

BLACK SOX SCANDAL



Vol. 12, No. 1, June 2020

Research Committee Newsletter

Leading off ...

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Chairman's Corner

By Jacob Pomrenke
buckweaver@gmail.com

At its best, the study of history is not just a recitation of past events. Our shared history can provide important context to help us better understand ourselves, by explaining why things happened the way they did and how we got to where we are today.

But those of us who study history never want to *re-live* it.

As I write these words in June 2020, we're still living under quarantine during a global pandemic, with racial tensions rising due to protests against police brutality and white nationalist backlash. It is easy to draw parallels to life in America from 100 years ago. The world has changed in many ways, but not in others.

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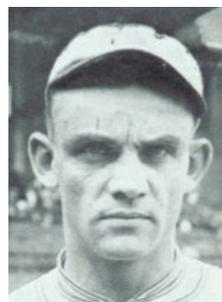
John "Beans" Reardon, left, wearing a flu mask underneath his umpire's mask, prepares to call a pitch in a California Winter League game on January 26, 1919, in Pasadena, California. During a global influenza pandemic, all players and fans were required by city ordinance to wear facial coverings at all times while outdoors. Chick Gandil and Fred McMullin of the Chicago White Sox were two of the participants; Gandil had the game-winning hit in the 11th inning. (Photo: Author's collection)

Pandemic baseball in 1919: California flu mask game

By Jacob Pomrenke
buckweaver@gmail.com

A batter, catcher, and umpire stand at home plate, all wearing cloth masks over their mouth and nose. The fans in the wooden bleachers are wearing masks, too. Even the canine mascot has its snout covered.

The photographs are some of the most enduring images of a global influenza pandemic that infected an estimated 500 million people, nearly one-third of the world's population, and the cause of nearly 50 million deaths over a 24-month span.¹ They are a sign



Chick Gandil

of the human desire to carry on in the face of horrific tragedy and of baseball's place in American culture.

If these images did not survive, it might be hard to believe such an absurd spectacle ever took place: a baseball game played while everyone present was wearing flu masks. It happened only once, during a California

Winter League game on January 26, 1919, in Pasadena, where city officials enacted — and enforced — a strict ordinance requiring all citizens to cover their faces while out in public.²

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NEW PODCAST FROM THE SHOELESS JOE MUSEUM

The Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum in Greenville, South Carolina, is temporarily closed as it prepares for a move down the street and the building of a new gift shop, across the street from Fluor Field.

SABR member Dan Wallach, the museum's new executive director, has launched a series of digital initiatives to help keep fans engaged until the museum's planned reopening in the late fall of 2020.

Wallach's new long-form interview podcast, "[My Baseball History](#)," premiered in May and includes episodes with historian Mike Miller, baseball artist Graig Kreindler, author Phil S. Dixon, and Field of Dreams movie site tour guide Craig Purcell.

Wallach has also spearheaded the redesign of the museum's website at ShoelessJoeJackson.org and has created new social media accounts on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#). Follow updates on all sites at [@shoelessmuseum](#).

The museum's current site is being redeveloped into a mixed-use apartment complex called .408 Jackson.

Download your free copy of *Scandal on the South Side*

Scandal on the South Side: The 1919 Chicago White Sox, edited by Jacob Pomrenke, with associate editors Rick Huhn, Bill Nowlin, and Len Levin, is [now available from the SABR Digital Library](#).

Scandal on the South Side is the first comprehensive book focused on the star-studded, dissension-riddled team that won the 1919 American League pennant and then threw the World Series — with full-life biographies of every player and official involved with that fateful team.

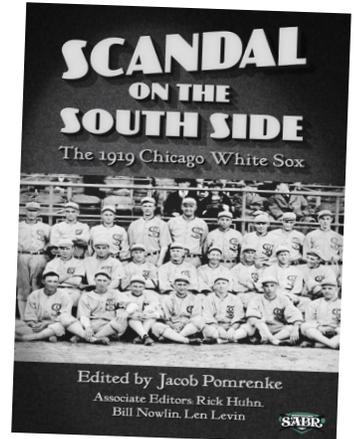
This book isn't a rewriting of *Eight Men Out*, but it is the complete story of everyone associated with the 1919 Chicago White Sox.

