

The Bad News Bees: Salt Lake City and the 1919 Pacific Coast League Scandal By Larry R. Gerlach

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It was the best and the worst of seasons, 1920. On the upside, the Negro National League founded in February provide top-flight professional competition for those prevented by race from white Organized Baseball and Babe Ruth, in his first season as a New York Yankee, forever changed the game by hitting fifty-four home runs, more than hit collectively by any other team and nearly double the old record (his) of twenty-nine. On the downside, in August Cleveland shortstop Ray Chapman died after being hit in the head by a pitch thrown by Carl Mays of the Yankees and in September the Black Sox scandal rocked the nation as eight Chicago White Sox players were indicted for conspiring with gamblers to lose the 1919 World Series to the Cincinnati Reds.¹

Ruth's slugging and Chapman's fatality were exceptional occurrences, but crooked play on the diamond was nothing new. Since its beginnings in the 1860s, professional baseball had been riddled with "hippodroming" — players taking money from gamblers to influence the outcome of contests. In 1865 two New York Mutuals were exiled for conspiring with gamblers and in 1877 the National League, just one year after its founding, permanently banned four Louisville Grays for "throwing" (deliberately losing) games. By the early twentieth century baseball gambling was endemic. Personal wagering was benign, but dishonest games threatened the integrity of the National Pastime. Players suspected of fixing games were common knowledge, but to avoid negative publicity team officials and league presidents, abetted by sportswriters, ignored or suppressed allegations of crooked play.²

But the Black Sox scandal could not be hushed up as it involved the World Series, a revered autumnal cultural ritual, and resulted in lifetime banishment for some of the game's finest players, most notably Shoeless Joe Jackson. It remains today a staple of American folklore, one of the most frequently cited cultural markers of ethical betrayal, the subject of histories, biographies, and a feature film, John Sayles's *Eight Men Out* (1988).³ The scandal has also found its way into an array of non-baseball literature, most notably F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, wherein Midwestern innocent Nick Calloway encounters a city slicker named Meyer Wolfsheim, "the man who fixed the World Series back in 1919."⁴ A national *cause célèbre*, the Black Sox scandal is one of the most notorious episodes in baseball history, familiar even to non-baseball fans.

Less well known is the contemporaneous Pacific Coast League (PCL) gambling scandal of 1919-1920.⁵ The incident is important not only as a case study of minor league baseball gambling in the early twentieth century, but also because of its chronological relationship to the more famous major league counterpart. The PCL scandal, which antedated the Black Sox affair in terms of exposure and banishment of players, was a principal catalyst in calling national attention to the extent of gambling in Organized Baseball and stimulating the need to combat forcefully its threat to the integrity of the game. And because the PCL scandal focused primarily on members of the Salt Lake Bees for allegedly conspiring with gamblers to throw games

affecting the 1919 league championship, it constitutes a significant chapter in the history of baseball in Salt Lake City.

Professional Baseball in Salt Lake City

Salt Lake's involvement with professional baseball began in 1901, the same year the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues was organized to provide uniform, stable governance for the minor leagues. The debut was inauspicious with a second place finish after only forty-one games in the four-team, Utah based Inter-Mountain League. In mid-season 1903 Salt Lake became a member of the eight team, Class A Pacific National League when the Portland Green Gages moved to Utah's capital on July 2. The Elders, so named as the city was home to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon), did not fare well, finishing fourth, twenty-nine games behind the pennant winner. With the league reduced four teams and Class B classification in 1904, the Elders finished last by 30.5 games. After a four-year hiatus, Salt Lake briefly reappeared in Organized Baseball in 1909 in the Inter-Mountain League, but the second place club relocated to Livingston, Montana, on July 10, just fifteen days before the four-team Class D circuit disbanded. The city's tenure in the Class D Union Association from 1911 to 1914 was successful as the Skyscrapers finished second all four seasons.⁶ Then, on December 17, 1914, Salt Lake City joined the prestigious Pacific Coast League as the only team outside California.

Classified AA, then highest level in the minor leagues, the PCL was regarded until the 1950s as the "third major league" because of the quality of play and geography as the American and National leagues extended no farther west than St. Louis. Promising youngsters, former major leaguers, and career minor leaguers relished the circuit's consistently pleasant weather, agreeable playing schedule (a Tuesday to Sunday series in each city) and substantially longer season than the 154 games in the majors.⁷ The league expanded numerically and territorially in 1919 when the Portland Beavers and Seattle Rainiers joined the San Francisco Seals, Oakland Oaks, Sacramento Senators, Los Angeles Angels, Vernon Tigers and Salt Lake Bees.⁸

Informally dubbed "the Mormons" by the regional and national press, the Salt Lake club in February 1915 was christened the Bees, referencing the beehive as both a religious icon and the official state emblem.⁹ The team enjoyed success in its inaugural season finishing second, thanks to pitcher Claude "Lefty Williams, who led the league in wins (33), winning percentage (.733) and strike outs (294).¹⁰ Finishing third the next two years and half a game out of third in 1918, the Bees were known for their batting prowess, widely attributed to a combination of the relatively thin air in Salt Lake, elevation 4,330 feet, and the short fences of Bonneville Park, although the latter is a disputed point. During the eleven years of Salt Lake's initial tenure in the PCL, 1915-1925, the Bees led the league eight times in batting average and nine times in runs per game and home runs while setting league records for team batting average (.327) in 1923 and 1924, runs per game (7.0) in 1924 and home runs (204) in 1923.¹¹

Unbridled enthusiasm accompanied the onset of the Bees' 1919 campaign. A full season of baseball was at hand after wartime exigencies had cut short the 1918 season on July 14, and under the aggressive leadership of new owner and club president Harry William Lane, whose nickname "Hardrock" derived from his days in mining, manager Eddie Herr had "the best bunch of ball players yet assembled for the local club." Pitching was stronger than ever, and the projections of an explosive offense proved accurate.¹² There were two discordant notes. First, PCL owners finally responded to player complaints of inadequate compensation by lifting salary

limits, but only after most players had signed 1919 contracts.¹³ Player salaries may have been linked to the second concern — the specter of gambling haunting the game.¹⁴

Prompted by growing commentary about “fixed games,” Fielder Jones, recently retired veteran major league player and manager, wrote a widely reprinted pre-season article defending the integrity of baseball. Declaring the game “absolutely square,” he attributed “the lack of scandal” as a reason for its popularity as the national pastime. Jones distinguished between private wagering on games and dishonest play, asserting he had never heard of professional gamblers attempting to fix games because players were “anxious to win” and knew at “the first sign of suspicion” they would “barred forever from playing professional baseball and disgraced for life.” He concluded: “If the honesty of baseball, or the men playing it, were ever assailed publicly it would be a greater menace to the game than all the gambling (which is a bad feature in itself) that has ever been carried on in baseball.”¹⁵ The naivety of this conventional view of baseball gambling would soon be revealed as Jones’s worst fears came to pass in both the major and minor leagues in 1919.

The 1919 PCL Season

For most of the 1919 season Salt Lake waged a close battle for first place with Vernon and Los Angeles, which had finished one-two in 1918. But the Bees faltered badly in late August, falling by September 16 to third place, 6.5 games behind the Tigers and their rival neighbors, the Angels.¹⁶ The final three weeks of the season would decide the pennant winner. Los Angeles and Vernon were scheduled to conclude the season with a seven game series. Prior to the showdown, the Angels had the more favorable schedule, albeit on the road, with seven games against the fourth-place San Francisco and six against last place Seattle, while the Tigers faced a fourteen-game home-and-home series against the Bees. As expected, Los Angeles won eleven games, taking five from the Seals and sweeping the hapless Rainiers. Vernon kept pace by doing much better than anticipated against the Bees.

Optimism ran high as the Bees opened their final home stand of the year against Vernon on September 16. This despite Ralph “Sailor” Stroud, the team’s best pitcher, winner of nine of his last ten starts including six in a row, suddenly bolting the club on September 18 citing irreconcilable differences with management over contract terms for 1920. Salt Lake had won eight of the previous twelve games against the Tigers, and the players insisted they had gotten “all their rotten playing out of their systems.” The Salt Lake press, judging the Bees to have “a nucleus of a pennant winning team” and capable of “playing real baseball when they are so inclined,” thought home team was determined “to leave a nice taste among the local followers of the diamond.”¹⁷ The Bees met expectations by winning the first two contests, but then lost nine of the next eleven games, including the last five away contests.

The Salt Lake press was appalled by the Bees’ poor performance against Vernon in Los Angeles.¹⁸ The *Deseret Evening News*, stressing the unusual number of errors and lack of timely hitting, called it “a miserable exhibition of the diamond game.” The *Salt Lake Telegram* thought the 16-1 shellacking on September 26 “farcical;” and the *Salt Lake Tribune* declared “at times the exhibition of utter lack of effort . . . has been pitiful and always it has been maddening.” After the series, manager Eddie Herr “said a mouthful” admitting he had “the greatest assortment of queer dispositions a manager ever had to deal with” because “there were about four men on his club who would prevent another five of the gamest men in the world from winning a flag in anybody’s league.”¹⁹

Vernon repeated as PCL champions by winning six of the final seven games against Los Angeles. Salt Lake again finished third, finishing its disappointing campaign by unexpectedly losing five of the last six games against fifth-place Oakland, a team reportedly “almost devoid of discipline and cooperative spirit;” several players were not speaking to each other or their manager. Adding insult to injury, San Francisco fans and sports writers charged that Herr had deliberately kept shortstop Ernie Johnson, second baseman Marty Krug and outfielder Emmett Mulvey out of the lineup so the Oaks could edge their cross-bay rival Seals in the final standings.²⁰ The Salt Lake press was disgusted with the team’s listless season-ending performance. The *Herald* thought the Bees played at times like a “Bunch of Sandlotters,” while the *Tribune* looked forward to when “the 1919 Pacific Coast league season will be a memory.”²¹ It was not to be. While the Vernon players split a purse donated by their fans for winning the championship and an additional stipend for defeating St. Paul of the American Association in the Little World Series, three Salt Lake Bees pocketed bonus money of a different sort.²²

First Rumbblings of Scandal

The Pacific Coast League was no stranger to the rampant gambling in professional baseball. Stakes were laid on the outcome of contests, but more widespread were smaller wagers made during games on each pitch – ball or strike, hit or out, walk or strike out. Concerned by the wagering being conducted openly “at all ball parks,” the league board of directors in October 1919 appointed a committee to determine “what measures can be taken to stamp out the evil.” The next day, they elected William H. McCarthy, member of the San Francisco Olympic Club and president of the United Workingmen’s Boot and Shoe Company, as the new league president. In contrast to his predecessor, Allan T. Baum, a *San Francisco Examiner* sports writer who had served as circuit president since 1912, McCarthy agreed to serve full-time in the post. He also promptly announced his uncompromising opposition to gambling. Still, league and club officials, along with the press, downplayed the seriousness of gambling notwithstanding reports that “many” players acknowledged members of a gambling syndicate were “trying to influence every player connected with a Coast league club.”²³

Salt Lake entered the 1920 season with high hopes for securing the city’s first PCL championship. The club sold a record number of box seats as fans eagerly anticipated watching what the *Salt Lake Telegram* called “the classiest aggregation of diamond talent the Salt Lake club has ever hurled into the Pacific Coast league pennant race.” John C. Derks, venerable *Salt Lake Tribune* sports editor concurred, judging the 1920 Bees “the greatest minor league club ever put on a field.” Boasting improved hitting, pitching and defense under the fiery leadership of player-manager Ernie Johnson, the Bees opened the season on April 6 with a 10-6 victory over the Portland Beavers, reeled off ten straight wins in mid-May and claimed first place on June 15.²⁴ A month later the Bees still resided atop league standings, but title prospects would soon be clouded, then destroyed by allegations of crooked play.

Immediately after the 1919 season runner-up Los Angeles claimed Salt Lake had laid down for Vernon during their September away games against the Tigers. Resentment smoldered during the winter and carried over into the 1920 season. Upon arriving in Salt Lake for their first meeting with the league-leading Bees, Angels manager Wade “Red” Killefer accused Ralph Stroud, Salt Lake’s best pitcher with a 12-3 record, of accepting \$500 from Tigers players to quit the club before the September 1919 Vernon series. The accusation clearly bothered Stroud, who went “to the showers with rage and disappointment” after being “battered off the rubber” in both

outings against Los Angeles. He was “badly off” in his first start, losing 14-4, then failed to survive the second inning in a 12-4 defeat.²⁵ Indeed, the entire Salt Lake club appeared shaken, dropping four of six games to the Angels in what the *Salt Lake Tribune* on June 22 called “the poorest exhibition of the national pastime seen in Salt Lake this year.” Stroud asked the league president to silence Killefer, but instead McCarthy reportedly hired a detective to tail the Bees. (A month later gambling revelations prompted Killifer and Angeles players to send a telegram to Stroud apologizing for their “grave injustice” in alleging he had taken a bribe to leave the Bees in 1919.)²⁶

A three-week road trip reinvigorated Stroud and the team. He won the first game, holding Sacramento hitless for six innings in a 6-2 victory. Thanks to an explosive offense the Bees returned home on July 22 still leading the league by half a game. Six Bees were batting over .300 including the league’s top three hitters — Earl Sheely .384, Harl Maggert .373 and Ernie Johnson .359; Bill Rumler’s .346 was sixth. The lone discordant note occurred after the first game of the home stand when second baseman Marty Krug left the club. Krug felt he was “made the goat” when Ernie Johnson criticized him for a managerial decision he made while substituting for the ejected skipper in the recent 10-9 loss to Seattle.²⁷

On July 27 Salt Lake trailed Vernon by half a game at the beginning of what would be a fateful series against the Tigers in Los Angeles. After the Bees dropped the first two games, lead-off batter Harl Maggert was ejected in the first inning of the third contest when he “bitterly disputed” a third strike call. The next day PCL President William McCarthy, recently “panned” for inconsistency in penalizing players who “mixed” with umpires, fined Maggert \$25 and suspended him indefinitely. Whereupon Maggert, claiming the Bees lacked “fighting spirit” and that he was “tired of being the goat for this club,” announced his retirement and promptly left for his home in Berkeley, California. Club officials were stunned by both the penalty and retirement. Business manager John “Jack” Cook filed an appeal with McCarthy asking the suspension and fine be rescinded, and Hardrock Lane, his “fighting blood up,” went to San Francisco to contest personally the seemingly harsh penalty. He also intended to meet with his team, then en route to San Francisco, to “straighten out things” if internal problems were responsible for the second player defection in two weeks. The Salt Lake press, too, was dumbfounded as to Maggert’s precipitous retirement in the midst of a superb season. The Los Angeles press was likewise confused as to why, “for some mysterious reason,” Vernon had suspended Babe Borton, its captain and first baseman.²⁸

A *Salt Lake Tribune* headline on August 4 clarified matters: “SCANDAL ROCKS OUR LEAGUE; MAGGERT RELEASED; BORTON SUSPENDED; CHASE BARRED.” Pursuant to allegations of game fixing, President McCarthy on August 3 had suspended indefinitely Vernon first baseman William Baker “Babe” Borton and banned former major league star Harold “Hal” Chase from all PCL ballparks. That same day Bill Lane unconditionally released Harl Maggert “because suspicions have been aroused and I cannot, in justice to myself or the Salt Lake club, permit him to continue with the club.”²⁹

These disciplinary actions stemmed from reported bribery incidents during the Salt Lake-Vernon series in Los Angeles. During the morning of July 27, the day the series began, Borton went to the Lankershim Hotel, Bees headquarters, and offered pitcher Ralph Stroud \$300 to throw a game. Stroud rejected the bribe, but Harl Maggert subsequently left the hotel with Borton, went to a branch of the National Security bank, and pocketed \$300. Two days later Maggert got himself ejected from the game in the first inning. The next day, July 30, Stroud returned to the mound after being chased after one inning on July 28; he pitched well, but lost 2-

1. After the game, Borton, apparently believing Stroud had changed his mind about the bribe, offered the pitcher \$300: "You lost, and here's your bit." Stroud refused the cash: "I don't know anything about it and I don't want your dirty money." Also on July 28, Hal Chase, widely suspected of collaborating with gamblers during his major league career, approached his long-time friend, Bees hurler Charles "Spider" Baum in the Lankershim lobby "with a proposition to make some easy money." Chase explained that he had "some friends who were willing to bet large sums of money on ball games, provided they had the edge." Baum "indignantly" declined to go along, saying only that teammate Walt Leverenz, the Bees next day's pitcher, usually won: "If that will do your friend any good, you are welcome to the information."³⁰

