series of legal maneuvers managed to avoid extradition from California; Ben Franklin claimed he was too ill to attend; Sport Sullivan chose to ignore the proceedings; and the mysteri-

ous Rachael Brown's whereabouts were unknown, although given the fact that Dave Zelcer's mother used the same unusual spelling for her first name, one might speculate this could have been a pseudonym used by his younger brother Nathan.

On July 20, Burns identified Zelcer as the mysterious "Bennett," testifying that he had been present at most of the meetings where the fix was arranged and payoffs were made, and had represented himself as a lieutenant of Arnold Rothstein.¹⁶

The following day, Zelcer's attorney Max Luster cross-examined Burns, failing to ruffle him and receiving sarcastic responses to many of his questions. Luster did get Burns to say he was mistaken about seeing Zelcer in New York City one day before the opening of the World Series when it actually was two days before the event. Luster then asked Burns when he first saw Zelcer in Chicago, and Burns replied that "he saw

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him walking down a street a few days ago and recognized him from the way he walked, the manner in which he held his head back and his general appearance."

Luster then closed his cross examination with a statement to the jury that he "would prove that Bennett was a man who did not answer Zelcer's description and that he would prove Zelcer was here in Chicago at the time of the alleged meeting with Burns in New York."¹⁷

On July 22, the prosecution presented its case against Ben and Lou Levi with John O. Seys, Secretary of the Chicago Cubs, as their principal witness. Seys identified the brothers as being among those taking bets on the World Series in the lobby of the Sinton Hotel the night before the first game.

Seys then related how he and Washington Manager Clark Griffith were approached by Lou Levi and Abe Attell, who "were taking turns making bets that Cincinnati would win the first game, giving odds of 6 to 5 and that Cincinnati would win the series." Seys also testified that "Attell told him he was not betting on Cincinnati in the third game as he thought Pitcher Dick Kerr would win for Chicago."

Finally, Seys told how Attell and Levi persuaded he and Griffith to hold the stakes for their bets. Seys stated that he ended up holding bets for the pair in the amount of \$2,250 and that he paid off on some of these in Chicago on the day of the third game.¹⁸

The next day, Zelcer's attorney Max Luster attempted to launch a newspaper blitz against Burns' testimony, claiming he would "present an alibi for his client that will be bullet proof." Luster went on to state that "the identification of Zelcer as the mysterious Mr. Bennett was the weirdest part of Burns'

testimony" and that "we shall have no difficulty of convincing the jury that Mr. Burns is guilty of a misstatement pointing out Mr. Zelcer as 'Bennett' .. , We shall disprove it without question."

Zelcer would not deny that he attended World Series games in Cincinnati and Chicago or that he knew Abe Attell, Luster declared, "but when it comes down to palming around with Hal Chase, the ballplayer, and Arnold Rothstein, gambler, Mr. Burns is exemplifying the art of sustained fiction. He doesn't even know these distinguished gentlemen, neither was Mr. Zelcer in New York either on Sept. 29 or 30, prior to the opening of the world's series games. Mr. Zelcer has a flawless alibi, and many witnesses to back it up."¹⁹

Zelcer's alibi suffered a major blow on July 26 when Billy Maharg testified as the prosecution's final witness. He too identified Zelcer as Bennett and corroborated much of Burns' testimony about him. Maharg also related how on the night of the second game, Zelcer had not wanted to give the players any money before Attell finally relented and gave Burns \$10,000 from a large pile of money under the mattress.

He also testified about a suggestion from Zelcer that "the players throw the fourth game for twenty thousand which would be put up as a bet." After the state rested its case, the defense moved that the charges against the Levis, Zork, Felsch, Weaver, Zelcer and Joe Jackson be dismissed on grounds of insufficient evidence.

The state promptly agreed to drop the case against the Levi brothers, but refused to take such an action for the others on grounds they might be further incriminated by the defense testimony.