Order the book:

The book can be ordered online at SABR.org/ebooks.

All SABR members can download the e-book edition for free in PDF, EPUB, or Kindle formats. SABR members also get a 50% discount to purchase the paperback edition. The retail price is \$19.95 for the paperback or \$9.99 for the e-book.

Read the bios online: All biographies from the book can also be read online at the SABR BioProject. Visit SABR.org/bioproj/category/completed-book-projects/1919-chicago-white-sox to find them all.



Free download available at SABR.org/ebooks

Black Sox Scandal Research Committee

Committee chair:

Jacob Pomrenke, buckweaver@gmail.com

E-mail list manager:

Rod Nelson, rodericnelson@gmail.com

Newsletter editors: Mark Dugo, Bill Lamb, Rick Huhn, Steve Klein, Bruce Allardice

Post questions, discussion in our

email listserv: <http://bit.ly/1919SoxYahoo>

Alias ‘Chick Arnold’: Gandil’s wild west days

By **Leman Saunders**

leman.saunders@gmail.com

Chick Gandil, who helped instigate the Black Sox Scandal, is remembered best as a rough-and-tough baseball rogue who rarely got along with teammates or opponents until his career ended in disgrace. In his early days, however, he was quite a popular player everywhere he played — even when using an alias. As a teenage phenom, Gandil’s pursuit of glory took him all over the southwestern United States and across the border into Mexico, from the baseball field to the boxing ring, until he reached the major leagues.

Most sources indicate that Arnold “Chick” Gandil grew up in the Bay Area and attended high school there.¹ But after a brief stay in San Francisco in the early 1890s, the Gandil family moved to Seattle² by the turn of the century and then to Southern California, where Chick began playing baseball seriously as a teenager.

There are a few mentions of the Gandils living in Santa Barbara by January 1903.³ Two minor newspaper items are related to sports — not baseball, but bowling — with “A. Gandil” turning in some of the “best scores” at the Monarch bowling alleys.⁴

By 1904, when he was 16 years old, Gandil dipped his toes in the amateur baseball ranks. That year he played for a team sponsored by the *Los Angeles Herald* newspaper, playing many different positions throughout the year.⁵

It was reported that he spent two years in the Los Angeles City Baseball Association playing for the “Christopher nine” and while it is unclear just who Gandil was playing for in 1905, he is listed as playing for the Christophers in January 1906.⁶ Then in March, Gandil jumped head first into semipro baseball when he left California to play in “Indian Territory.”⁷ As Gandil himself put it in a 1956 interview for *Sports Illustrated* he “hopped a freight bound for Amarillo, Texas, to play semipro.”⁸

Playing primarily third base for Amarillo, Gandil quickly became a fan favorite after he reportedly hit a home run in his very first at-bat.⁹ The Amarillo club fell onto hard times; by June, rumors of the team folding began to spread and the team’s primary investors met to discuss the future. Gandil left the team soon afterward.¹⁰

In later years as Gandil rose to stardom, Texas newspapers proudly laid claim to him. When Gandil made his major-league debut for the Chicago White Sox in 1910, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* ran a picture of Chick with a caption that read, “The big fellow is well known in Texas, not only in the cities of the Texas League, but also in other towns. At Amarillo, for instance, he has many friends who call him familiarly ‘Battle Axe.’”¹¹ In 1912, the same paper published a picture of Gandil as a “Texas Product,” calling Amarillo his home, and claiming that is where he



Chick Gandil (top row, 3rd from left) was a fan favorite early in his baseball career, including here in 1907 in Mexico, where he was known as “Chick Arnold.” He played for a team sponsored by the Cananea Consolidated Copper Company and worked as a boiler maker between games. He also distinguished himself in the boxing ring on some nights. (Photo: Leman Saunders)

made his debut in baseball.¹²

Gandil’s exact whereabouts after leaving Amarillo are unknown. There was one report which claimed he was bought by the Fort Worth Panthers in the Texas League and was let go due to fighting with an umpire.¹³ Gandil does not appear in any games for the Panthers and he likely simply went back home once the team in Amarillo showed signs of financial problems. Back in California on July 18, Gandil was given an opportunity to play for the Los Angeles Angels of the PCL. “Gandle [sic] ... a lad from Fort Worth, Texas league” was given a tryout in center field. He went hitless, but did reach on an error and scored a run.¹⁴ He did not record a putout in the field. The starting pitcher for the Angels that day was William “Red” Burns, who later became more well known by a new nickname — Sleepy Bill. How serendipitous that Gandil’s first professional game was as a teammate of the man who would later help end his professional career.