The bribery attempts confirmed rumors Bees officials had heard about game fixing in Los Angeles. Just prior to the series the betting odds had swung to 3-1 that Vernon would "grab the long end." Concerned owner Bill Lane reportedly hired "a corps" of detectives "to watch various members of the Bees." One of the detectives had tailed Borton and Maggert. Business manager Jack Cook, upon hearing rumors of game fixing after arriving in Los Angeles, instructed Spider Baum to "pretend to be a willing listen to any proposition" and to "take the money if offered." Assuming the fix was in, many Los Angeles "ace-in-the-hole betters" who normally risked no more than \$100 a game, now wagered \$1,500 to \$2,000 per contest. Prominent West Coast gambler Nate Raymond, later be implicated with Borton in 1919 PCL game fixing, evidently acted upon advice that Stroud had rejected the bribe and was burned. He reportedly "lost a particularly large amount" betting on the Bees to win the July 28 game, the one in which their premier pitcher failed to survive the first inning.³¹

Although ballplayers and club officials were notorious for maintaining a code of silence about known or suspected crooked play, the Bees promptly divulged the bribery proposals. Stroud immediately reported Borton's proposal to manager Ernie Johnson, who was already suspicious about Maggert's sudden financial good fortune. Baum, his personal friendship with Chase notwithstanding, likewise told Cook about Chase's proposition. Johnson reported the incidents to Vernon manager Bill Essick, who then advised McCarthy of the bribery attempts, and the suspensions ensued.³²

Upon learning of the attempted bribes, Lane immediately flew to Los Angeles to investigate. Maggert admitted taking the money from Borton, but said it was payment for "a gambling debt incurred a year before" in a "craps" game and that he initially left the hotel with Borton to look at hats, not go to the bank. Lane later went to Oakland where, joined by McCarthy, he repeatedly pressed his star centerfielder for the particulars of the dice game including the names of the participants. But Maggert "sullenly" and "persistently refused" to divulge any information about the game, saying the crapshooters were "businessmen whose names must be protected at all costs." Given the seriousness of the allegation against Maggert and his refusal to be forthcoming, Lane saw no alternative but to unconditionally release him.³³ Salt Lake fans and sports scribes found it hard to believe that the popular player was involved in throwing games but did not question Lane's decision to release him. However, concerns about integrity were raised against Vernon's Edward R. Maier and Bill Essick for refusing to release Borton. The club owner, who wanted to protect his player, and manager, Borton's good friend and former roommate, not only accepted their team captain's dubious contention that the payment to Maggert was for a gambling debt unrelated to baseball, but also dismissed the alleged bribe to Stroud saying "it is Borton's word against Stroud's, and both of us will take Borton's."³⁴

Gambling Allegations Intensify

PCL players, owners and fans were stunned by the allegations against two of the league's best players and a prominent ex-major leaguer. Babe Borton played four uneventful years in the major leagues before moving to the PCL in 1917. An outstanding fielding first baseman, he emerged in 1919 as a solid hitter besides, batting .303 with fourteen home runs. Until suspended, Borton was having the best season of his career, hitting .321 with eleven homers.³⁵ Harl Maggert, who played briefly in two major leaguer seasons, was also enjoying a career-best season in 1920, batting .371 with a twenty-two game hitting streak when suspended.³⁶ "Prince Hal" Chase was a much different case, a bona fide major league star highly regarded as an excellent hitter and superb fielder but also long suspected of conspiring with gamblers to throw games. Unofficially blacklisted from the majors after being released by the New York Giants in February 1920 when an incriminating disclosure connected him with game fixing, Chase returned to his native California, bought a one-third interest in the San Jose club in the semi-professional California Mission League, and played for the team on Sundays. He also regularly attended games at PCL ballparks³⁷

All three men denied any wrongdoing. Maggert immediately sent a telegram to the sports editor of the *Salt Lake Tribune*: "Tell fans I am absolutely innocent." Insisting he had been "unjustly accused," he vowed to "take the case to court if necessary." In a subsequent "open letter" to Salt Lake fans he professed to be "perfectly innocent of the charges," having "never at any time gambled in connection with baseball in any way." He also vowed to sue the Bees and the PCL for "slander and defamation of character," to which Lane replied: "Let him."³⁸ Babe Borton, describing his fielding "of a high order" and his hitting "hard and timely," likewise claimed he had "never gambled on games" and the charges were "a frame-up." Deflecting blame, he accused Stroud of "character assassination" and alleged that Salt Lake manager Ernie Johnson had devised the phony charges to "disrupt" the Vernon team in its battle with the Bees for first place.³⁹ Hal Chase, despite the damning account in Spider Baum's affidavit, "emphatically denied" the "absurd" bribery charge. Chase claimed he only asked Baum, "whom I considered a friend," on behalf of an associate who had been making small bets, "sporting propositions never more than \$10 or \$40," if Coast League games were being "framed." Mission president James Nealon was not persuaded. He immediately barred Chase from the league and forfeited his interest in the San Jose club.⁴⁰

The decisive action against the trio reflected growing concerns about crooked play stemming from a gambling incident earlier that season. On May 7, 1920, Charlie Graham, manager and part-owner of the then league-leading San Francisco Seals, "unconditionally released" the team's best pitchers, Tom Seaton and Luther "Casey" Smith, "for the good of the game." No specific charges were levied against the pair, Graham saying only that "persistent rumors of a most serious nature" about "their practices and their associates" prompted their release because "baseball must be kept above suspicion."⁴¹ (Seaton and Smith reportedly were not throwing games, but used a "code system" to signal gamblers whether a batter would "hit, fan or receive a pass to first."⁴² Both players professed innocence, but the suspicion was sufficient to prevent them signing with other minor and independent league teams.)⁴³

While McCarthy justly praised Graham for releasing the players instead of trading them as was customary in such cases, the banishment hardly assuaged the PCL's problem with gamblers. As McCarthy was well aware, gamblers had long wagered openly in league ballparks, most notably Washington Park in Los Angeles and Recreation Park in San Francisco. In fact, in a section of grandstand behind first base in San Francisco known as "gamblers row," during every

game “wagers of all sizes” totaling “at least” \$5,000 were “freely recorded.” Consequently, the league president ordered “ace boys,” as professional gamblers were then called, from all PCL ballparks. McCarthy understood the shaky legality of denying persons entry to ball games, so decided to set an example by personally banishing three prominent San Francisco gamblers from Recreation Park. One of those expelled, Roy Hurburt, confronted McCarthy on the street and knocked him to the ground with a punch to the mouth. But McCarthy was undeterred in his determination that “one way or the other gambling is going to be stopped.” Anticipating support from club officials and local police, including details of plain-clothed detectives, he predicted that every PCL city “will be clean before many weeks.” At stake, he said, was “either the survival of baseball or gambling.”⁴⁴

Salt Lake City followed suit by finally admitting and addressing the gambling problem. When in October 1919 rumors of a “fixed” World Series began to circulate, the *Deseret Evening News* criticized the “few narrow minded persons of warped mentality who insist that baseball is dishonest,” contending the game was “practically impossible to corrupt.” Less than a year later, the *Salt Lake Telegram* acknowledged “the growing gambling evil in this city. There are numerous places in Salt Lake where hundreds of dollars exchange hands daily over Coast league baseball — almost as openly as soft drinks are sold — yet no effort so far has been made to stop it.”⁴⁵ Although Vernon catcher Al DeVormer reported that a Salt Lake gambler offered him \$500 to throw a game and the allegations against Borton, Maggert and Chase confirmed suspicions that gamblers “tempt players with a month’s salary at a time, and occasionally find one who will listen,” Bees officials, like McCarthy, persisted in viewing the “growing menace” of gambling primarily as wagering during games.⁴⁶ Club president Lane admitted he was “convinced that a big baseball ring has been in operation and that certain players must have been influenced by the gamblers,” yet contended that betting at Bonneville Park had been “practically negligible so far this season.” Nonetheless, the club announced “special precautions,” including keeping an eye on known “leading spirits,” would be taken to prevent gambling in Bonneville grandstands. The Salt Lake press, like counterparts in other league cities, optimistically stressed that McCarthy’s crusade against ballpark gambling, Lane’s immediate release of Maggert, and the Bees’ prompt reporting of the bribery attempts constituted “abundant evidence that baseball keeps faith with the people.” However, the *Telegram*, now cleverly referring to the “Gamboling Bees,” was prescient in thinking “there is probably more behind the affair than has come to light.”⁴⁷

Indeed, within days Babe Borton moved to broaden the extent of the bribery conspiracy. As soon as the allegations against him were made, Borton offered to tell Vernon owner Ed Maier about “the bribery conditions” involving Tiger teammates. Maier initially told him to confess before the entire team, but reconsidered after several players advised that such a meeting would be “unwise, as the accused players” would be “so incensed at Borton’s charges.” Consequently, Maier met with Borton alone. The Tigers president had urged McCarthy to grant Borton a hearing in San Francisco, but the league president refused unless the names of participants in the alleged craps game were divulged. After the meeting, Maier’s concerns were sufficient to invite the league president to interview his erstwhile team captain in Los Angeles.⁴⁸ The PCL gambling scandal was about to blow wide open.

On August 7, 1920, McCarthy traveled to Los Angeles to interrogate Borton. That day it was “whispered about the ballpark” that Vernon players had been called to a meeting at Maier’s house, presumably by the club owner. Borton said the meeting was scheduled for 11:00, but had adjourned before he got there. McCarthy spent most of Saturday morning, August 8, meeting with group that including Maier, Los Angeles president John Powers, Vernon manager Bill

Essick and some Tiger players. He then spent “practically all Sunday closeted with Borton.” Borton admitted guilt, but angered that the Vernon players had secretly agreed to throw him “overboard” was determined that if he were to be punished, he would not “suffer alone.” Upon returning to San Francisco, McCarthy declined to give details of the meeting other than Borton “opened up and told all he knows” in “a complete statement” that implicated Vernon, Salt Lake, Portland and Seattle players in the scandal.” Borton’s allegations confirmed McCarthy’s fear that the task of combating gambling would not be as easy as he had initially thought: “It will require three or four days to clear up and corroborate various assertions that Borton made to me, but I think I can give out my decision by next Wednesday.”⁴⁹

Borton’s confession, made public on August 10, greatly expanded the scope of the bribery scandal. He “repeatedly and emphatically” denied attempting to bribe Stroud, but admitted that, having given Maggert \$200 during Salt Lake’s first visit to Los Angeles in 1920, the \$300 paid on July 27 was the balance of \$500 owed him for throwing games in 1919. Borton explained that Maggert was given cash because he and teammates Bobby Fisher and Clarence Brooks decided that mailing a sizable bank draft might make Mrs. Maggert suspicious. More significantly, Borton provided details about the Salt Lake-Vernon fix attempt. He claimed “just before the close of last season” manager Essick asked if he “could get any of the Salt Lake players to lay down so that we might win he pennant. I told him I would see what could be done.” Then, on the train to Salt Lake in September 1919, “certain members” of the Vernon club agreed to create a bribery pool of \$2,000 by contributing \$100 each from the bonus purse pledged by fans if the Tigers won the championship. Borton said that after the season Essick and Howard Lorenz, the club secretary, gave him money from the fan fund to pay eight players — five current PCL players (three Salt Lake and two Portland) and three others no longer in the league — with currency or bank drafts for helping the Tigers win the pennant by “laying down” against Vernon and “bearing down” against Los Angeles. Borton said he paid Salt Lake pitcher Jean Dale and outfielder Harl Maggert each \$500 and their teammate Bill Rumler \$250. In addition, he said an unidentified Vernon player gave \$350 to Bees’ third baseman Eddie Mulligan and \$100 each to Seattle pitcher Elmer Rieger and four Portland Beavers, pitcher John “Red” Oldham, outfielder Jack Farmer and catchers Del Baker and Art Koehler. Payment was not for any particular game, but generally assisting the Tigers win the title. When apprised of Borton’s allegations, Essick called him “a miserable liar” and finally issued his unconditional release.⁵⁰

When told about the allegations of crooked play, McCarthy vowed: “The scandal which hangs over the head of the Coast League must be cleaned up and cleaned up immediately. The web is tightly woven and it will require only a few days of investigation to convince the league directors that certain players must be dropped.” But then, on August 10, only a single day after his meeting with Borton, the league president, based on a brief, collective interview of Tiger players, apparent discrepancies and contradictions detected in Borton’s statement, and the reported failure of Vernon’s financial records to substantiate claims about postseason bonuses, pronounced the confession “a mass of falsehoods” vindictively created “out of whole cloth,” with intent to “discrediting reputable players and bringing the game into disrepute.” He thus wired Ed Maier: “I can completely vindicate your club.”⁵¹

Still, McCarthy conceded there “may be some truth concealed beneath the mass of lies,” which “will be hard to extricate.” He nonetheless decided to deal personally with the charges instead of fulfilling his pledge to undertake “a rigid investigation” of several Coast League players and to summon a special session of the league directors to discuss the scandal. As early

as August 5 Borton and Maggert individually had requested a “trial” before the league’s board of directors, but McCarthy refused because neither player would identify the participants in the purported craps game.⁵² Critical of the president’s unilateral action and in favor of a board of inquiry, the *Los Angeles Evening Express* charged the allegations against Borton and Maggert “were and are not being properly handled. This is the biggest and most startling scandal baseball has ever faced, and McCarthy should not endeavor to settle it single-handed. It is not a one man’s job and a board of inquiry should have been appointed by the league directors, who should have held a special session immediately after these charges were made.” The paper was not alone in thinking that “it appears that everything is being done to squelch the trouble so as to retain public favor and to have the matter forgotten as soon as possible.”⁵³ While it was commonplace, as *The Sporting News* observed, for “every briber or taker of bribes” to try to lessen guilt by incriminating others, Borton’s implicating most of the Vernon team had an unintended effect. The devastating consequences to league and public morale of even the possibility of an entire team being involved in crooked play unnerved the PCL president and thus effectively precluded further investigation.⁵⁴

The league president was not the only one “surprised and startled” by the magnitude of Borton’s allegations. The disclosures caught owners Judge Walter W. McCredie of Portland and William H. Klepper of Seattle unawares. Although Borton said the work of Baker, Farmer, Oldham and “other members” of the Portland club was particularly “raw” in throwing games to the Tigers toward the end of the season, McCredie said he knew nothing about his players gambling or receiving bribe money and had “no idea who could be involved.” Del Baker and Art Koehler denied taking money from Borton, claiming incorrectly that the Beavers had not played Vernon while the 1919 race was close.⁵⁵ Accepting McCarthy’s assertion that Borton’s charges were “falsehoods,” the Portland club failed to investigate further while the local *Oregon Journal* and *Portland Telegram* essentially stopped printing news about the unfolding scandal. Seattle’s Klepper, angered by McCarthy disclosing possible corruption on the Rainiers prior to notifying him, said he had been monitoring the gambling situation “too closely to believe that any of our players are involved.” Indeed, Klepper maintained the club had not “discovered anything to link any one of our players with the scandal.” McCarthy responded: “You need not worry over the reports . . . of gambling on the Seattle ball club. Your players are not involved so far as I am aware.”⁵⁶ It was reported that McCarthy had evidence to “ban at least three more players” and that he was going to the northwest to interview Portland and Seattle players.⁵⁷ McCarthy never made the trip perhaps because the strong assurances from McCredie and Klepper supported his reluctance to expand the investigation.