The prosecution readily admitted to reporters that Zelcer "was the only one of the gambler defendants to be deeply incriminated by the chain of evidence."²⁰

Later on that same day, Zelcer took the stand in his own behalf. He denied being in New York City at the Ansonia

Hotel on September 28, 1919, claiming that he had been in Chicago that day and had left that night for Cincinnati, arriving on September 29. Returning to Chicago after the first two games, Zelcer claimed he was confined to his hotel for three days due to illness.

His testimony was confirmed by a witness who claimed he had gone to a ballgame with Zelcer in Chicago on the day of the Ansonia Hotel meeting, and by a hotel bookkeeper who testified that he had paid his bill and left town that day. Zelcer also provided the hotel records as evidence, as well as the bills he had paid the hotel for drugs and doctors when he claimed to be sick.

"I don't know Maharg or Burns or any of the defendant ballplayers and never saw Maharg or Burns until they testified," Zelcer declared. "I have known Attell for years, but did not know anything of this alleged World Series deal, and Maharg and Burns have made a big mistake in saying I am the man they knew as Bennett."

On cross examination, the prosecution did get Zelcer to admit that he "had registered himself, Abe Attell, and the two Levis at the Sinton Hotel, Cincinnati, Sept. 30, presenting the register as evidence." Zelcer explained that he "had been moved to another room that day, and had volunteered to take in Attell" when he "could not obtain a room."

He further attempted to explicate himself from this discrepancy in his earlier testimony by presenting a telegram from the Sinton Hotel just received that day stating that he had registered there September 29 and promising "that the register showing this would be sent here if wanted."²¹

On July 29 Assistant State's Attorney Edward Prindiville, as he began to make his final arguments in the case, assailed Zelcer for "making baseball a confidence game." With his voice rising, Prindiville shouted, "And this man

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Zelcer. He has tried to prove an alibi, to prove that he is not the man Bennett who helped Abe Attell run this deal. Yet we prove that Abe Attell had thousands of dollars under the mattresses in his room at the Commercial Hotel. ... And Zelcer, after first saying he knew Attell slightly, finally admits that Attell roomed with him at Cincinnati during the series. He then admits that he has known Attell for years and yet he did not know of this conspiracy or of the \$10,000 transaction in his own room."²²

Prindiville's outburst had little effect on Zelcer. In an article written on August 1, Earl M. Shaub, who was covering the trial for the Universal Press Service, reported that he "is so confident he will be acquitted that he offered to bet \$100 to \$25 on the verdict." Zelcer's confidence was not misplaced because on August 2, much to no one's surprise, the jury returned not-guilty verdicts for the players, Zelcer and Zork. While the players were cheered and photographed in the courtroom and then ended up celebrating in a Chicago restaurant with the members of the jury, Zelcer quickly left Chicago for his home in Des Moines.²³

David Zelcer's notoriety quickly dissipated. He and his mother and brothers continued to reside in their Des Moines home at 1706 Sixth Avenue, and the brothers apparently continued their gambling activities. By the end of 1919, Abe Zelcer had closed his cigar store and pool hall, and according to the 1920 United States Census all four brothers made their living as "commercial travelers" — a term in use at that time for traveling salesmen — and in the case of the Zelcers a convenient cover for engaging in gambling.²⁴

By 1923 Abe Zelcer had retired from the road again, opening a cigar store at 539 Sixth Avenue. It may or

may not have been coincidental that about a year after the Zelcer cigar store reopened, American League President Ban Johnson charged that "Des Moines and Omaha were hotbeds of gamblers whose activities were responsible for much of the crookedness in professional baseball."

In a statement on October 7, 1924, Johnson claimed that one of his detectives, while investigating baseball gambling in Kansas City, found that the problem was not centered there but in Des Moines and Omaha.

Johnson's charges angered Polk County Attorney Seeburger and E. Lee Keyser, one of the owners of the local team, who questioned whether he had any definitive information since he had not passed it on to local authorities. Des Moines Police Chief James Cavender, however, said that "the police department had heard rumors all summer that local gamblers were betting heavily on baseball games, but that it had been impossible to gain evidence enough to convict them."