“Gandle” was given another tryout with a PCL team on August 8 for Fresno in a game played in L.A. against Portland. He had one at-bat as a pinch-hitter in the fifth inning and did not reach base.¹⁵

Upon his return to the local diamonds of Los Angeles, Gandil took the opportunity to start playing under a new name: *Chick Arnold*. The reason for changing his name is open to speculation, but he would primarily use that name in baseball for the next three years until he returned to the

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► GANDIL

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PCL in 1909.

By October 1906, Arnold had secured a spot playing for the Los Angeles Hamburgers of the California Winter League.¹⁶ Chick primarily played outfield and a little first base for the Hamburgers, who continued on in the Southern State League for the 1907 spring season. Many future major-leaguers were also part of the league and Gandil sharpened his talents and began to stand out as a powerful hitter.

In July, the Hamburgers withdrew from the league because “a number of players have been taken in by various teams in the professional league.”¹⁷ Gandil was one of them as it was reported that “speedy bushers” Arnold and pitcher Orlando Cole from a San Diego team were leaving for Humboldt, Arizona.¹⁸ Gandil joined the Humboldt team for a big Fourth of July tournament in nearby Prescott.

During his time playing for the Hamburgers, “Arnold” caught the eye of the Pacific Coast League’s Portland Beavers, who offered him a tryout as an outfielder. Gandil hustled back to California and made an appearance on July 6 against the Los Angeles Angels. The “local busher” was called in to play center field late in the game and did not record a hit in his only at-bat. In his one fielding opportunity, he committed a two-base error when he misjudged a fly ball when it “should have been an easy out.”¹⁹

The day’s bigger story was a one-hit pitching gem by the Angels ace, “Red” Burns, who would go on to win 24 games that season.

Back in Los Angeles again and still going by Arnold, Chick played one game for the Playa Del Rey team on July 7 against the San Diego Pickwicks, going 2-for-5 with a triple and a run scored in a 5-4 loss.²⁰ The Pickwicks liked what they saw and signed Gandil the following day.

The *San Diego Evening Tribune* reported, “In signing Arnold, manager Palmer has secured probably the heaviest hitter in the Southern California league. He seldom strikes out and when he clouts the ball fairly usually sends it to the fence. His batting has brought him much favorable notice and last Friday the management at Portland offered to give him a tryout in right field this week.”²¹

It is unclear if Arnold ever played for the Pickwicks. On July 21, the *Los Angeles Times* reported “Arnold Gandil, known in baseball circles as ‘Chic’ Arnold ... is now playing with the Humboldt, Ariz., team, in the Arizona State League.”²²

To add more mystery to Chick’s departure, his father, Christian Gandil, took out an ad in the *Los Angeles Times* that ran on July 13:

“NOTICE – TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, I will



In 1904, when Chick Gandil (top row, 2nd from left) was 16 years old, he played for a team sponsored by the *Los Angeles Herald* newspaper, playing many different positions throughout the year. (*Los Angeles Herald*, February 15, 1904)

not be responsible for any debts my son Arnold, sometimes called Chic, may contract on or after this date, July 11, 1907. C. Gandil.”²³

One can only speculate as to what might have led to this announcement needing to be published. But for all intents and purposes, Arnold “Chick” Gandil, alias Chic/Chick Arnold, had been fully emancipated from his family.

Arnold packed his bags and headed back to Arizona.²⁴ With Humboldt, Chick played all over the field, including catcher and even pitching in relief in at least one game. On July 30 against Prescott, Arnold began the game as a catcher and relieved the Humboldt starting pitcher in the sixth inning. While Chick did hit a triple, he allowed three passed balls as a catcher and accounted for a wild pitch on the mound while striking out two in a 13-5 loss.²⁵ Gandil also was loaned out to play a few games for the Prescott team in August.