In addition to the release of Borton’s confession, the scandal took another dramatic turn on August 10 when McCarthy barred Nathan “Nate” Raymond, “a notorious San Francisco and Seattle tenderloin character,” from all PCL ballparks. In apprising Seattle Rainiers president William H. Klepper of the ban, McCarthy declared: “If half the reports I receive are true, your chief of police should back up his patrol wagon . . . and put some of the so-called gamblers where they belong.” To prove his point, McCarthy soon banned six other Seattle gamblers from the Rainiers’ Dugdale Park.⁵⁸ The reason for the banishment became clear the next day with the release of an August 7 affidavit in which Seattle first baseman Robert “Rod” Murphy recounted an August 4 meeting with Nate Raymond at Seattle’s Savoy Hotel wherein the gambler offered him \$3,000 “with a lot more to come” to throw games. To establish credibility, Raymond boasted he was “the man who put the deal through” in 1919 when “some of the boys of the Salt Lake club sold out to Vernon.” When Murphy asked who was involved in the scheme, Raymond

replied: “Ask Maggert and Borton as to how I treated them in our agreement.” In all, he claimed to have “cleaned up about \$50,000” through fixed games in 1919. Raymond also revealed that he gave Borton \$300 to pay Maggert during the Salt Lake-Vernon series in July 1920 because the Bees outfielder “refused to talk business” about throwing games that season until receiving the balance of the \$1,000 owed for crooked play 1919.⁵⁹ Borton denied being a go-between for Raymond and called Murphy’s charges “ridiculous.” He scoffed: “Was Harl Maggert such an important member of the Salt Lake club last season that he could get \$1,000 from a tinhorn gambler for assuring him that games would go a certain way?”⁶⁰

On August 11 the scandal widened further when Borton not only increased the number of complicit players to twenty-seven by identifying the Tigers allegedly participating in the bribery pool, but also produced tangible evidence of payoffs to two players. Canceled drafts and a supporting statement from A. D. Averill, branch auditor of the Los Angeles Trust & Savings Bank, documented that Borton had sent checks dated October 18, 1919 to Bees outfielder Bill Rumler and pitcher Jean Dale in the amount of \$200 and \$500 respectively. Borton additionally disclosed a letter he had received from Dale dated October 8, 1919 that included mailing addresses for Rumler and Bees infielder Eddie Mulligan. Borton asked sarcastically “if anyone thought this [was] to make sure the three would get their Christmas cards that year.” He also claimed that Tigers pitchers threw “straight fast ones” to Rumler during the 1919 season so that he could beat out the Angels Sam Crawford for the PCL batting title.⁶¹

Another Borton affidavit, printed in the *Los Angeles Evening Express* on August 14, disclosed new conspiracy details. He identified teammate Al DeVormer as the “only one who kicked” about using the fan fund for payoffs and declared that while manager Bill Essick initially said he “wanted to keep out of the whole affair,” his share of the bonus money “came out the same as anyone else’s.” Borton also said that when the bonus money was “cut up” on October 18, second baseman Bobby Fisher, the previously unnamed co-conspirator, was given \$700 or \$750 to pay Baker, Oldham, Koehler and Farmer of Portland and Mulligan of Salt Lake. Borton also said Fisher told him he paid Eddie Mulligan \$350 instead of the promised \$500 because the Little World Series share was “smaller than we thought.” Borton also claimed that Bees manager Ernie Johnson concocted the craps game story as cover for the payoff to Maggert. Borton later admitted that the charge against Johnson was false, that he, Maggert and Fisher had invented the craps story. (Fisher subsequently denied involvement in the plot.)⁶²

The *Los Angeles Evening Herald* on August 16 printed brief, general denials from Essick and ten Tigers about Borton’s allegation, but three of his teammates offered specifics about the bribery attempt. Outfielder Jacob “Stump” Edington confirmed that on the trip to Salt Lake in September 1919 Borton said he would try to get some Bees to “lay down ” Pitcher William “Wheezer” Dell said Borton told him he was going to offer Ralph Stroud \$300 to throw a game. When Dell commented: “Three hundred dollars! Well, that’s more than anybody ever offered me,” Borton replied: “You can get it any time you’ll throw a game.”⁶³ Catcher Al DeVormer, noting he had received only \$152 instead of an expected \$200 from the “fan’s fund” of \$3,965 distributed to Tiger players, said he had not agreed to siphoning \$700 from the fund for one Salt Lake and four Portland players or an additional \$1,100 for other Bees. (Vernon officials claimed the fund was approximately \$2,000 short owing to unfulfilled pledges and delinquent fund checks.)⁶⁴

Meanwhile, Harl Maggert persisted in proclaiming innocence. But Borton’s confession and repeated disclosures left him no choice but to come forth as well. He and his wife met with McCarthy on August 12 initially hoping to clear his name, but ultimately confessing. McCarthy

noted that in admitting guilt, Maggert “said some very startling things” that made the case “more involved than ever and it will call for more work than I had anticipated.” “I hope that this is the beginning of the end of the scandal. If what Maggert says is true I think that the Coast League directors will be in a position to clean up the mess in a short time.”⁶⁵ But despite McCarthy’s professed intention of involving league owners in the investigation and the fact that charges against multiple Beavers begged for closer examination, he pursued neither a director’s meeting nor a broad-based investigation of game fixing allegations. As far as the league president was concerned the scandal spotlight now focused directly on five Salt Lake Bees.

Players in the Scandal Spotlight

Peripherally connected with the scandal was Elmer Jay Rieger, who had played for Vernon and Seattle in 1919, joined the Bees in 1920. Borton identified him as a conspirator while pitching for Seattle, but, curiously, said he gave the pitcher \$100 not for throwing a game, but instead for “bearing down” against Los Angeles. Rieger acknowledged receiving the money in October 1919, the day after the St. Paul series ended in Los Angeles, but explained it was the customary partial share from the Little World Series bonus as he had played for the Tigers earlier that season.⁶⁶ Because the timing of the payment supported his explanation and “bearing down” did not constitute wrongdoing, Rieger was absolved of involvement in the bribery scandal.

Harl Vestin Maggert was the only Bee who admitted culpability in game fixing. Often called “Harley” and nicknamed “Shacker,” he was born in Cromwell, Indiana in 1883. Save for two brief major league stints with the Pittsburgh Pirates (1907) and the Philadelphia Athletics (1912), Maggert was a career minor-leaguer, a veteran of sixteen seasons, eleven in the PCL. Despite the advanced age of thirty-six when he joined the Bees in 1919, the speedy, solid all-around player was an excellent lead-off hitter. In 1919 he batted .274 and tallied a league-leading 127 runs, the fourth time he had led the league in runs scored. During the Bees victories in the first two games of the September 1919 series against Vernon, Maggert hit .333; in the remaining five home games he batted .227, but committed no errors. In six-games against the Tigers in Los Angeles, he hit .167 and committed one error. Maggert was enjoying the best season of his career in 1920, batting .371 with a 22-game hitting streak and 174 hits including 41 doubles when suspended after 115 games. In confessing to President McCarthy on August 12, he offered a lame excuse intended to deflect blame: “Well, I knew the other fellows were getting theirs, so I thought I might as well get mine.”⁶⁷ The other fellows were Eddie Mulligan, Jean Dale, and Bill Rumler.

The least plausible suspect on the Bees roster was third baseman Edward Joseph “Eddie” Mulligan, a fan favorite for his aggressive play, slick fielding and feisty demeanor. Born in St. Louis in 1894, he launched his professional career in 1914 and quickly advanced to the majors playing briefly for the Chicago Cubs 1915-1916. Following discharge from the army, he joined Salt Lake in 1919 as a utility infielder. The light-hitting Mulligan hit .275 for the entire Vernon series, close to his season average (.269), but the fact that he did not play in the final doubleheader of the series was deemed suspicious. (The reason was not disclosed, but it must have been an injury as he also missed the first two games of the next series against Oakland.) On August 16 Mulligan went to San Francisco for a “cross-examining” by McCarthy. Mulligan flatly denied Borton had ever propositioned him and on August 17 McCarthy summarily cleared him of “all charges of irregularities.”⁶⁸ Following two years with the Chicago White Sox (1921-

1922), Mulligan returned to the PCL for several years before embarking on a distinguished career as a minor league executive.⁶⁹

Of the Bees accused of crooked play, Jean Dale was the most suspect. Emmett Eugene Dale, born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1889, played four seasons in the major leagues with the St. Louis Cardinals (1911-1912) and the Cincinnati Reds (1915-1916) before returning to the minor leagues. In the war-shortened 1918 season, he posted a 1.50 ERA with Indianapolis, still the best season mark in the American Association. For the Bees in 1919 he went 13-13 with a 4.48 earned run average.⁷⁰ In the September series against Vernon in Salt Lake, Dale took the mound after the Bees had defeated the Tigers in the first two games. “Walloped quite hard” in a 7-4 loss, he was removed after 4.1 innings having given up all seven runs, four on five hits in the fifth. (The umpire, citing the muddy playing conditions, said Dale “could not put anything on the ball but mud.”) Dale rebounded with a complete game on September 20, but lost again, 6-3. He yielded thirteen hits and, more importantly, with the Tigers leading 2-1 gave up three runs and made a crucial error in the seventh inning. Four days later in Los Angeles he lost again, 6-2, allowing nine hits, hitting a batter, issuing eight bases on balls and walking in four runs. Giving up three crucial runs after the fifth inning, he “couldn’t place the pellet anywhere near the home plate in critical stages,” just “flinging the baseball . . . every which way except over the plate.”⁷¹ Dale did not pitch again in the Vernon series. In his next and final season outing on October 4, he lost 4-1 to Oakland, but hurled a complete game, giving up eight hits but no walks and only one run after the third inning.⁷² His consistently poor pitching and receipt of a sizable \$500 from Borton both suggest the likelihood of involvement in the bribery scheme. Dale made no comment on Borton’s allegation as in 1920 he pitched for the Dallas Submarines of the Class B Texas League, compiling a mediocre 15-18 record but an excellent 2.61 ERA.⁷³

The greatest controversy and uncertainty about gambling participation involved Bill Rumler. Born in Grover, Nebraska, in 1891, William George Rumler broke into professional baseball with Great Bend in the Kansas State League in 1913 and advanced the next year to the American League’s St. Louis Browns. He spent 1915 with Atlanta of the Class A Southern Association and most of 1916 with Little Rock in the same circuit, returning to the Browns for the last part of 1916 and all of 1917. After serving in the army in 1918, Rumler joined the Bees in 1919 and enjoyed his finest season in Organized Baseball. The Bees clean-up hitter led the PCL in batting average (.362) and doubles (42 while his 17 triples and 17 home runs were second best in the league.⁷⁴ In the controversial September series with Vernon, Rumler hit .467 with two home runs in Salt Lake and .333 in the first two games in Vernon before an injury sidelined him for the rest of the series. A mediocre fielder, he committed no errors against the Tigers.⁷⁵ Why then, given his strong performance against Vernon, did Bill Rumler receive a \$200 check from Babe Borton?

There are two explanations for the pay-off, one speculative and the other verifiable. During the Vernon series in Los Angeles, Rumler suffered an injury on September 24, left the next day’s game after one at-bat and did not play in the final three games of the series. Because Borton allegedly offered money to key players to sit out games against the Tigers, there was some suspicion, later proved unjustifiable, that Rumler had intentionally sat out four games. But far more damaging was Rumler’s affidavit of August 11, 1920 admitting that he had accepted Borton’s proposal of a “safety bet” during a trip to Los Angeles in July 1919 — the day of the Jack Dempsey-Jess Willard heavyweight title fight [July 4], he recalled. The two players agreed to “a sporting proposition” wherein Rumler would give Borton \$250 if Vernon took the PCL championship and receive the same amount from Borton if Salt Lake won. It was common

practice at the time for players on pennant-contending teams engage in “safety bets” to ensure some postseason earnings. (PCL clubs did not award player bonuses for winning the championship.) While technically not a wager as no money would exchange hands if neither team won, the agreement still could be construed as betting against one’s own team. After the 1919 season Rumler wrote to Borton requesting payment “as there was a long, hard winter ahead.” But Borton only sent \$200 saying Vernon’s postseason bonus was less than expected. Emphatically denying the payment was for throwing games, Rumler noted if the money were for “anything of a shady or questionable nature,” he would not have left a paper trail by writing a letter to Borton or accepting a bank draft instead of cash. Moreover, Rumler said his teammates knew about the arrangement with Borton, a claim confirmed by an affidavit from catcher Charles A. “Butch” Byler, who “distinctly” recalled Rumler telling a group of Bees about the deal.⁷⁶

Predictably, Rumler received strong, albeit qualified, support in Salt Lake City. The *Salt Lake Telegram* voiced the consensus opinion by suggesting Bees fans would not think the popular player “maliciously a party” to fixing games because of his prompt acknowledgement of a common practice, but would “not take kindly” to his essentially betting against the Bees. Club officials were of a like mind. Owner Bill Lane and business manager Jack Cook accepted Rumler’s “full and convincing explanation” of the “unfortunate” agreement and thus personally absolved him of any wrongdoing. On August 12 the Bees board of directors reviewed the matter and while regretting the “unfortunate fact” that Rumler had been involved with a player who had confessed to bribery, concluded “the evidence presented does not involve the integrity of Player Rumler and exonerates him from bribery or any guilty act.”⁷⁷

The league president was of a different mind. Upon reviewing the Rumler and Byler affidavits along with the assessments of Bees officials, McCarthy promptly “indefinitely suspended” the star outfielder on August 16. Regardless of the veracity of Rumler’s account, the president judged him “guilty of an indiscretion which merits the most severe punishment” because he “has laid himself open to suspicions of a most serious character”—wagering on Vernon to win the pennant implied accepting “bribe money.”⁷⁸ McCarthy equated the safety bet to bribery without any specific allegations of crooked play or an explanation as to how, save for a game-ending misplay or errant at bat, a right fielder could determine the outcome of a ball game.⁷⁹ But presumption and appearances were the operative considerations in a sport increasingly tainted by gambling concerns.

Reaction to the Rumler Suspension

The suspension was “a complete surprise” to Rumler and the Bees. The next day Bill Lane, thinking the penalty excessive for a player guilty of an indiscretion, not bribery, flew to San Francisco to do “a little missionary work” on Rumler’s behalf. The *Salt Lake Telegram* thought the Bees president would “no doubt put up a scrap for the Salt Lake club that will echo around the Golden Gate.” Lane declared, perhaps a bit disingenuously: “I care nothing for Rumler’s value to the Salt Lake club, but I am convinced that he has done nothing crooked, and for that reason I do not want to see his career as a ball player ruined.” He added that even if reinstated Rumler would not be with the Bees in 1921 because his involvement with Borton “ends his usefulness in the Coast League.”⁸⁰ When McCarthy refused to rescind the suspension, Lane announced after returning to Salt Lake: “For the good of baseball I guess I will stop fighting for Rumler. I hate to see the career of the young fellow ruined in this way, but there is no doubt that he had dealings with Borton, and Borton by his own confession is a menace to baseball.”

However, the Bees refused to release the ineligible player so he could seek a position in another league, preferring instead to pay his full season's salary. Manager Ernie Johnson optimistically believed "one of the greatest players in the minor leagues" would eventually "be cleared" to play.⁸¹ But given Lane's statement that Rumler would not be with the Bees in 1921, the club probably retained him in order to profit by eventually selling his contract to a major league team.

Eddie Mulligan's exoneration did not allay resentment of Rumler's suspension. The Salt Lake press found the decision the more objectionable because McCarthy refused to suspend Vernon manager Essick and the Tiger players fingered by Borton. The *Telegram* charged Rumler was a scapegoat, suspended only because San Francisco newspapers pressed McCarthy to do so. The paper also asserted the *Los Angeles Evening Express's* strident demand for Rumler's ouster was designed to hurt Salt Lake's chances against the Tigers and Angels. And Jack Cook, playing on "the well-defined feeling" among Bees fans that some PCL clubs wanted to drop Salt Lake because of travel expenses, fatuously asserted McCarthy's hard line stance was "part of a plot to force us to break off relations" with the league.⁸²

Rumler's case became the more confusing — and suspicious — on August 20 with the release of telegrams between McCarthy and Lane. As soon as Borton's charges were made public on August 10, McCarthy wired Lane, then en route by train from San Francisco to Salt Lake, asking if Rumler, Rieger and Mulligan had taken money. But Rumler's name was not on the telegram Lane received in Winnemucca, Nevada. Consequently, he replied in the negative without naming names after querying only Rieger and Mulligan. Thus McCarthy's negative reaction to Rumler's safety bet admission was compounded by the erroneous belief that the player initially lied when asked about receiving money from Borton and recanted only when confronted with the canceled bank draft. But Rumler had been not been questioned about the incident.⁸³ (The wire had been "doctored" — by whom and why is unknown.)

Controversy about the Scandal Probe

Despite allegations of game fixing against specific players McCarthy, content with making examples of Rumler, Borton and Maggert, eschewed further bribery investigations in favor of addressing the general problem of wagering on PCL games. It was illegal in California to bet on the result of baseball games, but the law was infrequently enforced as the offense was only a misdemeanor. To increase the consequences of gambling, McCarthy, in conjunction with Seals president Charles Strub and San Francisco Police Judge Timothy L. Fitzpatrick, drafted a bill to be introduced to the state legislature in January 1921. The proposed statute would make "betting or bookmaking" on the result or "any play" of a baseball game a felony, the same criminal classification as betting on horse races, punishable by up to five years in the state prison or six months in the county jail.⁸³ Enforcement difficulties aside, the proposal did nothing to alleviate the belief that fixing games was widespread in the league. Del Howard, manager of the Oakland Oaks, remarked during a series in Los Angeles that there was "a considerable feeling" among Vernon fans that many of Borton's allegations were true and that the players should "prove themselves innocent."⁸⁴ Borton, "sick and tired" of being made "the goat," threatened a slander suit against McCarthy for ignoring his allegations against Tiger players.⁸⁵ As the *Los Angeles Evening Express* aptly put it: "It appears that everything is being done to squelch the trouble so as to retain public favor and to have the matter forgotten as soon as possible." To many it seemed McCarthy was determined to focus on the three self-identified players and otherwise let the season run its course.⁸⁶

Initially the gambling revelations scarcely affected the Bees and Tigers as they continued battling for first place. By August 10 Salt Lake, boasting the league's top four hitters, trailed Vernon by only a game and a half.⁸⁷ But while continuing to win, the Bees, having already lost Maggert, began to struggle offensively without Rumler and his .352 batting average. Still only a game behind the Tigers on August 29 despite several one-run losses, it was widely supposed that with Rumler's "famous pokes" the Bees would be in first place.⁸⁸ In light of the tight pennant race, Bill Lane, believing not only that the league's best hitter was innocent, but also that his indefinite suspension was improper, prepared to "declare open war" on McCarthy.