According to Cavender, there were four cases pending against baseball pools before the Polk County Grand Jury. "This, however, is as far as we were able to go toward curbing baseball gambling, Cavender declared, because "it is an expensive proposition and would take a large fund to put the gamblers out of business. If Ban Johnson or any of the baseball authorities want to furnish us with the necessary money we can do a lot more toward ridding the city of the hotbed of which he speaks."

Omaha team owner Barney Burch added that he "had often heard that there had been gambling going on in Des Moines, Denver, Kansas City, Minneapolis, and Omaha, but thought most of the betting was on big league games."

The furor over Johnson's charges and comments quickly died down, apparently receiving widespread attention only in Des Moines and Omaha, and was ignored by national publications

like *The Sporting News*. Although the Zelcers' names were never uttered in connection with this brief tempest, given their past history, it seems highly likely they were involved.²⁵

While the law never seemed to catch up with the Zelcers, Father Time did. Abe Zelcer died in May 1934, and his mother Rachael passed away soon afterwards. Dave and his younger brothers Lou and Nate continued living in the house on Sixth Avenue for a while, but by 1938, they had sold it and moved into the Hotel Savery, one of Des Moines' finest downtown hotels.

Three years later, Lou Zelcer died. By 1943, the military had taken over the Savery for Women's Army Corps barracks, and Dave and Nate Zelcer moved to the Martin Hotel. David Zelcer died in 1945 and Nate followed him in death two years later.²⁶

The fascinating saga of Dave Zelcer and his participation in the Black Sox scandal is an aspect of Iowa and Des Moines history that has been largely ignored. Part of this may be due to selective amnesia perhaps coming from a sense of shame, but most likely this can be blamed on sheer ignorance of events.

Even at the time events were unfolding in 1919-1921, press coverage was very spotty. In Des Moines, the *News* and the *Capital* provided the most detailed coverage on the local angle of the story while the *Evening Tribune* and the *Register* provided far less, with the latter paper largely ignoring the local aspect until Zelcer and the Levi brothers were indicted in March 1921.

All four papers quickly and quietly let the story drop after the charges against the Levis were dropped and Zelcer won acquittal. Both the *News* and the *Capital* were absorbed by the *Evening Tribune* before the end of the 1920s, and it appears that this paper did no retrospective stories on Zelcer and the Black Sox before it ceased publication in 1982.

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Particularly surprising was the silence of *Register* sports editor Sec Taylor, who wrote nothing about the events of 1919-1921 under his own byline except his October 1919 piece in which he expressed his opinion the Series was not fixed.

Taylor, who remained with the paper until his death in 1965, apparently never commented in his columns about Zelcer and the Levi brothers in relation to the Black Sox.

Notes

1. Bret H. Mandel, *Is This Heaven? The Magic of the Field of Dreams* (Lanham, Md.: Diamond Communications, 2002), p.137.

2. Quoted in David A. Nathan, *Saying It's So: A Cultural History of the Black Sox Scandal* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), p. 67; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, October 9, 1924, p.6.

3. Des Moines City Directory (Des Moines and Detroit: various publishers between 1892 and 1910); Entries for Jacob, Rachael, David and Abram Zelcer in 1880 United State Census, Des Moines Polk County, Iowa, Family History Library Film 1254359 at FamilySearch.org; *Des Moines Evening Tribune*, October 20, 1921, p.1; February 9, 1921, p.1; *Des Moines News*, September 27, 1920, p. 1; September 28, 1920, p.2.

4. Des Moines City Directory (Detroit: R.L. Polk Company, 1911-1916).

5. Ibid. 1917-1919; Martin Donell Kohout, *Hal Chase: The Defiant Life and Turbulent Times of Baseball's Biggest Crook* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland Publishing, 2001), p.245; *News*, March 26, 1921, p.1; March 28, 1921, p.5; *Des Moines Register*, March 27, 1921, pp. 1-2S; July 23, 1921, p.1; Des Moines *Capital*, March 26, 1921, p.1; July 22, 1921, p.1; *Evening Tribune*, July 22, 1921, p.1; *Nonpareil*, July 23, 1921, p.1; *Wichita (Texas) Daily Times*, July 22,

1921, p.1.