In mid-August, Gandil and a teammate left for Mexico to play for the Cananea Consolidated Copper Company team and work as a boiler maker between games. Players in this league usually were given jobs in the towns where they played. The smelting plant in Humboldt and the railroad in Prescott appear to be the players’ most likely employers. Gandil reportedly went to Prescott “with the understanding that he would have employment with the railroad in order to secure his services on the baseball diamond,” but his quick departure to play and work in Cananea suggests that the railroad job did not pan out.²⁶

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► GANDIL

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In Cananea, Gandil was a popular player known for his hitting throughout the league. He also became a two-sport athlete, spending some nights in the boxing ring.

One highly publicized bout was against Tucson heavyweight Jack Bernal on September 17 in Cananea. Scheduled to go 20 rounds to decide the “heavyweight championship of Arizona and Sonora,” Chick, weighing in at 180 pounds, defeated the heavier Bernal in the third round thanks to his “superior reach and fast footwork.”²⁷

The *Bisbee Daily Review* provided a thorough recap of the fight, with a round-by-round summary. A reported 400 people left the theater enthusiastic over the victory by “the big first baseman of the Cananea ball team.” Gandil landed a combination that knocked Bernal into his corner and “into his chair, where he took the count.” The newspaper concluded that “Bernal did not hit Arnold a good clean blow during the bout” and that he was “outclassed in all respects.”²⁸

Bernal contested Gandil’s victory upon his return to Tucson, telling the *Tucson Citizen* that he was “clearly entitled to [t]he decision, as he had the best of the contest.”²⁹

This triggered a defiant response from Gandil who sent a letter to the *Arizona Daily Star* claiming “Bernal was not in the fight from the beginning to the end, and that he is willing to meet Bernal at any time he is ready for a purse of from \$100 to \$1,000.” He also said he would “meet Bernal in a six-foot ring to show him who it was that ran” and that he would “fight Bernal at 170 pounds ... and if he does not knock him out in two rounds” that Bernal could “have all of the gate receipts.” It is unclear if Bernal took Gandil up on his rematch offer.

Gandil knocked around the Arizona State League throughout November. While Cananea was his primary team, he made an appearance playing in at least one game for Tucson and finished up the season playing for the team in Bisbee, Arizona.³⁰

Gandil was well received by the fans and towns where he played, in part because he played for at least five different teams in the Arizona State League and thus was easily recognized by all fans. Because of his talent, almost all of these teams jockeyed to secure his services in 1908. In the

following years whenever Gandil made career advancements, the Arizona papers would brag about this “Arizonan” making good and how well liked he was in the towns he played in.

After learning of his signing with the White Sox in July 1909, the *Arizona Daily Star* heaped praise on Gandil, saying, “It is sincerely hoped by his many friends here that he will make good in a Chicago uniform next season.” A few weeks later, the paper praised Gandil’s talents and ties to Arizona under the headline “Former Arizonan Distinguishes Self.”³¹

Louisiana would be Gandil’s primary home for the 1908 season with the Shreveport Pirates of the Texas League. While with Cananea, Gandil primarily played at first base and that was the position he played in Shreveport. Still playing under his alias as Arnold, Chick once again quickly became a fan favorite. Back in Arizona, the *Bisbee Daily Review* lamented his departure:

“There has been a faint, selfish hope in the hearts of several fans that the torpid atmosphere of Louisiana would make Chick Arnold long for the cool breezes of the mountains and cause him to throw off in his tryout with Shreveport, so that he could secure his release and shine again as Cananea’s star. ... He has a whip like a Texas blacksnake, a lightning quickness of action when the ball gets in his territory — picking up low ones, pulling down high ones and gathering in wild throws like a school girl plucking daisies in the field. Whenever he faces the pitcher the ball generally raises the dust in a good safe spot, far from any fielder’s itching glove.”³²

Gandil had a strong season in Shreveport that ended prematurely on August 15 with a leg injury while sliding into second base.³³ By September, he was back in Cananea playing winter ball in Mexico again.³⁴

In February 1909, the “strapping big fellow” arrived in California to play for the Fresno Giants of the outlaw California State League.³⁵ Almost immediately, he found himself in turmoil — leading to his arrest after he jumped to a new team.

He played in a few practice games with the Giants before greater temptation lured him away. An agent from the PCL’s Sacramento Senators came to Fresno to secure players for the upcoming season.