Lane's strategy was to insert Rumler into the Bees line-up. On August 14, two days before his suspension, Rumler "threw out his knee and was carried off the field" after sliding into third base against Sacramento. It was thought the injury might sideline him for the season, but he recovered quickly.⁸⁹ With Rumler now physically ready to play again, Lane announced on August 30 his suspended star would participate in the series against the Angels in Los Angeles beginning the next day. He knew sending Rumler to right field would have serious consequences: either the umpires would forfeit the game due to the ineligible player or Vernon would refuse to play. Having made his point, Lane would remove Rumler in order to allow the game to proceed and then seek a federal court restraining order to suspend the suspension. His contention, endorsed by San Francisco attorney Harry I. Stafford, was that McCarthy had exceeded his authority by banning Rumler "indefinitely." According to the PCL constitution, the president was empowered to suspend players no longer than ten days; only the league's board of directors could expel players for more than two years for betting on ball games. Warned of Lane's plan, McCarthy preemptively imposed "a five-year ban effective immediately" on Rumler, declaring that by wagering on the Vernon club he had violated Section 27 of the league constitution, conduct detrimental to the league. Believing he had thus "outfoxed" the Salt Lake club, McCarthy reportedly "chuckled at his vast cunning in having 'put one over' on Lane."⁹⁰

Initially it was Lane's threatened suit, not McCarthy's unilateral decision, that aroused controversy. A San Francisco sports writer excoriated Lane in the *The Sporting News* for threatening to sue for Rumler's reinstatement. Condemning Lane's "sportsmanship," "Seal Rock" questioned which value Salt Lake "holds in highest esteem — the honesty of baseball or the winning of a scrap of cloth called a pennant." He also criticized the Salt Lake press for referring to an "innocent bet" when "nobody outside Salt Lake seems to have any doubt as to how Rumler should stand in baseball." The *Salt Lake Telegram*, in printing excerpts of the column, noted that *TSN* coupled this "San Francisco viewpoint of the affair" with a defense of Lane. The anonymous *The Sporting News* scribe acknowledged the Bees president was "being roundly panned" for trying to get Rumler back, but argued persons "in the know" understand he "has reason to believe there are a number of players who have been permitted to continue playing against whom evidence has been secured, and he is trying to smoke out President McCarthy and secure action at once against them." The columnist cogently contended McCarthy's position "seems to be to defer that action until the season ends, because it will be so startling the sensation would put a temporary stop to baseball in the Coast league. It is believed that when the season is over President McCarthy will make disclosures that Lane wants made at once, whatever the cost."⁹¹

Subsequently, Walter D. Bratz, influential sports editor of the *Salt Lake Telegram*, joined *The Sporting News* debate with a measured personal assessment of the issues. Refuting the notion that Salt Lake officials and fans "condone baseball crooks" or "value a pennant above the good name of baseball," he argued support for Rumler reflected the "honest conviction the

accused player is not morally guilty.” Bratz admitted that he had initially disagreeing with Lane and club directors, thinking Rumler “equally as guilty as Maggert or, at any rate, that he had indiscreetly, perhaps, placed himself in equally as bad a position.” But after reviewing “all the facts” and talking “with a number of ex-big-leaguers,” including two currently playing in the PCL who “made no bones” about safety bets being common, he changed his mind: “I now believe Rumler did nothing other than what other players have done many times” openly and without penalty. Bratz also argued that because the agreement with Borton was made in early July, well before the ultimate pennant contenders were known, notions of betting against his team or bribery were negated. The problem, thought Bratz, was timing: “The only feature that makes things look bad” was that Rumler received payment from Borton “when the ‘slush fund’ was being passed to Maggert and probably others.”⁹²

With six weeks to go in the season, the Bees were among five teams in “the battle for the bunting,” but then slipped badly due to Rumler’s absence and constant distractions related to the scandal. By mid-month they had fallen to third, and by September 30 had dropped to fifth place. Frustrated by the Bees “unfolding with amazing rapidity” while Vernon moved “merrily” toward the pennant, the *Salt Lake Tribune* sharply criticized McCarthy for summarily suspending Rumler but making “no effort whatever to ascertain the facts of the allegations against eighteen to twenty Vernon Tigers.” The only benefit of his supposedly “vigorous campaign” against gambling, the paper acerbically concluded, was to “effectively put out of business one of the greatest baseball clubs the Coast League ever had.”⁹³

Resolution of the Rumler Controversy

On September 16 Bill Rumler, fearful the five-year suspension was “the equivalent of putting him out of baseball permanently,” announced his intention to sue the PCL for \$50,000 in damages because McCarthy’s “high handed methods” had taken away his “bred and butter.” He reiterated his belief that the agreement with Borton was in “no sense of the word betting,” but instead was a proposition known as “stake saving” which was “done every year in the big leagues and in every other league” without ever causing a player to be suspended. Rumler buttressed his case by pointing out that he had “extraordinary good luck both in fielding and hitting” in the two September 1919 series against the Tigers and had even tried to play when injured contrary to the advice of Los Angeles physician, Dr. Charles Spencer. McCarthy dismissed Rumler’s litigation threat as an attempt to pressure the league’s board of directors into reinstating him: “So far as I am concerned, the Rumler case is closed.”⁹⁴

But the case was far from closed for Bill Lane. Resentful of McCarthy’s autocratic behavior and use of Rumler as his antigambling poster boy, he persisted in seeking a meeting of team owners to discuss the entire issue of PCL gambling. During his initial meeting with McCarthy on August 18, Lane unsuccessfully asked for a special meeting of PCL directors “to hear and determine the truth or falsity of the charges” against Rumler. Then, after the announcement of Rumler’s five-year suspension, Lane and the Bees board of directors again filed a request for a formal league hearing, whereupon McCarthy advised Lane by letter that he would call a special meeting for October 27. That amounted to “a gratuitous insult” for unless reelected to office at the annual directors meeting on October 26, McCarthy would not be league president on October 27.

Now angered by McCarthy’s duplicity and persistent refusal to convene a league meeting, Lane decided to challenge the authority and conduct of the league president. The Salt

Lake board of directors adopted a resolution contending McCarthy's suspension of Rumler for five years was "without authority and without right." Specifically charging he had "willfully and deliberately" ignored Sections 20, 21 and 22 of the league constitution, they asserted that his "assumption of unwarranted authority is not only despotic, but dangerous." Noting McCarthy's refusal to grant Lane's requests for meeting of the PCL directors made in accordance with the league constitution, instead "choosing to arbitrarily settle the matter yourself," the directors declared: "We resent this, and now again formally request of you that a special meeting of league directors be immediately called for the purpose of hearing all the evidence in the Rumler case." A copy of McCarthy's letter to Lane and the Bees' directors' resolution were sent to owners of the other clubs. Portland's Walter McCredie, Seattle's William Klepper, Sacramento's Lewis Moreing and Oakland's J. Cal Ewing promptly supported Salt Lake's request being "fully convinced" the PCL president had "not only violated the letter and spirit of the constitution," but also had assumed "a high and mighty attitude for which he has no warrant whatever."⁹⁵ Given the substantial support for the Salt Lake resolution, McCarthy had no choice but to summon the league directors.

On September 30 the long anticipated meeting convened at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. So convinced that Rumler was a "victim of circumstances and was unjustly punished," Salt Lake directors Lester D. Freed, Frank S. Murphy, George O. Relf and the Reverend Elmer I. Goshen decided to join Lane, Cook and Rumler in personally making "a vigorous protest" against McCarthy. But well before convening, the gathering assumed aspects of an intra-league power struggle. Should the directors override his ruling, McCarthy vowed: "I'll resign. It will mark the end of baseball for me." Vernon, Los Angeles, Oakland and San Francisco, the four wealthiest and most influential franchises, then pledged to support the president. Seals owner Charles H. Sturb even threatened to withdraw his club from the league if Rumler were reinstated. Although Los Angeles president Johnny Powers pledged to back McCarthy, he remained dissatisfied with his failure to investigate the alleged crookedness of Vernon players. Convinced that "last year's plot . . . cheated Los Angeles out of the pennant," Powers favored examining the entire gambling scandal. Perhaps influenced by the convening on September 7 of a Cook County, Illinois, grand jury to investigate suspected game fixing in the major leagues, he proposed bringing Rumler, Borton, Essick, Fisher and other Tiger players before the directors for questioning: "With scandal in the majors ripping baseball wide open, I believe we should take up the charges once more."⁹⁶

The anticipated fireworks fizzled as the directors voted not to discuss the Rumler case or other gambling allegations. The reason, thought the *San Francisco Examiner*, was "just about the nastiest bit of scandal that has ever infected the realm of sports" — namely, the Black Sox Scandal. On September 28, two days before the PCL meeting, eight Chicago White Sox players, including former Bee Claude "Lefty" Williams, were indicted for conspiring with gamblers to throw the 1919 World Series. As the *Examiner* put it, Rumler had no chance "of getting his job back with some eight real stars of the baseball firmament" indicted for fixing games. Even Bill Lane concurred, initially voting with the other owners to uphold Rumler's suspension, but then symbolically switching his vote as the lone dissent.⁹⁷ Bill Rumler remained banished, an example of the fate awaiting PCL players who became involved with gambling.

The Salt Lake delegation went to San Francisco intent upon challenging Rumler's suspension and charging McCarthy with malfeasance in office, but after the Black Sox indictments left without pursuing either issue. They presented the club's resolution criticizing McCarthy, but then declined to challenge the president. Director Freed said the meeting "went

along nicely” and that “there was no friction between any of the clubs.” Moreover, he said McCarthy and the Bees’ directors “met in all friendliness and there were no hard feelings.” The *San Francisco Examiner* thought it “apparent from the outset that the Salt Lakers would be satisfied with hearing just to convince the fans at home that they were on the job and trying to save their favorite slugger.” The failure to press the issue may also have reflected Salt Lake’s increasingly tenuous position in the league. Persistent criticism of the Bees franchise because of weather, altitude, geographical isolation and, especially, the length and expense of train travel may have induced caution. Lane emphatically denied rumors that Salt Lake would bolt the league if Rumler were not reinstated, and the Bees directors in enthusiastically affirmed their pleasure in being a part of the circuit.⁹⁸

As for concerns about league gambling, the PCL directors rejected an open-ended discussion of the subject in favor of appointing a committee consisting of McCarthy and two club owners, Oakland’s Ewing and San Francisco’s Graham, to “thoroughly investigate the Rumler case and incidentally probe the case of every other player in the Coast League who has been under suspicion in the past.”⁹⁹ Rumler’s response was magnanimous: “I am satisfied to abide by the judgment of the directors. All that I ask is a fair and impartial trial. One of these days they will find out I am right. It may take time, but it will come out.” Lane, too, was “well satisfied,” saying: “The directors have done just what I wanted. They appointed a committee to reopen the case and I know that it will be tried on its merits. If they adjudge Rumler guilty I will have done all in my power. I am willing to abide by their decision.” Director George Relf agreed, thinking Rumler’s case was “in safe hands” and that the committee would conduct a thorough investigation. In fact, the committee was a public relations gesture aimed at placating ownership concerns and public opinion. McCarthy reiterated in his closing remarks to the directors that he believed Rumler guilty and would not change his opinion.¹⁰⁰

That the scandal had lingered for two months led to increasing criticism of McCarthy’s failure either to bring closure to the charges and countercharges or substantially alleviate concerns about the extent of gambling in the league. Coincident with the announcement of the league investigatory committee, Clyde A. Bruckman of the *Los Angeles Times*, who had long contended the scandal had been “handled in bush league fashion,” criticized McCarthy for a “breach of faith with the baseball fans.” The charge stemmed from a letter Maggert had sent to Borton that was printed in the *Los Angeles Evening Express* on September 30 and made public by Borton’s attorney on October 3. In the letter Maggert claimed Vernon teammates Bobby Fisher and Chet Chadbourne recently told him that during McCarthy’s investigative trip to Los Angeles in early August, Al DeVormer, Johnny Mitchell and Stump Edington “spilled the beans” about how Tiger players had “framed up” a story to discredit Borton. Maggert further stated that when McCarthy asked DeVormer if he objected to his share of the fan fund being deducted, he replied: “You are right, I did.” Whatever the veracity of Maggert’s claims, the president now faced suspicion that he had both ignored and failed to disclose charges that seemingly validated Borton’s allegations and countered his unilateral absolution of the Vernon team.¹⁰¹ McCarthy ignored the criticism, steadfastly refusing to investigate further any bribery allegations in hopes of getting through the season before the scandal lid blew off.

The tumultuous 1920 PCL season came to an end on October 17. Vernon, unaffected by the scandal save for losing Borton, won its third consecutive championship. Salt Lake, “shattered and disheartened,” faded badly without Maggert and Rumler, the two “mainstays of the club,” who when suspended ranked first (.371) and third (.352) among league batters. The Bees fell to fifth place with a 95-92 record, the franchise’s lowest finish to date. Although curve-baller Ralph

Stroud, 26-13 (.667) was the league's top hurler and Earl Sheely led the league in hitting (.371) and homers (33), it was a bitterly disappointing, frustrating season for a team the *Tribune's* John Derks called "the greatest minor league club ever put on a field."¹⁰²

Legal Proceedings Commence

The season may have ended, but the scandal had not yet run its course. As a *Sporting News* headline proclaimed: "Coast [League] Turns from Diamond to Court."¹⁰³ Resolution of the gambling scandal through legal action had long been contemplated. Following McCarthy's absolution of Tiger players, Borton threatened to go to court with additional evidence about the Vernon bribery "slush fund." On August 16 the league president, because "my jurisdiction is manifestly limited, but the superior court will have power fully, disinterestedly and publicly to investigate," urged Vernon owner Ed Maier to "insist" that Essick and the Tigers fingered by Borton — the parties aggrieved by the allegations — to press Los Angeles County District Attorney Thomas Lee Woolwine to immediately prosecute Borton for criminal libel. He also offered a reward of \$5,000 for "convincing evidence" that Vernon players were complicit in the bribery scheme. Maier turned over McCarthy's proposal to his attorney, Edward F. Wehrle, who set out to gather "all the evidence, written, printed or photographed to see what kind of a case it will make." But after reviewing the records, he decided not to pursue the matter, presumably for want of a sustainable case.¹⁰⁴

For two months legal proceedings had remained a ready but reluctant option. PCL officials dismissed Borton's charges as "a pack of lies" deliberately intended to harm the reputation of players, the Vernon club and the league, but refused to file libel or slander suit against him, a curious failure if they knew his charges were false. Perhaps they simply wanted to avoid the publicity — or possible outcome — associated with legal action. In any event, the accused players bore the burden of initiating court proceedings. On September 1 Borton initiated a \$50,000 libel suit against Bill Essick for calling his charges "a pack of lies."¹⁰⁵ Maggert, Rumler and Lane threatened, but did not institute, suits against McCarthy and the league. To Clyde Bruckman of the *Los Angeles Daily Times*, it was an "injustice" for Borton or other accused players to bear the expense of trying to prove the league's claims wrong: "Why should the Pacific Coast League, with this scandal hanging over its head . . . sit back without taking immediate action and permit an individual which it has barred from its ranks, carry the burden of the investigation?"¹⁰⁶ The answer was evident: McCarthy wanted to avoid the publicity attendant to trial during the playing season.