6. Eliot Asinof, *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1987), pp. 247, 261; "Others Involved in the Scandal," from <http://www.1919blacksox.com/participants>; Harold Seymour, *Baseball: The Golden Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 310; *Capital*, September 29, 1920, p.1; *News*, September 28, 1920, p.1; *Davenport Democrat and Leader*, September 30, 1920, p.6; W.C. Madden and Patrick J. Stewart, *The Western League: A Baseball History, 1885 through 1999* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Publishers, 2002), pp. 79, 94.

7. Asinof, *Eight Men Out*, pp. 15-22; Des Moines City Directory (Detroit: R.L. Polk Company, 1902-1904); *Register*, March 27, 1921, Sec. 3, p.23; *Capital*, September 29, 1920, p.1; *Sporting News*, November 4, 1920, p.3; Entry on Ben Frankel/Franklin from "Family Trees of Moses Kaganovitch, David Solzman, Ruben Schindler and Isaac Jershfeld (Feldman), ID: 10101 at Ancestry.com.

8. *Register*, March 27, 1921, Sec.3, Page 1-2S; July 19, 1921, July 19, 1921, p.5; *Capital*, March 26, 1921, p.1; *Evening Tribune*, July 27, 1921, p.1; *News*, March 28, 1921, p.1; July 27, 1921, p.1; Asinof, *Eight Men Out*, pp. 261-262.

9. *Register*, July 19, 1921, p.5; July 20, 1921, pp. 1.4; *Evening Tribune*, July 20, 1921, p.1; *Capital*, July 20, 1921, pp. 1,14; September 29, 1920, p.1; *News*, September 28, 1920, p.1; *Nonpareil*, July 23, 1921, p.1; *Daily Times*, July 22, 1921, p.1.

10. *Capital*, October 19, 1919, p.1; July 20, 1921, pp. 1,14; July 22, 1921, p.1; *Register*, October 14, 1919, p.4; July 19, 1921, p.5; July 20, 1921, p.4; *Evening Tribune*, July 21, 1921, pp. 1,2; July 27, 1921, pp. 1,3; *News*, July 27, 1921, pp. 1,8.

11. Asinof, *Eight Men Out*, p. 219; *Capital*, September 29, 1920, p.1; *News*, September 28, 1920, p.1; March 28, 1921, p.1; *Evening Tribune*, September 29, 1920, pp. 1,8; July 22, 1921, p.1.

12. Nathan, *Saying It's So*, pp. 16-17; *Register*, October 14, 1919, p.4.

13. *Evening Tribune*, September 30, 1920, p.1; Nathan, *Saying It's So*, pp. 17-19; *Capital*, September 29, 1920, p.1; *News*, September 28, 1920, p. 1.

14. *Evening Tribune*, September 29, 1920, pp. 1.8; *News*, October 28, 1920, p.1; October 29, 1920, p.1; *Register*, October 29, 1920, p. 1.

15. Asinof, *Eight Men Out*, p. 231; *Evening Tribune*, March 26, 1921, pp. 1,7; *News*, March 26, 1921, p.1; March 28, 1921, p.5; *Register*, March 27, 1921, Sec. 3, pp. 1-2S; *Capital*, March 26, 1921, p.1.

16. *Register*, July 19, 1921, p.5; July 20, 1921, pp.1,4; *Evening Tribune*, July 20, 1921, p.1; *Capital*, July 20, 1921, pp. 1,14.

17. *Register*, July 21, 1921, pp. 1,9; *Evening Tribune*, July 21, 1921, pp. 1,2; *Capital*, July 21, 1921, p.1.