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LOS ANGELES										
	A	B	R	BH	SB	PO	A	E		
Gandle, cf.....	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Gochbauer, ss.....	5	1	0	0	3	4	2			
Cravath, rf.....	3	1	1	0	0	0	0			
Dillon, 1b.....	3	1	2	1	9	1	0			
Ellis, lf.....	3	0	2	0	3	0	0			
Toman, 2b.....	4	0	0	0	2	2	1			
McClelland, 3b....	3	0	0	0	3	4	1			
Eager, c.....	3	0	0	0	5	1	0			
Burns, p.....	3	0	1	0	0	1	0			
Leguin, c.....	1	0	0	0	2	0	0			
Totals	29	4	6	1	27	13	4			
SAN FRANCISCO										
	A	B	R	BH	SB	PO	A	E		
Spencer, ss. & cf...	4	0	0	0	2	0	0			
Wheeler, ss.....	3	1	1	0	2	4	0			
Mohler, 2b.....	4	1	1	0	2	3	2			
Hildebrand, lf.....	4	0	1	0	0	1	0			
Irwin, 3b.....	4	0	1	0	1	0	0			
Williams, 1b.....	4	0	0	0	8	0	0			
Sears, rf.....	4	0	1	0	1	0	0			
Wilson, c.....	3	0	2	1	8	1	0			
Simonds, p.....	3	0	0	0	0	2	0			
O'Brien, cf.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Totals	33	2	7	1	24	11	2			
SCORE BY INNINGS										
Los Angeles.....	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	*	-4	
Base hits	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	*	-6
San Francisco.....	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	-2	
Base hits	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	1	0	-7

Chick Gandil, age 18, made his Pacific Coast League debut in 1906 when he was given a one-game tryout in center field by the Los Angeles Angels. The Angels’ starting pitcher was William “Red” Burns — later known as Sleepy Bill. They would cross paths again later in the Black Sox Scandal.
(*Los Angeles Herald*, July 19, 1906)

► GANDIL

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In the wee morning hours of March 20, under the watchful eye of Fresno club representatives suspicious of his intentions, Gandil and his wife, the former Fay Kelly, boarded a train bound for Sacramento. Gandil played in that afternoon's game where he started the game-winning rally in the ninth inning with a single and scored the winning run.³⁶

Gandil, called the "Human Frog" by a Fresno newspaper,³⁷ was not the first or last player to jump for the PCL, but his case was special. Fresno went after Gandil, claiming he had absconded with a \$225 advance and with a "suit loaned him by the Fresno management to practice in."³⁸ Sacramento secretary John Inman denied these charges and claimed they had "made arrangements" with Fresno to cover any of Gandil's expenses. He added there was "nothing underhanded about the deal" and that Gandil gave the Fresno club "due notice" of his intentions to leave the club.³⁹

The situation escalated as a warrant was issued for Gandil's arrest on March 24 for "obtaining money on false pretenses." He quickly turned himself in and was bailed out by the Sacramento manager and a stockholder; Gandil went straight to the ballpark for practice.⁴⁰

All of this took place while Gandil's contract was still held by the Shreveport ballclub back in Louisiana. Sacramento worked hard behind the scenes, even enlisting the help and influence of American League President Ban Johnson, to make sure Gandil was not branded an outlaw.⁴¹ The matter was cleared up behind the scenes and the Fresno fiasco ended with Gandil reverting back to his given name for baseball purposes.

In Sacramento, Chick went on to have his best and most consistent season with 212 hits, putting him among the contenders for the PCL batting title, and catching the eye of Chicago White Sox owner Charles Comiskey who signed the 21-year-old first baseman in July and invited him to spring training in 1910.⁴²

When Gandil returned to Fresno for a spring training game that spring, local fans had not forgotten about the "grasshopper" who had jumped their team, as Hugh Fullerton reported:

Chick Gandil, christened Grasshopper out here because he once jumped from Fresno into the Coast League, got his revenge yesterday by slamming four slashing drives, one a double through the infield, and he silenced the jeers of the crowd.