The indictment of the eight Black Sox on September 28, effectively forced similar action in the PCL. By early October it was clear to all parties — Borton, Maier, Powers and the newly formed PCL investigating committee — that a grand jury would be the best way to "get at the bottom of the entire matter." On October 2, Angels president Johnny Powers, accompanied by Vernon's Ed Maier and PCL attorney Warren I. Williams, conferred with Chief Deputy District Attorney William C. Doran about calling a grand jury. Borton had already repeatedly requested a grand jury inquiry, and on October 4 his attorney, Griffith Jones, again urged DA Woolwine to take action because of McCarthy's failure to disclose Maggert's letter evidenced the league's deliberate suppression of relevant facts about the gambling allegations. The opposing parties joined forces four days later when Jones and Williams jointly asked Doran to probe league "irregularities" during the 1919-1920 seasons. On October 11 Doran promised a "full and

complete” investigation would commence within the week; time was of the essence as the season would soon end and players likely needed to testify would scatter to their homes.¹⁰⁷

On October 15, 1920, a Los Angeles County grand jury was impaneled to investigate gambling activities in the PCL. There were two separate but related aspects to the jury’s probe: 1) Borton’s contention that he and Tiger teammates had pooled money to bribe players to throw games, and 2) the alleged involvement of professional gamblers in game fixing. In his opening statement to the jurors, prosecutor Doran asserted that the PCL had “degenerated into one of the greatest bunko conspiracies ever perpetrated on the Pacific coast,” that “the entire league was honeycombed with graft,” that “buying and selling games was almost an every day occurrence,” that “at least two or three” players on “at least” five of the eight clubs had taken bribes and that “scores of games during the 1919 season were thrown for money.” A *Salt Lake Telegram* headline was apposite: “AS TO ‘CROOKEDNESS,’ IT LOOKS LIKE WE HAD A MAJOR LEAGUE AFFAIR.”¹⁰⁸

Borton, ultimately called upon to testify three times, led off a parade of some fifty witnesses including players, team and league officials, sports writers, gamblers and local business men. For most of the morning he detailed his familiar allegations, adding that he had documentary evidence in the form of three drafts for \$100 paid to unnamed Salt Lake Bees, incriminating letters from unidentified players and three letters from Maggert supporting his account of the bribery scheme. Borton denied any involvement with gamblers, contending his sole objective had been to facilitate Vernon winning the pennant.¹⁰⁹ In subsequent days the testimonies of other witnesses either largely reiterated what already had been aired in the press or denied knowledge of any crookedness in PCL games. (After the “startling denials” by many players Borton had accused of involvement in bribery prompted rumors of perjury “heard freely in the grand jury corridors,” Deputy District Attorney Frank W. Stafford remarked of grand jury hearings generally: “One witness in every three probably perjured himself.”)¹¹⁰ As the proceedings continued, additional pieces of bribery activity came to light. Bees catcher Ed “Tub” Spencer reported in a letter to the grand jury that he had refused a \$1,700 bribe from Borton near the end of the 1919 season; Borton confirmed Spencer’s rebuff, but said the catcher “overrated himself” and had been tendered only \$500. Salt Lake second baseman Marty Krug said he had also been approached.¹¹¹ Three Portland Beavers reported bribery offers. Second baseman Paddy Siglin said Borton had offered him \$100 to stay out of the line-up against the Tigers in 1919. Pitcher John Glasier and right fielder Dick Cox claimed Borton in 1920 offered to tip them off as base runners regarding pick-offs and safe leads. Vernon pitcher William “Wheezer” Dell also extended bribery efforts into the 1920 season, testifying that Harl Maggert offered him \$300 on July 26 to throw a game.¹¹²

Predictably, the Bees quartet — Maggert, Rumler, Mulligan and Dale — was a principal focus of the inquiry. Bill Lane offered to assist by either obtaining depositions from targeted players or paying travel and accommodation expenses for them to testify in person. Harl Maggert, a key witness, was the first Bee to testify. He initially failed to appear, pleading illness, but ultimately took the stand on October 21. During his two-hour testimony, Maggert denied involvement with “a coterie of sure-thing gamblers,” but said he, Dale, Mulligan and Rumler were together when Borton “asked us to let the Tigers win,” promising payment with money pooled by members of the Vernon team.¹¹³

The grand jury initially was disposed not to summon Rumler, Mulligan or Dale and instead base its findings on documentary evidence. But eventually the panel decided to subpoena the trio and Ralph Stroud.¹¹⁴ On October 27 Stroud recounted Borton’s bribe attempt. Mulligan

and Rumler testified on November 2, the former journeying from his home in St. Louis, the latter arriving in a car Lane chartered to fetch him from a hunting trip in central Utah mountains.¹¹⁵ Mulligan denied having any involvement whatsoever with Borton and pointed out that he had exceeded his season's batting average during the Vernon series, even winning a game with a triple. Rumler reiterated what was in his affidavit. Jack Cook later refuted claims that Rumler "sat out" three games against Vernon by introducing a statement from Los Angeles physician Charles H. Spencer, who had examined his hand injury. The "well-known bonesetter" confirmed that Rumler had wanted to play because he was battling Crawford for the battling championship, but the ligaments were "so badly injured that he could not throw a ball or grip a bat."¹¹⁶ Jean Dale did not appear before the grand jury despite Walter Morris, president of the Texas League, directing the Dallas club to pay his travel expenses from his home in St. Louis and threatening to bar him from baseball if he failed to show up. Dale initially said he could not leave town because of some unspecified involvement in the upcoming national presidential election, then demanded \$300 to take the witness stand. He eventually sent a deposition to the grand jury foreman denying involvement in game fixing and claiming Borton's check was payment for a \$500 loan made during the September 1919 Vernon series in Salt Lake. In late November Dale attend the minor league association meeting in Kansas City to present a statement to McCarthy and other PCL moguls, but his profession of innocence "did not carry much weight."¹¹⁷

Despite Borton's repeated insistence that the bribery money had come from Vernon teammates and that he had no involvement with "sure-thing gamblers," it was initially reported the grand jury intended to "whitewash" Tiger players and make professional gamblers Nate Raymond, Sidney Cohn, Benny Rudnick, Max Zimmer and Vic Levy the "goats" responsible for the league's gambling problems.¹¹⁸ Raymond was the key figure. Guest registers obtained by the Vernon club from hotels "up and down the coast" showed he had followed the Tigers during 1920 "up to the time of the Borton exposure" at the end of July in Los Angeles. The itinerary thus seemingly corroborated Raymond's claim of a working relationship with Borton. It is unclear, however, whether Raymond, later associated with Black Sox gambler Arnold Rothstein, was the mastermind of a gambling ring or an independent operator working with Borton to fix games.¹¹⁹

At the end of October, Borton's attorney took the offensive. Griffith Jones challenged the jurors to ask Maier and Essick six questions: "Why was Borton allowed to distribute the Vernon fan fund in place of Manager Bill Essick? Why was no accounting of the fan fund given to players as had been the custom? Why did Al DeVormer complain about the amount he received from the fan fund? What happened to the balance of DeVormer's money out of the 1919 fan fund? Why is it that the facts now disclosed by the grand jury investigation were not disclosed by President McCarthy, Owner E. R. Maier or Manager Essick? Why did Borton have to ask for the grand jury investigation?" The most telling query involved the accounting of the bonus fund. The grand jury acknowledged the fund was short \$2,000, but failed to pursue an accounting.¹²⁰

Ironically, the publicity attendant to the Black Sox indictment and the PCL grand jury investigation turned public and press opinion from outrage over the gambling revelations to optimism that the scandal ultimately would prove beneficial for the game. "The cleanup will not hurt baseball, but help it," proclaimed the *Salt Lake Telegraph*. Detroit Tigers superstar Ty Cobb, stopping in Utah en route to California with his family, agreed saying the game was "clean with the exception of a few who were now being "weeded out" and that the discovery of the "rotteness" in baseball was "the best thing that happened to the game in many years." Similarly

the *Telegram*'s Walter Bratz surmised: "We are cleansing baseball and doing it in such a manner that the republic is regaining its confidence in the game and the men who conduct it." He thought that fans who were initially "heart-sick" over the revelations and vowed never again to attend games, "will change their attitudes before the 1921 season is very many weeks old" and that the game will "rise from the blow to a bigger, cleaner and better sport." The *Telegram* also endeavored to boost morale by joining some 300 newspapers in a nationwide "referendum," a campaign to boost fan support by soliciting letters on how best to curb gambling in the game; the best entry would win \$100.¹²¹

Salt Lake fans were further heartened by published accounts of the grand jury proceedings. The *Telegram* reported "all indications" were that Mulligan "got a clean bill" from the panel and that the jurors "couldn't see anything wrong" with Rumler's explanation of the safety bet. Upon returning to Salt Lake, Jack Cook said Rumler "conclusively proved" that he was innocent of crooked play and was guilty only of using "poor judgment" by entering into an agreement that "in itself was not a bet or a gamble, and involved nothing of a crooked nature." While his conduct was "against the ethics of baseball and is entitled to be justly criticized and properly punished," it could not be construed as betting against his own club. Besides, Cook pointed out, during the July 1920 series in Los Angeles Babe Borton offered bribe money to Maggert and Stroud while Hal Chase approached Spider Baum, but neither one had solicited Rumler. According to *The Sporting News*, even District Attorney Doran thought Rumler should be "absolved" of the taking a bribe.¹²² Events would soon prove such optimism was misplaced.

The Grand Jury Decision

On December 6, 1920, the grand jury concluded nearly two months of proceedings. Four days later the panel returned bills of indictment charging Nate Raymond, Babe Borton, Harl Maggert and Bill Rumler with "criminal conspiracy." The jurors concluded that "together with Raymond" the three accused players "did willfully, feloniously and fraudulently and corruptly conspire" on September 5, 1919, to play "so imperfectly and with such lack of skill" as to "procure the Vernon team to win games" during the subsequent home-and-home series in Salt Lake and Los Angeles. The primary culprits were Maggert and Rumler, who "did purposefully, willfully and corruptly make errors, misplays, fail to bat the ball and by other apparent or not lapses of real skill" enable Vernon to win games and thus the PCL championship. Moreover, by conspiring to enable Tiger players to obtain unjustly the \$3,985 fan bonus purse for winning the pennant, the accused had defrauded the spectators who had paid to see games played with integrity. Similarly defrauded were the Salt Lake and Los Angeles clubs that had paid them to perform to the best of their ability. Under California law, conviction of "criminal conspiracy" was punishable by a maximum of two years in prison, a fine of \$5,000 or both. The indictments were presented to Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Frank R. Willis, who then issued bench warrants for the arrest of the accused, set bail for each at \$1,000 and gave them until December 31 to appear in court and enter a plea.¹²³

An analysis of the grand jury's decision indicates it was based primarily on expediency, unsubstantiated claims, speculation and political bias. Faced with conflicting testimonies and the absence of tangible evidence, the jurors decided to limit indictments to the individuals who had confessed to bribery, Borton and Maggert, or those against whom specific allegations were made, Raymond and Rumler. Hence Jean Dale, who ignored the grand jury subpoena to testify, was not indicted despite his demonstrably poor performances against the Tigers and dubious

explanation for receiving \$500 from Borton. Box scores and games accounts do not substantiate the indictment's description of Maggert and Rumler's performance against Vernon and the jurors' decision mentions no testimony regarding specific instances of suspicious play. Unlike Rumler, who batted .333 with no errors before being injured, Maggert hit a feeble .174 against Vernon in Los Angeles and committed one error, but the entire team performed poorly offensively. Significantly, seven newspapers, three in Los Angeles and four in Salt Lake, made no critical comments about the performance of either Maggert or Rumler or even hinted at crooked play. While the Bees dropped the final double header to the Tigers, the *Salt Lake Herald* thought the team played "a rather nifty article of ball." Perhaps most important, 1919 Bees manager Eddie Herr, who was not called to testify, said he was "the most surprised man in the world" upon learning of the charges against his players. His response was emphatic: "Personally, I saw nothing wrong with their play against Vernon in our last two series of 1919. Furthermore, I heard nothing."¹²⁴

Despite Rod Murphy's affidavit stating that Nate Raymond had admitted colluding with Borton and Maggert in 1919 and prosecutor Doran's assertion that the PCL was "honeycombed with graft" and "scores of games during the 1919 season were thrown for money," the grand jury investigation produced no additional information about the extent of PCL gambling. Raymond's involvement was asserted, but not explained. His role in a purported league-wide gambling ring and the nature of his association with Borton – both critical issues – were not addressed. Since neither Maggert, who was not involved in a safety bet, nor Raymond stood to benefit from the Tigers bonus purse as implied by the indictment, the most basic questions went unanswered. First, if Tiger players did not participate in the bribery scheme, why did Borton alone risk his career by hatching a conspiracy to provide bonus money for Vernon? And second, why would players on other teams risk their reputations and careers by fixing games for payment promised after the season from a fund that might not materialize if the Tigers did not win the pennant? To be sure, on these and other crucial matters, the jurors were dependent upon the information provided by the witnesses called to testify.

It is evident, however, that in some instances the decision was more political than evidentiary. In an apparent sop to Angels owner Johnny Powers, who had pressed for the investigation believing his team had been cheated out of the 1919 championship, the grand jurors asserted that Los Angeles would have won the pennant had Maggert and Rumler "used their best efforts to win baseball games." The speculative hypothesis ignored the fact that Los Angeles entered the season-ending series against Vernon with a 2.5 game lead, but proceeded to blow the flag by losing five of six games to the Tigers. Moreover, the jurors declined to examine possible league-wide bribery as Doran had urged, and instead limited the scope of the investigation as McCarthy had done. And in clearing the Vernon team of involvement in the bribery attempt, they confirmed the league president's unilateral handling of the scandal. Pleased by the decision, McCarthy said he was "more than glad that Bill Essick and the Vernon Club have been exonerated by the Grand Jury" as he had "all long been confident that they were in the clear."¹²⁵ The belief that PCL officials had been determined from the beginning to avoid casting aspersions on an entire team was reinforced by Eddie Maier's testimony concerning Borton's effort on August 5 to expose the scandal and the alleged "frame" by his teammates. Finally, the grand jury's decision not to investigate the shortage in the Vernon fan purse also avoided examining Tiger players on that issue.¹²⁶ The Salt Lake press, perhaps reflecting disillusionment with the entire episode, reported the decision briefly and dispassionately, offering no comments about the Bees players or the larger issue of the game's integrity.

Post-Indictment Developments

Paradoxically, for the accused indictment was the best possible outcome from the grand jury proceedings. A failure to indict would not have allayed suspicions of crooked play, but a jury trial promised closure either through conviction or dismissal. Conviction in a court of law was problematic as it involved more stringent testimony rendered under oath and satisfaction of the highest evidential standard: proof beyond reasonable doubt. As demonstrated by the subsequent jury acquittal of the Black Sox on August 2, 1921, it was virtually impossible to prove collusion to fix games absent incriminating documentary evidence. After all, misplays, lapses in fielding, unsuccessful at-bats are integral parts of the game. That is why Griffith Jones had challenged the jurors: "If Borton has been proven a gambler or connected with gamblers by evidence introduced before the grand jury we want an indictment issued and will welcome a court fight." Harl Maggert, who thought "it's all a big frame-up," that Rumler was "absolutely innocent" and that Jean Dale and Eddie Mulligan should have been indicted, was also delighted with the outcome: "All we ever wanted was a chance to prove our innocence in open court, and we're going to get it now. Borton, working for a movie company in Los Angeles; Maggert, tending to the family coal business in Berkeley; and Rumler at home in Milford, Nebraska, appeared in court and posted bail. Raymond fled across the Canadian border to Vancouver, British Columbia, thus becoming a fugitive.¹²⁷

With the gambling scandal now in the hands of the judiciary, a *Salt Lake Telegram* headline — "QUIET SESSION EXPECTED AT SACRAMENTO" — seemed apt as the PCL directors gathered on December 16 for their annual meeting. Accord marked the first day as the directors adopted a resolution making the off-field conduct of players, managers and other club employees subject to league discipline. But the next day's session was "one of the stormiest" in league history.¹²⁸ Trouble erupted when the directors from Portland, Sacramento, Seattle and Salt Lake raised concerns about a proposal from the four wealthiest clubs to double McCarthy's salary from \$5,000 to \$10,000. "Stunned" by the opposition, McCarthy announced he would not stand for reelection as league president. He then blasted the "peanut magnates" who "cry over spilled milk" for trying to "to make him pay a penalty for his stand in the Rumler case" and declared the league should begin a "clean up among the club owners" as well as gamblers. Taken aback by the president's reaction, the smaller market owners, emphasizing their misgivings were solely financial, promptly concurred in offering McCarthy a three-year term at \$10,000 a year. But McCarthy twice refused re-election on those terms, even rebuffing subsequent efforts by league supporters and a committee of San Francisco civic and business leaders to persuade him to remain as president. In a revealing statement about personality, McCarthy asserted he was "forced to take this drastic step" because "my aims in life always have been to preserve my independence and my manhood."¹²⁹

The fate of the Bees was again an issue. Concerns about the Utah franchise had increased in November 1920 amid rumors that the state legislature might pass a law prohibiting baseball and other "amusements" on Sunday. Enactment of a "Blue Law," which would have brought the Bees both financial ruin and revocation of league membership, never materialized. But the concern was such that the PCL owners came within one vote of authorizing the sale of the club to Vancouver, British Columbia.¹³⁰ Consequently it was speculated prior to the December meeting league directors would drop Salt Lake in favor of either Vancouver or, more likely, geographically proximate Fresno, California.¹³¹ However, no action was taken on the matter as

proposals from the two cities revealed serious weaknesses: distance and funding concerns about Vancouver, inadequate finances and facilities for Fresno.