18. *Evening Tribune*, July 22, 1921, p.1; *Nonpareil*, July 23, 1921, p.1; *Daily Times*, July 22, 1921, p.1; *Capital*, July 22, 1921, p.1; *Register*, July 23, 1921, pp.1-2.

19. *Register*, July 24, 1921, p.1.

20. *Evening Tribune*, July 27, 1921, p.1; *Capital*, July 27, 1921, p. 1; *News*, July 27, 1921, pp. 1,8; *Register*, July 27, 1921, pp. 1-2.

21. *Register*, July 28, 1921, pp.1, 14.

22. Ibid., July 30, 1921, pp. 1-2.

23. *Capital*, August 1, 1921, p.1; August 3, 1921, pp.1-2; *Evening Tribune*, August 3, 1921, pp. 1,4; *Register*, August 3, 1921, p.1; *News*, August 3, 1921, p.2.

24. Des Moines City Directory (Detroit: R.L. Polk Company, 1920-1923); Entries for Rachael, David, Abe, Louis, and Nathan Zelcer from Manuscript of Fourteenth Census of the United States 1920-Population, City of Des Moines, Polk County, Iowa, at Ancestry.com.

25. Des Moines City Directory (Detroit: R.L. Polk Company, 1923-1930); *Register*, October 18, 1924, p.1; October 19, 1924, p.1; *Nonpareil*, October 19, 1924, p.6.

26. *Register*, May 14, 1934, p.3; *Evening Tribune*, May 14, 1934, p.5; Des Moines City Directory (Detroit: R.L. Polk Company, 1938-1944); Dates of death from Zelcer family grave markers at Jewish Glendale Cemetery, Des Moines, Iowa.

A GALLERY OF ROGUES

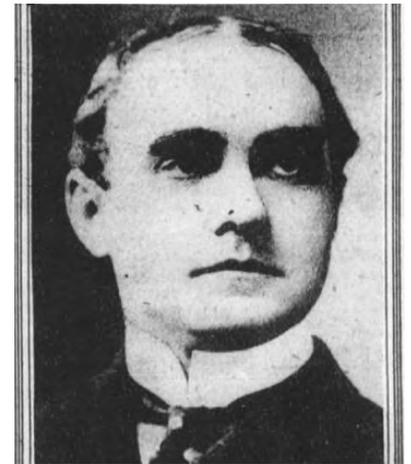
As a rule, many of the figures in the Black Sox Scandal stayed out of the public eye. The players, gamblers, lawyers, judges and trial witnesses rarely talked to the press about the 1919 World Series and they almost never posed for photographs. What we know about their personal lives is often based on a handful of brief profiles or legal transcripts from 1920 or '21. During his research for *Black Sox in the Courtroom*, author Bill Lamb compiled a collection of photographs — some rarely seen before — of most of the figures involved in the legal proceedings. We're pleased to print them here in the Black Sox Scandal committee newsletter. These biographical sketches are drawn from the insightful glossary at the end of Lamb's book.



Abe Attell, featherweight boxing champion turned Rothstein body-guard. He and David Zelcer ("Bennett") backed the Bill Burns fix proposal. (Chicago Daily News)



Arnold Rothstein, "The Big Bankroll," reputed mastermind and chief financier of the fix (UPI)



Joseph "Sport" Sullivan, Boston gambler who served as front man in meetings with players. Indicted by grand jury but did not appear at trial. (Boston Journal)

** This photo has been updated and corrected. The Library of Congress photo commonly ID'd as Sport Sullivan is actually a Brooklyn boxing promoter.*



"Sleepy" Bill Burns, former MLB pitcher and middleman in 1919 World Series fix. Star witness for prosecution at trial. (The Sporting News)



Billy Maharg, Philadelphia boxer and fix middleman. His newspaper interview broke the scandal wide open. (Chicago Daily News)



Hal Chase, the most corrupt ballplayer of all-time. Won bets on the 1919 Series, but his exact role in the fix is uncertain. (HOF Library)