Latent interclub tensions erupted during the wee hours one morning when Bees business manager Jack Cook and Los Angeles owner Johnny Powers staged a “fistiana” at a gathering of directors in Portland’s Bill Keppler’s room. Fisticuffs began when Powers accused Cook of “four-flushing” in his proposition to sell the Salt Lake franchise to Vancouver. Instead of separating the two disputants, the other directors pushed back tables and chairs, giving the combatants “plenty of opportunity to display their fistic prowess.” Cook led with “a hefty right swing that landed Powers on the floor and jarred his mental machinery.” Powers then decked Cook twice, “knocking him unconscious and producing a black eye.” After the meeting, a frustrated Bill Lane, “tired” of league machinations, threatened “to sellout my interest in the Salt Lake Club and step out. Life is too short to be doing what we are doing at these league meetings.”¹³²

A battle of a different sort occurred in a Los Angeles courtroom on December 21. With the opening of the trial against Borton, Maggert and Rumler scheduled to open the next day in Los Angeles County Superior Court, the lawyers for the accused — Paul W. Schenck for Rumler, Frank Dominguez for Maggert and Griffith Jones representing Borton – interposed a demurrer challenging the legal viability of the charges. During a lengthy, three-hour pretrial argument before Judge Frank R. Willis, the defense attorneys sought a dismissal because of the “legal insufficiency” of the charges presented in the indictment. Basically, the defense contended provisions of the California penal code were not applicable to the game fixing charges against their clients because “it is not a crime to violate a civil contract.” Judge Willis took the motion under advisement, promising to announce his decision on December 24.¹³³

On Christmas Eve Day, before a courtroom gallery jammed with spectators awaiting the decision, Judge Willis, instead of sustaining the demurrer “with leave to amend” thereby allowing modification the indictment, dismissed the four indictments with prejudice because the defects could not be remedied.¹³⁴ In delivering this Christmas present, the court ruled that while the players, in signing contracts with their teams, had entered into an agreement to play baseball to the best of their ability, the failure to do so was “a breach of a civil contract” and thus not “actionable as a criminal cause.” As defense counsel had pointed out, there was nothing in California law that prohibited a ballplayer from conspiring with gamblers to throw baseball games: fixing games was not a criminal offense. The decision, not entirely unexpected given the wording of the criminal conspiracy statute, was correct in a legalistic sense but vastly unpopular with many people. As a San Francisco reporter put it: “A ballplayer can be as crooked as his conscience will permit in California, and the law can't touch him. He even can admit he is a crook and get away with it, so far as the law is concerned.”¹³⁵

If indictment was the best thing the players could have wished for, dismissal was the worst. Judge Willis’ decision resolved controversy in the legal sense, but returned the scandal to status quo ante grand jury in the public mind. Without a court trial, the issue of guilt or innocence remained in doubt. Litigation of the bribery scandal as a matter of civil law would require the unlikely eventuality of either the ball clubs or fans suing for damages. For the players, dismissal was not vindication. Upon learning of the decision, Maggert exclaimed: “You can tell them all I’ve got at least one year more of good baseball in me.” But William McCarthy, still serving as president until contractual issues were resolved, believed the players, untouchable under the law, were still subject to the jurisdiction of baseball where they remained “indicted and convicted in the eyes of the Coast League baseball public.” “If the law cannot punish them,” he

declared, “it remains for baseball to do its share, anyway, and to at least keep them from participating in professional ranks.”¹³⁶

In early January 1921 the Pacific Coast League directors expelled Babe Borton, Harl Maggert and Bill Rumler and expunged their 1920 playing statistics from the official league record.¹³⁷ Dénouement came on January 12 when the National Association of Minor Leagues, the governing body for all minor league teams, barred from Organized Baseball Borton and Maggert, who admitted involvement in game fixing; Jean Dale, who most assuredly threw games; and Bill Rumler, who confessed to making a safety bet. The Salt Lake press briefly noted the banishments without commenting on the conclusion of a long and painful chapter in the city’s baseball history or the personal fate of previously revered ballplayers.¹³⁸

Scandal Aftermath

Babe Borton, Harl Maggert and Jean Dale never played professional baseball again. Borton worked at a series of odd jobs in the movie industry and finally as a process operator for Standard Oil in Los Angeles where he died of lung cancer on July 29, 1954 at age 65. Harl Maggert worked with his father-in-law in the family’s coal business in Berkeley before moving to Fresno to live with his son two years before dying on January 6, 1963, age 80. (His son, Harl Warren Maggert, played professional baseball; an outfielder like his father, he reached the majors for one season with the Boston Braves in 1938.) Jean Dale returned to his hometown, St. Louis, where he died at age 68 of hypotension due to cholecystitis on March 20, 1958.¹³⁹

Bill Rumler, convinced he had been unjustly treated, refused to abandon the diamond. In November 1921 he hired a trio of lawyers who appealed without success for Commissioner Judge Landis to review his case.¹⁴⁰ He played for three years, 1921-1923, in independent leagues in North Dakota, Minnesota and Ohio, then in “outlaw” circuits until reinstated in December 1928. Retained on reserve by Bill Lane, who relocated the Bees to Los Angeles in 1926 as the Hollywood Stars, Rumler returned to the PCL in 1929 after an absence of eight years. At the advanced age of thirty-eight, he hit a career-high .386, third best in the league and the best in franchise history. He also drove in 120 runs and poled a career-high 26 home runs in helping the Stars win the pennant by defeating the San Francisco Missions, formerly the Vernon Tigers. The next year he was hitting .353 with 82 RBIs in 92 games when a severely broken ankle put his career into a tailspin. He continued playing with lower level minor league and barnstorming teams until 1932. Returning to Milford, Nebraska, he served his hometown with distinction as fire chief, town marshal, justice of the peace and police chief until his death on May 26, 1966, at age 75.¹⁴¹ While PCL annals are filled with outstanding hitters who subsequently failed in the majors, Rumler’s suspension as he approached peak performance for what he thought was an innocent, commonplace “safety bet” may have ruined a successful major league career.

As for the PCL, the grand jury investigation spurred its crusade against gambling. In October 1920 Portland owner Walter McCredie drafted a proposal for introduction in the Oregon legislature that for the first time would make “throwing” baseball games a felony. It provided that anyone “who gives, or offers, or attempts to give, any money, thing of value, or consideration of any nature whatever” to a ball player with the intention of having him throw the game would be subject to five years in prison, a \$5,000 fine or both; the same penalties applied to the player. Responding to Judge Willis’s decision, California State Senator Lawrence J. Flaherty of San Francisco on January 12, 1921, introduced a bill making it a felony in California to offer or accept anything of value pertaining to a ball player not using his “best efforts” to win

games. Other states followed suit. The league assigned detectives to all ballparks during the 1921 season to monitor the activities of gamblers and players; on September 4 McCarthy announced that seven gamblers were "forever debarred from admittance" to PCL ball yards. And in a modest but revealing attempt to counter the lure of gamblers, each club agreed in November 1921 to contribute \$2,500 to a \$20,000 purse to be divided annually among players on the first seven teams at season's end.¹⁴² Although the grand jury, despite abundant circumstantial evidence and pervasive suspicion as to extensive gambling and bribery in the PCL, failed to discover specific evidence about fixed games or players involved in crooked play, the publicity attendant to the scandal and the fate of the four banished players probably were the most effective deterrents against future gambling.

Concluding Comments

Baseball historians generally have praised PCL President William H. McCarthy for his leadership during the scandal. But, the forceful banishment of gamblers from ballparks and determined rhetoric aside, his primary concern was minimizing public concerns about the extent of crooked play by "whitewashing" the Vernon team and avoiding a comprehensive investigation during the playing season.¹⁴³ Moreover, to achieve this end, he insisted upon acting unilaterally instead of summoning club directors to assess league gambling, violated the league constitution by indefinitely suspending Bill Rumler, repeatedly refused Salt Lake's legitimate request for a league hearing, failed to follow-up on Babe Borton's allegations against specific players and made "no effort whatever to ascertain the facts of the Vernon conspiracy" notwithstanding a "comparatively easy" investigation of where, when or whether Borton deposited money allegedly collected from teammates.¹⁴⁴ Perhaps his behavior reflected the first-year president's desire to demonstrate his authority to club owners, uncompromising opposition to gambling and unwillingness to heighten, perhaps unnecessarily, public concerns by calling into question the integrity of an entire team.

Be that as it may, the Salt Lake club, not the league president, made the first and most decisive response to the scandal. Bees officials unhesitatingly reported the initial Borton and Chase bribe attempts to league officials, conducted the first investigation of those solicitations, immediately suspended Hal Maggert, promptly probed Rumler's safety bet with Borton and ultimately forced McCarthy to call the special directors meeting that finally appointed a committee charged with investigating league-wide gambling. As an unidentified Salt Lake director put it: "We started the scandal investigation and [then] wielded the axe first when crookedness was uncovered."¹⁴⁵

The Pacific Coast League scandal, which preceded the Black Sox affair in exposing and exiling players, significantly increased national awareness of the pervasiveness of gambling in baseball and established the actions necessary to combat it. *The Sporting News* and the *New York Times* gave extensive national coverage to the PCL's scandal and grand jury proceedings.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, the PCL scandal foreshadowed developments and set precedents for the Black Sox scandal. Just as Judge Willis's dismissal of the PCL player indictments foretold the acquittal of the Black Sox in an Illinois court, the league's subsequent banishment of the quartet presaged Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis' decision to exile the Black Sox on the grounds that court decisions were irrelevant as baseball was a law unto itself.¹⁴⁷ In the end, both the minor league president and the major league commissioner, both recently elected to their positions,

approached their respective scandals with greater concern for public perception and personal ego than for due process and individual rights.

The scandal now over, the 1921 season began a new chapter in Salt Lake City baseball history. There was a new manager, Clifford Cravath, veteran Philadelphia Phillies slugger known familiarly as “Gavvy” and “Cactus.”¹⁴⁸ There was a new a new line-up as only seven members of the 1920 team, none front-line players, returned.¹⁴⁹ John Derks, sports editor of the *Salt Lake Tribune*, counseled: “Much as we deplore the disasters which befell the Bees last year, the hour has now arrived to forget them and to step into another race.”¹⁵⁰ But the team finished seventh in 1921 with a 73-110 record and struggled thereafter until an awesome offence led by Francis “Lefty” O’Doul’s .375 batting average and Tony Lazzeri’s 60 home runs propelled the Bees to second in 1925.¹⁵¹ Despite the best season in team history, Hardrock Lane sought greater revenue by moving the franchise to Los Angeles in 1926. Irony abounded: Salt Lake replaced Vernon, which had relocated to San Francisco; initially to be called “Vernon,” the team was reincarnated as the Hollywood Stars.¹⁵²

The story of the Bad News Bees and the 1919 Pacific Coast League gambling scandal is an important, albeit overlooked, chapter in the history of baseball in Salt Lake City and the nation. For years league officials attempted to ignore or suppress the embarrassing incident. The official PCL record book’s account of 1919-1920 does not mention the scandal, and the league’s initial premier historian concluded a profile of Maggert noting only that he was “with Salt Lake in 1919-1920 when he discontinued playing.”¹⁵³ When the Bees departed for Los Angeles in 1926, Salt Lake newspaper accounts of the city’s tenure in the league did not mention the scandal. When the Utah capital returned to PCL in 1958, Bees fans were told nothing of the events of 1919-1920.¹⁵⁴ Even an extensive retrospective article on Salt Lake’s PCL history celebrating the circuit’s centennial in 2003 ignored the scandal.¹⁵⁵

As an instructive case study of a bygone era when professional baseball confronted forthrightly the gambling epidemic that threatened the integrity of the National Pastime, the PCL trial and turmoil of 1919-1920 deserves a prominent place in historical memory. Despite the accompanying negativity and disillusionment, the contemporaneous PCL and Black Sox scandals forced professional baseball henceforth, from the banishment of major and minor league players in the 1920s to the expulsion of Pete Rose in 1989, to be vigilant about the threat of gambling to the integrity of the game. Conventional wisdom has long held that Babe Ruth’s home run rampage, Judge Landis’s uncompromising punishment, or a combination of both, “saved” the National Pastime. But the experience of Salt Lake City and the PCL points to a more fundamental reason the game flourished after the scandals of 1919-1920. The specter of gambling, bribery, game fixing and banishment of players were soon forgotten with the onset of new seasons: the game itself saved baseball.

¹ For an overview, see Robert C. Cottrell, *Blackball, the Black Sox and the Babe: Baseball's Crucial 1920 Season* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2002).

² See Daniel E. Ginsburg, *The Fix Is In: A History of Baseball Gambling and Game Fixing Scandals* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1995) and William A. Cook, *The Louisville Grays Scandal of 1877: The Taint of Gambling at the Dawn of the National League* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005). See also Sean Deveney, *The Original Curse: Did the Cubs Throw the 1918 World Series to Babe Ruth's Red Sox and Incite the Black Sox Scandal?* (NY: McGraw-Hill, 2009).

For valuable context, including gambling, see Steven A. Reiss, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era*, rev. ed. (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

³ Eliot Asinof, *Eight Men Out: The Black Sox and the 1919 World Series* (NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), the basis for a movie of the same name; Daniel A. Nathan, *Saying It's So: A Cultural History of the Black Sox Scandal* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2005); Gene Carney, *Burying the Black Sox: How Baseball's Cover-Up of the 1919 World Series Fix Almost Succeeded* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2007); Donald Gropman, *Say It Ain't So, Joe!: The True Story of Shoeless Joe Jackson* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979); David L. Fleitz, *Shoeless: The Life and Times of Joe Jackson* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001); Kenneth J. Ratajczak, *The Wrong Man Out* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008) and Irving M. Stein, *The Ginger Kid: The Buck Weaver Story* (Madison: WI: Brown & Benchmark, 1992).

⁴ Wolfsheim represented Arnold Rothstein, New York City gambler who was the principal in the fix. See David Pietrusza, *Rothstein: The Life, Times, and Murder of the Criminal Genius Who Fixed the 1919 World Series* (New York: Basic Books, 2004). For the scandal in literature, see Ivan Kahane, "Touching All the Bases: An Examination of the 1919 Black Sox Scandal Through Baseball Fiction" (M.A. thesis, San Francisco State University, 1990).

⁵ For an overview based on biographical portraits of the key figures in the PCL scandal see Bob Lemke's column, "The Bleacher Bum," in the *Sports Collectors Digest*, August 27, 50-52; September 3, 110-111; September 10, 50-52; and September 17, 100-103. See also *The Reach Official American League Guide 1921* (Philadelphia: A. S. Reach, 1921), 195-196; Ginsburg, *The Fix Is In*, 260-272 and R. Scott Mackey, *Barbary Baseball: The Pacific Coast League of the 1920s* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1995), 5-14. Lemke's and Mackey's work is undocumented; Ginsburg's is drawn from the *Los Angeles Daily Times*.

⁶ The Inter-Mountain League included Salt Lake City, Ogden, Park City and Lagoon amusement park. The 1913 team finished four games out of first place but boasted the leagues' dominant players: Frank Huelsman led in all offensive categories (batting average .423, runs 123, hits 200, RBI 126 and homers 22), while pitcher Amos Morgan, with a 26-10 record, led in wins and winning percentage (.722). For Salt Lake's seasonal standings and player statistics, 1901-1914, see Lloyd Johnson and Miles Wolff, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball*, 2nd edition. (Durham, NC: Baseball America, 1997), 127, 137, 141, 165, 179, 185, 193, and 198.

⁷ PCL schedules were not static. Excluding the war-shortened 1918 season, teams played 181 to 211 games from 1915 to 1921. Dennis Snelling, *The Pacific Coast League: A Statistical History, 1903-1957* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1995), 324.