Carl Zork, St. Louis gambler, associate of Abe Attell, Kid Becker and others. Indicted by grand jury but acquitted at trial. (David Pietrusza Collection)

A GALLERY OF ROGUES



Nat Evans, born Nathaniel I. Evens in St. Louis, was a discreet Arnold Rothstein lieutenant who was mostly unconnected to the 1919 World Series fix during his lifetime (1877-1935). Decades later, he was identified as fix operative "Brown" by Rothstein biographer Leo Katcher and *Eight Men Out* author Eliot Asinof. He was in the hotel room where the players were paid. This rare image, from his December 1920 passport application to Cuba, was discovered by committee member Bruce Allardice. (Ancestry.com)

Editor's note: The Nat Evans photo originally published in this newsletter in June 2013 was incorrect. The original photo was an image of George G. Mathews, a Fort Lauderdale newspaper publisher. As Bruce Allardice explains, the photo of the applicant is always attached to the second (reverse) page of a passport application. Thus, the photo that appears on Ancestry.com with Nat Evans's passport application is of the previous applicant in the database, which is Mathews. Evans's real photo, seen at left, can be found on the page following his application. We apologize for the error. Another photo of Evans can be found in the June 2014 committee newsletter, available at SABR.org.



Nate Raymond, West Coast gambler who masterminded the 1919 PCL game-fixing scandal that foreshadowed the Black Sox. He later took part in 1928 Manhattan card game where Arnold Rothstein was killed. (NYPD)



Carl Zork, with fellow St. Louisian Ben Franklin, helped raise money after the White Sox won Game 3 to persuade the players to return to the fix. (John Thorn Collection)



Harry Redmon, St. Louis theater owner who lost heavily on 1919 World Series bets. Informant for Ban Johnson and prosecution witness at trial. (Chicago Tribune)

GRAND JURY WITNESSES



Sam Pass, best man at Ray Schalk's wedding and friend of White Sox players. Lost heavily in wagers on 1919 World Series with Abe Attell. Refused to identify Attell at June 1921 extradition hearing after accepting bribe from attorney William Fallon. (Chicago Tribune)



Henrietta Kelley, in-season landlord for various White Sox players. Reportedly overheard Eddie Cicotte make incriminating statements at her boarding house. Reluctant Grand Jury witness who denied having any relevant knowledge of fix. (Chicago Tribune)



Dr. Raymond Prettyman, Chicago dentist and family friend of Buck Weaver. Posted bond for Weaver following return of original Black Sox indictments. Testified before Grand Jury in October 1920. (Chicago Tribune)



Joe Gedeon, St. Louis Browns infielder, friend of Swede Risberg and Fred McMullin, who won bets on the 1919 World Series based on inside knowledge. Attended a mid-Series meeting in Chicago with gamblers trying to revive the fix. (Chicago Daily News)



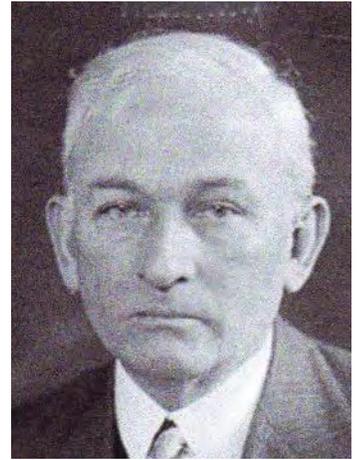
James Crusinberry, sports writer for Chicago Tribune. He authored the influential letter signed by Fred Loomis that kicked off the Cook County Grand Jury investigation in September 1920. (Meet the Sportswriters website)



William Veeck Sr., Chicago Cubs president and former sports writer who publicized fix rumors of Cubs-Phillies game that preceded Grand Jury investigation. Father of Hall of Fame executive Bill Veeck Jr. (Chicago History Museum, CDN Collection)



Bert Collyer, publisher of "Collyer's Eye" trade sheet that broke early stories of the 1919 World Series scandal. Scheduled Grand Jury witness but never called to testify. (Collyer's Eye)