⁸ Bill O'Neal, *The Pacific Coast League, 1903-1988* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1990), 28-29, 230; Mackey, *Barbary Baseball*; Dick Dobbins, *The Grand Minor League: An Oral History of the Old Pacific Coast League* (Emeryville, CA: Woodford Press, 1999); Paul Zingg and Mark Medeiros, *Runs, Hits, and an Era: The Pacific Coast League, 1903-1958* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Dick Dobbins and Jon Twichell, *Nuggets on the Diamond: Professional Baseball in the Bay Area from the Gold Rush to the Present* (San Francisco: Woodford Press, 1994); W. R. Schroeder, *The Pacific Coast League from 1903 to 1940* (Los Angeles: Helms Foundation, 1941); and Fred W. Lange, *History of Baseball in California and Pacific Coast Leagues, 1847-1938: Memories and Musings of An*

Old Time Baseball Player (Oakland: n.p., 1938).

⁹ The name “Bees” was chosen from suggestions offered by the public. *Salt Lake Telegram*, February 5, 1915. “Deseret,” the *Book of Mormon* term for “honeybee,” was the name of the provisional state established by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon settlement in Utah. The beehive, the mark of Utah Territory, became the state symbol upon statehood in 1896. Allan Kent Powell, ed., *Utah History Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 18-139, 603. In March 1915 the Salt Lake board of directors asked league newspapers not call the team “the Mormons” because it “is not altogether pleasing to a part of our citizenship, and not at all beneficial to Salt Lake City” given the efforts that had been made “toward forgetting any differences between Mormon, Jew and Gentile.” The *San Francisco Bulletin* responded: “Far be it from the Bulletin to say that someone has ‘put one over’ on the Salt Lakers, but one cannot help thinking that ‘The Bees’ is decidedly suggestive of ‘The Beehive House,’ [Brigham Young’s home] which is just as decidedly suggestive of Mormonism.” *Salt Lake Tribune*, Mar. 28, 1915.

¹⁰ Williams posted a 33-12 record and a 2.84 ERA in an astonishing 418 innings and 36 complete games in 65 starts. Small in stature at 5’ 9” and 160 pounds, he had a devastating curve ball. He played for the Detroit Tigers in 1913-1914 and Chicago White Sox in 1916; the Black Sox scandal ended his career in 1921. Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 31, 347-348, 350; John Thorn, et al., eds., *Total Baseball: The Official Encyclopedia of Major League Baseball*, 7th ed. (Kingston, NY: York: Total Sports, 2001), 1826-1827.

¹¹ Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 377, 379-380. The distance to the twenty-foot high outfield fence was 308 feet in left, 408 in center, and 319 in right. These exceeded the dimensions of the Portland and San Francisco ballparks and reasonably approximated those of several others. Altitude may have been the more important factor. See “Bonneville Park, SLC” in Larry Zuckerman, *Ballparks of the PCL* (San Diego: Baseball Press Books, 2001).

¹² *Deseret* (Salt Lake City) *Evening News*, Mar. 31, 1919. The oldest of Salt Lake City's four daily newspapers is hereafter cited as *Deseret Evening News*. For Lane, see his Pacific Coast League Hall of Fame entry at

http://web.minorleaguebaseball.com/about/hof.jsp?pid=lane_b&sid=1112. The Bees led the league in scoring, averaging five runs per game. Bill Rumler's batting average (.362) and slugging percentage (.702), Earl Sheely's 28 homers and Harl Maggert's 127 runs led the league. *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 11, 1919; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 12, 1919.

¹³ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Mar. 31, 1919. Data on major and minor league player salaries are scarce prior to World War II. I have not found information on PCL salaries circa 1920, although Portland in 1922 reportedly paid Jim Thorpe \$1,000 a month, a sum considerably above the norm. There was no compensation ceiling on Class AA circuits like the PCL, but in January 1921 the National Association of Minor Leagues set a \$4,250 limit for Class A players. The average major league salary in 1915 was approximately \$7,300. For comparison, in 1920 Chicago bricklayers, painters, plumbers and stonecutters earned about \$2,860 a year. *Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 12, 1921; Paul Andresen and Kip Carlson, *The Portland Beavers* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 21; John Helyar, *Lords of the Realm: The Real History of Baseball* (New York: Villard, 1994), 6; "Compensation from before World War I" in *Compensation and Working Conditions* (Fall 2001) <http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cm20030124ar03p1.htm#8>.

¹⁴ The role of disproportionately low salaries in the Black Sox scandal is a matter of controversy. Various references to Chicago owner Charles Comiskey's purported penuriousness are summarized in Nathan, *Saying It's So*, 100, 107-108, 125-126, 130, 144, and 202.

¹⁵ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Apr. 6, 1919. For Jones' career, see *Total Baseball*, 985 and 2464; Paul Andresen, "Fielder Allison Jones," in David Jones, ed., *Baseball Stars of the American League* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2006), 480-482.

¹⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 16, 1919.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 10 and 19, 1919; *Deseret Evening News*, Sept. 15-16 and 19, 1919; *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, Sept. 16-17 and Oct. 1, 1919

¹⁸ The Tigers played most of their games at Washington Park, the Angels' home field, because it was much larger than Maier Park in Vernon.

¹⁹ *Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 27, 1919; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Sept. 27 and 29, 1919.

²⁰ *Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 1, 1919; *San Francisco Examiner* and *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, Oct. 5, 1919; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 5-6, 1919. It was later revealed that Johnson had a leg injury while Krug and Mulvey refused to play because management declined to provide travel expenses home after the season. The Oaks finished ahead of the Seals by .001 percentage point, .473 to .472. Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 324.

²¹ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 28, 1919; *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, Oct. 7, 1919.

²² *The Sporting News*, Oct. 23, 1919. It was suggested prior to the season that Salt Lake fans follow the lead of Los Angeles and Vernon supporters by pledging \$10,000 as a bonus should the Bees win the pennant. *Salt Lake Telegram*, Apr. 8, 1919.

²³ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 25-26, 29 and Nov. 11, 1919; *ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1920. See also Thomas F. Graham, "Putting Over the Next Big League," *Sunset: The Pacific Magazine*, vol. 33 (1914): 275.

²⁴ *Deseret Evening News*, Apr. 7, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Apr. 11, 1920; *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, May 20 and June 15, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Apr. 7, 1920 and Apr. 3, 1921.

²⁵ *Salt Lake Telegram* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 16, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, June 21, 1920.

Harry Grayson provided a detailed account of the incident in the *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 27, 1920.

²⁶ Johnson later explained that Stroud had been discussing leaving the team for two weeks before Vernon arrived in town. *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, Aug. 9, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 13, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 14, 1920; *Los Angeles*

Evening Express, Aug. 27, 1920.

²⁷ *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 26 and July 22-23, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, July 23, 1920.

²⁸ *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 30-31 and Aug. 1-3, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, July 31, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, July 31 and Aug. 1-3, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 3, 1920.

²⁹ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 4, 1920.

³⁰ *Salt Lake Telegram*, July 29 and Aug. 4, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 4, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 3-4 and 8, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 20, 1920.

³¹ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 10, 192; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 10 and 12, 1920; *The Sporting News*, Sept. 2, 1920.

³² *Salt Lake Telegram*, July 29 and Aug. 4, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 4, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 3-4 and 8, 1920.

³³ *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 4 and 7, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 5, 1920.

³⁴ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 5-6, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 6, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 7, 1920.

³⁵ William Baker Borton, born in Marion, Illinois, in 1888, began his professional baseball career in 1910 with Ottumwa, Iowa. He played four years in the major leagues, with the Chicago White Sox (1912-1913), New York Yankees (1913), St. Louis Terriers of the Federal League (1915 and the St. Louis Browns (1916). *Total Baseball*, 620; Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 30, 39, 42, 167-168; Lemke, "Borton & the Pacific Coast League Scandal," *Minor League History Journal*, vol. 3 (Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1994): 37-44.

³⁶ Maggert played three games with the Pittsburg Pirates in 1907 and briefly with the Philadelphia A's in 1912. *Total Baseball*, 698; Lange, *History of Baseball*, 182-183; Bob Lemke, "Caught red-handed taking bribe money," *Sports Collectors Digest*, Sept. 10, 1993, 50-52.

³⁷ Born on February 13, 1883, Harold Homer "Hal" Chase had a peripatetic, fifteen-year major league career in the American, Federal and National leagues. That he was regarded as the finest fielder in

baseball despite a below average .979 fielding percentage suggests deliberate miscues. *Total Baseball*, 670-671; Martin Kohout, *Hal Chase: The Defiant Life and Turbulent Times of Baseball's Biggest Crook* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland, 2001) and Don Dewey and Nick Acocella, *The Black Prince of Baseball: Hal Chase and the Mythology of the Game* (Toronto: SportClassic Books, 2004).

³⁸ Maggert's telegram continued; "Will fight charges soon as possible. Does my record look like throwing games? Have never accepted money at any time on baseball. Can prove that when time comes. My lawyer will proceed. Letter for publication on way." *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 4-6, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 6, 1920.

³⁹ *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, August 4, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 4-5, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram* and *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 5, 1920.

⁴⁰ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 4 and 9, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, *Salt Lake Tribune*, and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 4-5, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 7-8, 1920.

⁴¹ *San Francisco Chronicle* and *San Francisco Examiner*, May 8, 1920. Knuckleballer Thomas Gordon Seaton had a 94-64 record with a 3.14 ERA during six major league seasons with the Philadelphia Phillies 1912-1913, the Federal League's Brooklyn Tip-Tops 1914-1915 and Newark Pepper 1915, and the Chicago Cubs 1916-1917. For the Seals in 1919 his record was 25-16, ERA. 2.84, Smith's was 17-19, ERA 3.57. *Total Baseball*, 1744; Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 40, 290.

⁴² *Salt Lake Telegram*, May 14, 1920.

⁴³ *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, May 21, 1920. Seaton tried to join Smithfield in Utah's Cache Valley League. For various other failed attempts, see Ginsburg, *The Fix Is In*, 260-263.

⁴⁴ *San Francisco Chronicle* and *San Francisco Examiner*, May 10-12, 1920.

⁴⁵ *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 22, 1919; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 4, 1920.

⁴⁶ For reports of actions in various cities around the country, see the *New York Times* May 18, 10 and 25-30, 1920.

⁴⁷ *Salt Lake Telegram*, May 13, 1920; *The Sporting News*, May 20, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 4-5, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 5 and 9, 1920.

⁴⁸ *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, Aug. 6-7, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 21, 1920.

⁴⁹ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 7-9 and 11, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 9-10 and 12, 1920; *Deseret Evening News and Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 10, 1920.

⁵⁰ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 10-11, 1920; *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 11 and 15-16, 1920. Brooks later denied the allegation, but knew about the payoff. *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 19, 1920.

⁵¹ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 11, 1920

⁵² *San Francisco Chronicle*, Aug. 4, 1920; *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 5-6, 1920.

⁵³ *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 8-10, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 9, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 9-10, 1920; and *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 11, 1920.

⁵⁴ *The Sporting News*, Aug. 19, 1920.

⁵⁵ *Oregon (Portland) Journal and Portland Telegram*, Aug. 9, 1920; *Seattle Daily Times*, Aug. 11, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner and Salt Lake Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 17, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 19, 1920. The Beavers and Tigers played in Portland Aug. 19-24 and in Los Angeles Sept. 9-14, the latter series just prior to Vernon playing in Salt Lake. See the 1919 schedule, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Apr. 6, 1919.

⁵⁶ *Oregon Journal and Portland Telegram*, Aug. 11, 1920; *Seattle Daily Times*, Aug. 9 and 11-12, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 10, 1920.

⁵⁷ *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, August 10, 1920.

⁵⁸ *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Aug. 8 and 12, 1920. Also called "Nigger Nate," Raymond was not an African American.

⁵⁹ *San Francisco Examiner, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, and Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 12, 1920. Murphy reported the bribe attempt to club president Klepper, who in conjunction with Seattle police devised a plan to apprehend Raymond in the act of finalizing the offer; the scheme failed when Raymond,

perhaps tipped-off, failed to show up as arranged.

⁶⁰ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 12, 1920. The *Express* printed Murphy's affidavit in full on Oct. 22, 1920.

⁶¹ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, *Los Angeles Evening Express*, *San Francisco Examiner* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 12, 1920. The sequential numbers on the endorsed checks, 5248 and 5249, substantiate that they were sent simultaneously to Rumler and Dale. Borton also claimed to have a letter from Rumler during the Bees season-ending series against Oakland expressing anxiety about whether he or Crawford would win the batting title. Such a sentiment was perfectly natural and did not support Borton's implication of collusion, which is not supported by box scores did not support an intimation of collusion, which is not supported by box scores of Vernon-Salt Lake games. Besides, Oakland pitchers would have had nothing to do with a plot to assist Rumler best Crawford. Rumler hit .414 against Oaks hurlers in the final week of the season, while Crawford went 7 or 21 (.333) in his season-ending series against Vernon. Consequently, the Bee edged the Angel .362 to .360 for the batting crown. Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 39.

⁶² *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 14 and Oct. 19, 1920. The affidavit was reprinted in the *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 15, 1920.

⁶³ Essick later said he had been told that Borton had approached an unidentified Vernon pitcher, probably Dell, about making \$300 for throwing a game and telling him "just how to do it." *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 12, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Deseret Evening News* and *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 11, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 17, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 21, 1920. Other Tigers named in the "pennant-buying plot" were manager Bill Essick, Bobby Meusel (then with the New York Yankees), Al DeVormer, Clarence Brooks, John "Scotty" Alcock, Bobby Fisher, Johnny Mitchell, Clyde Beck, Hugh "Bunny" High, Jacob "Stump" Edington, Tommy Long, Sam Ross, Rex Dawson, Art Fromme, Willie Mitchell, Joseph "Happy" Finnerin, William "Wheezer" Dell, Byron "Duke" Houck, and Chet Chadbourne.

⁶⁴ During grand jury proceedings in the fall of 1920 it was established that in March 1919 Los Angeles fans contributed \$3,965 to a pool to be shared by whichever team, the Tigers or Angels, won the pennant. *San Francisco Examiner*, Dec. 11, 1920.

⁶⁵ *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 13, 1920.

⁶⁶ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 18, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 17, 1920. Rieger, who at age 21 pitched briefly for the St. Louis Cardinals in 1910, was a sixteen-year career minor leaguer. In 1919 he posted a combined 14-16 record with Vernon and Seattle, but had a fine 2.67 ERA. Rieger pitched for the Bees in 1921 and 1922, finishing his career with Vernon in 1923. *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 19, 1920; *Total Baseball*, 1715; Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 41, 43, 47, 49, 53.

⁶⁷ *Total Baseball*, 698; Lloyd Johnson, ed., *The Minor League Register* (Durham, NC: Baseball America., 1994), 187; Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 39, 41; John E. Spalding, *Pacific Coast League Stars*, vol. I (Manhattan, KS: Ag Press, 1994 and Bob Lemke's, "Caught red-handed taking bribe money," *Sports Collectors Digest*, Sept. 10, 1993, 50-52 and "Borton & the Pacific Coast League Scandal," 37-44.

⁶⁸ *Total Baseball*, 1122; Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 39, 43; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 14, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, Aug. 16-17, 1920 and *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 18, 1920.

⁶⁹ After two years in Chicago, Mulligan returned in 1923 to the Pacific Coast League where, save for a brief appearance with the Pittsburg Pirates in 1928, he remained until 1938; playing for a record eight PCL teams, Mulligan was elected to the PCL Hall of Fame. Mulligan subsequently served as part owner and general manager of Salt Lake's entry in the Class C Pioneer League, owner of the PCL's Sacramento Solons, and president of the California League 1956-1975. *Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 27, 1921; *Total Baseball*, 1038; *Minor League Register*, 230-231. Spalding, *Pacific Coast League Stars*, 48, 214. The date of his Hall of Fame induction is not known.

⁷⁰ *Total Baseball*, 1416. Record books and statistical compilations refer to him as Gene Dale, but newspapers in Salt Lake and elsewhere in the PCL invariably used "Jean," apparently his preferred

spelling at the time. His death certificate cites both spellings.

www.thedeadballera.com/DeathCertificates.html. For a biographical sketch, see Bob Lemke, “Bees’ pitcher stung Angels by throwing games,” *Sports Collectors Digest*, Sept. 3, 1993, 110-111.

⁷¹ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 18-19 and 21, 1920; *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, Sept. 19, 1920.

⁷² *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 5, 1920.

⁷³ Johnson and Wolff, *Encyclopedia of Minor League Baseball*, 221; www.baseball-reference.com.

Dallas finished in sixth place, 45 games out of first. Dale exhibited excellent control with Dallas and even pitched a no-hitter for nine innings before losing 1-0 in the twelfth inning.

⁷⁴ Baseball records always cite Milford, Nebraska as his birth place; he grew up in Milford, but was born in nearby Grover. See his obituary in the *Milford Times*, June 2, 1966. *Total Baseball*, 1142; Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 225, 335; “Bill Rumler” in *Nebraska Minor League Baseball*, <http://www.nebseballhistory.com/people/rumler.html>; for a detailed biographical sketch, see Bob Lemke, “Rumler’s story mix of ‘Eight Men Out,’ ‘Natural,’” *Sports Collectors Digest*, Sept. 17, 1993, 100-103.

⁷⁵ *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Salt Lake Telegram*, *Deseret Evening News*, Sept. 16-29, 1920.

⁷⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 12, 1920, printed the Rumler and Byler affidavits in full.

⁷⁷ *Salt Lake Telegram* and *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 12, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 13, 1920.

⁷⁸ *Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Telegram* Aug. 16-17, 1920. The directors present were H. W. Lane, Frank S. Murphy, M. R. Evans, Lester D. Freed and George O. Relf.

⁷⁹ Pitchers, catchers and first basemen in that order can most directly affect a contest. Since collective team performance over nine innings normally overrides the effort of an individual player, it is likely that multiple conspirators are required to fix a game. Deveney, *Original Curse*, weaves circumstantial evidence and poor play by right fielder Max Flack into a possible conspiracy by Chicago Cubs players to throw the 1918 World Series.

- ⁸⁰ *Deseret Evening News*, Aug. 17, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 17-18, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 20 and 24, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 20, 1920.
- ⁸¹ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 23, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 24 and Sept. 18, 1920.
- ⁸² *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Aug. 12, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 19 and 31, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 21, 1920.
- ⁸³ *San Francisco Examiner* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 21, 1920.
- ⁸⁴ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 27, 1920.
- ⁸⁵ *San Francisco Examiner*, Aug. 20, 1920.
- ⁸⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 21, 1920.
- ⁸⁷ Earl Sheely .382, Bill Rumler .347, Ernie Johnson .344 and Wally Hood .340. *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 9, 1920.
- ⁸⁸ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 29, 1920 and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Sept. 2, 1920.
- ⁸⁹ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 15, 1920; *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 16, 1920.
- ⁹⁰ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 31, Sept. 1 and 21, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 31, 1920.
- ⁹¹ *The Sporting News*, Sept. 9, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Sept. 13, 1920.
- ⁹² The column, datelined Salt Lake, September 26, appeared in *The Sporting News*, Sept. 30, 1920.
- ⁹³ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Sept. 8 and 14, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 21 and 30, 1920.
- ⁹⁴ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 17-18, 1920.
- ⁹⁵ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Sept. 26; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 21, 26, and 28-29, 1920. The signatories were H. W. Lane, Frank S. Murphy, Elmer I. Goshen, Lester D. Freed, George O. Relf and M. R. Evans.
- ⁹⁶ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Sept. 26 and 28-30, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 28-30; *Deseret Evening News*, Sept. 30, 1920.
- ⁹⁷ *San Francisco Examiner*, *Los Angeles Daily Times* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 1, 1920.
- ⁹⁸ *San Francisco Examiner* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 1, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 4, 1920.
- ⁹⁹ *San Francisco Examiner*, Oct. 1, 1920.

¹⁰⁰ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 1, 1920.

¹⁰¹ *Los Angeles Daily Times* and *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 1, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram* and *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 4, 1920. All three men denied the allegation, Edington saying he “had no beans to spill.” Bruckman soon abandoned sports writing for Hollywood, where he gained fame directing Laurel & Hardy, Abbott & Costello and Buster Keaton films.

¹⁰² Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 335, 338 and 348. *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 17 and 31, 1920 and Apr. 3, 1921; *The Sporting News*, Oct. 21, 1920; and *Deseret Evening News*, Dec. 18, 1920.

¹⁰³ *The Sporting News*, Oct. 28, 1920.

¹⁰⁴ *San Francisco Examiner*, *Deseret Evening News*, and *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Aug. 17, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Herald* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 18 and Sept. 2, 1920; *The Sporting News*, Sept. 3, 1920.

¹⁰⁵ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 19, 1920; *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Sept. 1, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 2, 1920.

¹⁰⁶ *Los Angeles Daily Times* and *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 4, 1920.

¹⁰⁷ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Oct. 2, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 3, 1920; *Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 4, 1920.

¹⁰⁸ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 15, 1920; *Los Angeles Daily Tribune*, *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 16, 1920.

¹⁰⁹ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 15, 1920. The documentation was never submitted.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 19 1920.

¹¹¹ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 21, 1920; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Dec. 8, 1920.

¹¹² *Los Angeles Daily Times*, *Los Angeles Evening Herald* and *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 19, 1920; Lemke, “Borton & the Pacific Coast League Scandal,” 42.

¹¹³ *Los Angeles Evening Express, Salt Lake Tribune and Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 20; *San Francisco Examiner*, Oct. 20 and 21; *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 21, 1920.

¹¹⁴ It was announced on November 10 that subpoenas would be issued for Bees Marty Krug and Butch Byler, the former to explain a reported bribe offer by a Vernon player and the latter to amplify his knowledge of Rumler's "safety bet" with Borton. However, the players were not summoned. *Deseret Evening News*, Nov. 11, 1920.

¹¹⁵ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 22, 24 and 30, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 28, 1920.

¹¹⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Nov. 2, 1920. There is confusion about the nature of the injury. On September 24 Rumler left the game for an undisclosed reason late in the game after three at bats, perhaps injuring himself while scrambling back to the bag after overrunning second base after hitting a double. The next day he retired after one at bat and did not play in the remaining three games of the series. The *Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Telegram* on September 26 specifically said a "painfully injured foot" had made it impossible for him to pursue fly balls. But Doctor Spencer described in detail a hand injury, and correctly recalled that after the Vernon series the Bees had gone to Oakland. Previously, on August 13, 1919, Rumler suffered a wrist injury so severe that he was out of the line-up for ten games. See the *Salt Lake Herald-Republican, Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Telegram*, Aug. 14-26, 1919. Did the doctor confuse the two injuries?

Four considerations support Dr. Spencer's statement regarding the nature of the injury sustained against Vernon. First, it is unlikely that Spencer and Cook would have perjured themselves by deliberately submitting false information under oath about an incident that was common knowledge. Second, no one, including Los Angeles and Salt Lake sports reporters, disputed the doctor's account of an injury that occurred during a crucial series under investigation by the grand jury. Third, Spencer was correct in saying the Bees went to Oakland after the Vernon series whereas after Rumler's injury in August the team traveled to San Francisco and Seattle before returning to Salt Lake. Fourth and most telling, the Bees manager at the time, Eddie Herr, who was unaware of Spencer's testimony,

emphatically told Los Angeles sports writer Harry Grayson: “There has been a lot of talk about Rumler retiring from the game during the last series between Vernon and Salt Lake City in Los Angeles. I’ll settle that right now. Rumler had a bad finger and I personally told him not to run the risk of adding to the injury.” Had Rumler injured both his foot and hand trying to get back to the base? Whatever the case, he unquestionably suffered an injury serious enough to prevent him from playing in the final games against Vernon.

¹¹⁷ *San Francisco Examiner*, Oct. 21 and Nov. 11, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 21 and 28, Nov. 9, and 11-12, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Nov. 26, 1920.

¹¹⁸ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 15 and 20, 1920. That all the gamblers cited were Jewish, like Arnold Rothstein and Abe Attell, the principals in the World Series fix, did not provoke anti-Semitic commentary as occurred during the Black Sox Scandal. See Nathan, *Saying It’s So*, 32-36.

¹¹⁹ *The Sporting News*, Sept. 3, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 23, 1920. Whether Raymond knew Rothstein before the PCL scandal is not known, but sometime after 1920 he moved to New York City. Both men were participants in a 1928 card game in New York City soon after which Rothstein, who refused to pay a sizable loss, was fatally shot. Raymond subsequently continued as a gambler, forger and con artist. See Pietrusza, *Rothstein*, 9-11, 375-376.

¹²⁰ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 23, 1920.

¹²¹ *Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 6, 11 and 17-20, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, Oct. 9 and 16, 1920.

¹²² *Salt Lake Telegram*, Nov. 7, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1920; and *The Sporting News*, Nov. 11, 1920.

¹²³ The charges were extensively reported in all Los Angeles, Salt Lake and San Francisco newspapers on Dec. 11, 1920. The indictment cited September 5, 1919, as the date when Borton, Maggert and Rumler conspired with Raymond to throw games. But on that day Los Angeles, not Vernon, was in Salt Lake City; presumably September 15, when the Tigers came to town, was intended.

¹²⁴ *Salt Lake Herald-Republican*, Sept. 29, 1919; *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Dec. 8, 1920.

¹²⁵ *Los Angeles Daily Times* and *San Francisco Examiner*, Dec. 11, 1920

¹²⁶ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 21 and 25, 1920.

¹²⁷ *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Oct. 27-28, 1920; *Vancouver Sun*, Dec. 11, 1920; *San Francisco Examiner*, Dec. 12 and 15, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Salt Lake Telegram* Dec. 12, 15 and 19, 1920.

¹²⁸ *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Evening News*, Dec. 17, 1920.

¹²⁹ *San Francisco Examiner*, Dec. 20 and 22, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Salt Lake Telegram* and *Deseret Evening News*, Dec. 18-19, 1920. See the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Dec. 27, 1920, for the fullest account of the incident. McCarthy subsequently accepted reappointment, serving until “heavy-handedness” led to his ouster in 1923. He returned to the PCL in 1926 as part of a consortium that purchased the Vernon club and transferred it to San Francisco as the Mission Bells. O’Neal, *Pacific Coast League*, 45; Dobbins and Twichell, *Nuggets on the Diamond*, 67-68.

¹³⁰ When the Bees joined the PCL, the concerns some clubs had about costs, estimated at \$15,000 per season, were offset by anticipated gate receipts. Although visiting teams received forty percent of the ticket sales for a series in Salt Lake, several clubs deemed that inadequate to cover the cost of the trip to Utah. *Salt Lake Tribune*, Dec. 17, 1914. For concerns about Salt Lake’s membership in the league tied to rising travel expenses, which had increased to nearly \$30,000 by fall 1920. *Deseret Evening News*, June 3, 1918; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 14 and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 15, 1919; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Oct. 18, 1920. In September 1919 Spokane inquired about replacing Salt Lake and the next month Vancouver representatives advised league directors of their desire to join the circuit. *Deseret Evening News*, Sept. 16, 1919 and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 25 and 27, 1919. It is unclear whether the sale of the Bees to Vancouver fell through because of the opposition of the San Francisco club or Lane’s concern about unfavorable currency exchange rates. *Vancouver Sun*, Nov. 20-21, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Sept. 14, Nov. 17- 19 and 24-25 and Dec. 15, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1920; *The Sporting News*, Nov. 25, 1920.

¹³¹ *Vancouver Sun* and *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Dec. 16, 1920.

¹³² *Salt Lake Telegram and Salt Lake Tribune*, Dec. 18, 1920; *The Sporting News*, Dec. 23, 1920.

¹³³ *Los Angeles Daily Times*, Dec. 24, 1920; *Deseret Evening News*, Dec. 12, 1920.

¹³⁴ *Los Angeles Daily Times* and *Los Angeles Evening Express*, Dec. 25, 1920; *Salt Lake Telegram*, Dec. 24 and 25; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Dec. 25, 1920.

¹³⁵ *The Sporting News*, Dec. 30, 1920.

¹³⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Dec. 25, 1920.

¹³⁷ Reporter Leo Moriarty used the *Los Angeles Daily Times* to compile retroactively statistics for the four banished players. Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, xii.

¹³⁸ *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times* and *Deseret Evening News*, Jan. 13, 1920; *Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 13 and 19, 1921.

¹³⁹ Borton and Dale death certificates, www.thedeadballera.com/DeathCertificates.html; Maggert obituary, *Fresno Bee*, Jan. 7, 1963; Dale death notice, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Mar. 22, 1958. For Harl Warren Maggert's major league statistics, see *Total Baseball*, 698.

¹⁴⁰ *Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Nov. 11, 1921. That might have been a victory for Rumler given Landis's propensity for banning permanently players involved in gambling; during and after his tenure as commissioner a "safety bet" was grounds for banishment for life.

¹⁴¹ Bob Lemke, "Rumler's story mix of 'Eight Men Out,' 'Natural,'" *Sports Collectors Digest* (Sept. 17, 1993), 100-104 covers Rumler's post-Bees career. See also Richard E. Beverage, *Hollywood Stars — Baseball in Movieland, 1926-1957* (Placentia, CA: Deacon Press, 1984), 1-2, 28, 45; Mackey, *Barbary Baseball*, 169-177; Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 69, 72; Eldon Hostetler, "Milford's Major League Baseball Player: The Rest of His Story" in "Early Milford People Stories": *Old Newspapers Tell the Story, 1864-1940* (Milford, NE: n.p., 1995), 116-118; *Milford (Nebraska) Times*, May 26 and June 2, 1966; *Nebraska (Lincoln) State Journal*, May 27, 1966. Rumler was reinstated during the annual meeting of the National Association held in Toronto, Canada. *Toronto Globe and Mail*, December 6-8, 1928.

¹⁴² *Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 31, 1920 and Jan. 12 and Nov. 12, 1921. The postseason distribution was pro-rated according to finish: first \$6,000, second \$4,000; third \$3,000; fourth \$2,500; fifth \$2,000; sixth \$1,500; seventh \$1,000.

¹⁴³ O’Neal, *Pacific Coast League*, 35-36, praised McCarthy’s “tough and straight forward manner” in dealing with the scandal; Zingg and Medeiros, *Runs, Hits and an Era*, 46, lauded his “swift and decisive action;” and Dobbins and Twichell, *Nuggets on the Diamond*, called it an “arduous investigation.”

¹⁴⁴ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Sept. 21, 1920.

¹⁴⁵ *The Sporting News*, Dec. 21, 1920.

¹⁴⁶ For example, *The Sporting News*, Aug. 26, Sept. 3, Oct. 14 and 28, Nov. 4, Dec. 9, 16 and 30, 1920; *New York Times*, Aug. 4, 10 and 17, Oct. 5 and Dec. 10 and 24, 1920. Surprisingly, none of the Black Sox studies mention the PCL episode.

¹⁴⁷ For Landis, see David Pietrusza, *Judge and Jury: The Life and Times of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis* (South Bend, IN: Diamond Communications, 1998) and J. G. Taylor Spink, *Judge Landis and Twenty-Five Years of Baseball* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1947).

¹⁴⁸ *Deseret Evening News*, Dec. 2-3, 1920. Cravath spent eleven years in the majors, the last nine with Philadelphia, where he served the dual role as player—manager for the 1919 and 1920 seasons. He led the National League in home runs six times. *Total Baseball*, 793 and William Swank, “Gravvy Cravath” in Tom Simon, ed., *Deadball Stars of the National League* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2004), 221-224.

¹⁴⁹ Returnees were catchers Butch Byler and Joe Jenkins, utility infielder John “Heine” Sand, and pitchers Walt Leverenz, Elmer Rieger, Hollis “Sloppy” Thurston and John “Jack” Bromley. Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 43, 47. In 1924 Sand, then shortstop for the Philadelphia Phillies, refused a \$500 bribe to throw a game so the New York could win the National League pennant; his report led to life-time banishments for Giants outfielder Jimmy O’Connell and coach Albert “Cozy” Dolan. See

Ginsburg, *The Fix Is In*, 184-195.

¹⁵⁰ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Apr. 3, 1921.

¹⁵¹ The Bees finished fourth in 1922 and fifth in 1923 and 1924 Snelling, *Pacific Coast League*, 47, 57, 232, 333, 335, 338-340. In 1925 only one Salt Lake hurler had an ERA below 4.24, but all eight regulars hit over .300; Lazzeri set PCL records for RBIs (222) and runs (202) as well as the professional baseball record for home runs (60). For Lazzeri, see Spalding, *Pacific Coast League Stars*, vol. II, 232; John Sillito, "'Our Tone': Tony Lazzeri's Baseball Career in Salt Lake City, 1922-1925," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 72, no. 4 (Fall 2004), 343-357 and Richard Ian Kimball, "Bringing Fame to Zion": Tony Lazzeri, the Salt Lake Bees, and Life in the Pacific Coast League," *NINE: A Journal of Baseball History and Culture*, Vol. 14, no. 2 (Spring 2006), 40-58.

¹⁵² *Deseret Evening News* and *Salt Lake Tribune*, Jan. 9, 1926; Beverage, *Hollywood Stars*, Introduction (n.p.) and 1-2.

¹⁵³ Schroeder, *Pacific Coast League*, 12-13; Lange, *History of Baseball*, 182-183.

¹⁵⁴ Salt Lake's tenure in the PLC includes 1958 to 1967, 1970 to 1984 and 1994 to the present.

¹⁵⁵ *Salt Lake Tribune*, Aug. 3, 2003.