John O. Seys, Chicago Cubs team secretary who testified that he was the stakeholder for 1919 World Series bets placed by Abe Attell and Lou Levi. Prosecution witness at Attell extradition hearings in New York and at Black Sox criminal trial. (Chicago Daily News)

LAW & ORDER: THE PROSECUTORS



Maclay Hoyne, outgoing State's Attorney who left for New York on vacation at outset of Black Sox Grand Jury proceedings in September 1920. Was publicly critical of the Grand Jury from afar, but reinserted himself in the case upon return. Narrowly escaped disbarment in 1932. (Chicago Daily News)



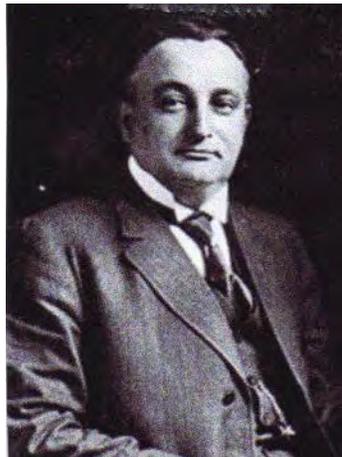
Hartley Replogle, Assistant State's Attorney who, in Hoyne's absence, was lead prosecutor in the initial Grand Jury proceedings in September 1920. Testified as prosecution witness during a mid-trial suppression hearing. (Chicago Tribune)



George Kenney, secretary at State's Attorney's Office under Hoyne and mistrusted by the Assistant State's Attorneys. Reputed to be the thief of the Grand Jury material and transcripts from SAO offices in the fall of 1920. (Chicago Tribune)



Robert E. Crowe, elected as Cook County State's Attorney in November 1920. Faced with a hasty deadline for trial in March 1921, chose to dismiss the original Black Sox indictments and re-present the case to a second Grand Jury. Later famously prosecuted Leopold and Loeb murder trial in 1924. (Wikipedia)



George Gorman, Assistant State's Attorney under Crowe who re-presented the Black Sox case to a new Grand Jury in March 1921 and served as lead prosecutor during the trial. Also served one term as U.S. Congressman, 1913-15. (Chicago Daily News)



John F. Tyrrell, Assistant State's Attorney under Crowe who handled technical and procedural issues during Black Sox trial. Active in Republican Party circles and served as state GOP chairman in 1937. (Chicago Daily News)



George F. Barrett, recently retired Chicago judge who was retained to represent the interests of the American League during the Black Sox trial. His younger brother, Charles, was Ban Johnson's lawyer. (Collyer's Eye)

JUDGES AND JURIES



Charles A. McDonald was presiding judge of Chicago criminal courts and instructed the Grand Jury to investigate game-fixing rumors in fall of 1920. He allowed the public disclosure of Grand Jury testimony, a blatant breach in grand jury law and legal decorum. (Chicago Daily Journal)



Hugo M. Friend presided over the Black Sox criminal trial in 1921. At the time, he was a recently appointed Circuit Court judge handling the first major trial of his long judicial career. He served on Illinois trial and appellate courts for another 45 years. (Chicago Tribune)



William E. Dever, respected Circuit Court judge who put prosecutors in crisis mode in March 1921 when he denied adjournment request and assigned a trial date. SA Robert Crowe responded by dismissing the indictments. Dever served one term as Chicago mayor beginning in 1923. (Wikipedia)



Above: A group photograph of the Cook County Grand Jury that returned the original indictments of the Black Sox and gamblers in October 1920. (Chicago Evening Post)

Right: Henry H. Brigham, American Car Company president who was appointed foreman of the Cook County Grand Jury in the fall of 1920. Later testified on behalf of White Sox defense at Joe Jackson's back-pay lawsuit in 1924. (Chicago Tribune)



Below: Group photograph of the Black Sox trial jury, which returned an acquittal on August 2, 1921. (The Sporting News)