Fullerton also opined about the young prospect, "Comiskey is much encouraged. He says Gandil has no faults that cannot be corrected and he thinks he has found a

Baseball Squabble Leads to "Chick" Arnold's Arrest

[Special Dispatch to The Call]

SACRAMENTO, March 24.—Arnold Gandil, also known as "Chick" Arnold, the big first baseman who was enticed to leave the Fresno club in the State league to play with the Sacramento Coast league team, was arrested here today on a warrant sworn out in Fresno by A. B. Evans, charging him with obtaining money under false pretenses. Gandil is said to have accepted \$225 advance money after signing a contract, and to have left Fresno without paying it back.

A contract dispute between the Fresno Giants of the outlaw California State League and the Sacramento Senators of the Pacific Coast League led to Chick Gandil's arrest before the 1909 season. Sacramento officials worked with American League President Ban Johnson to ensure Gandil remained eligible in professional baseball.
(*San Francisco Call*, March 25, 1909)

first baseman."⁴³

It is hard to imagine now a teenager taking off on his own, riding trains, bouncing from town to town trying to make a living and chase his dream of becoming a ball player in an area not far removed from the days of the Wild West.

By closely examining this time in his life it is easy to see how these formative years shaped a young Arnold Gandil not only into overcoming adversities to become a great player, but more importantly toughening up the teenager and helping shape him into the rough character he was later reported to be.

Notes

1. A 1914 *Baseball Magazine* profile of Gandil claims that the family left Minnesota for Berkeley, California, around 1890 and "have resided (there) ever since." The article also says Gandil attended Oakland High School for two years and most biographical sources repeat these claims. However, there do not seem to be any records of Gandil attending the school. See: "Chic' Gandil, The Man Who Started the Famous 'Seventeen Straight,'" *Baseball Magazine*, August 1914, accessed online at LA84.org.

2. 1900 US Census, Ancestry.com. The 1901 and 1902 Seattle City Directories show Chick's father, Christian

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► GANDIL

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Gandil, living in an apartment above his florist shop at the corner of 10th Avenue and E. Prospect Street in Seattle. In December 1902, a "C. Gandil" placed multiple ads in the *Los Angeles Times* for "garden work by the day." Since Chick Gandil was playing baseball in Los Angeles in 1904 and Christian Gandil appears in the Los Angeles City Directory by 1905, it seems likely the entire family had moved to Southern California.

3. "Advertised Letters," *Santa Barbara Weekly Press*, February 12, 1903. A list of names for Santa Barbara on February 9 includes Christian Gandil and Mrs. C. Gandil who was noted as being "foreign."

4. "High Scores," *Santa Barbara Weekly Press*, January 15, 1903; January 22, 1903.

5. "Heralds Win Again," *Los Angeles Herald*, June 13, 1904; "Many Amateurs Play Fast Ball," *Los Angeles Herald*, June 20, 1904.

6. "Many Men Join Professionals," *Los Angeles Times*, July 21, 1907.

7. "Jud Smith is Obstreperous," *Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 1906.

8. Chick Gandil with Melvin Durslag, "This Is My Story of The Black Sox Series," *Sports Illustrated*, September 17, 1956.

9. "Many Men Join Professionals."

10. "Base Ball Team Re-Organized," *Amarillo Herald*, June 22, 1906. A *Los Angeles Herald* article on July 9 mentions an "Arnold" playing left field for the Jevne Clerks in the Los Angeles County League, and this may possibly be Gandil, too.

11. "Dale Gear's Student," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 20, 1910. The caption refers to Gandil's time playing with the Shreveport Pirates of the Texas League in 1908 as well as his time with Amarillo.

12. "Chick Gandil, Texas Product, Is Washington's First Sacker," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 2, 1912.

13. "Many Men Join Professionals."

14. "Angels Turn Diamond Tables," *Los Angeles Herald*, July 19, 1906.

15. "Fresnoites Fail To Make Stand With Giants," *San Francisco Call*, August 9, 1906.

16. "Many Men Join Professionals."

17. "Hamburgers Out," *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 1907.

18. "Mr. Perkins Is Up Against It," *Los Angeles Herald*, June 29, 1907.

19. "Angels Even Up With Portland," *Los Angeles Herald*, July 7, 1907.

20. "Pickwicks Winner of Hard Fought Game," *San Diego Evening Tribune*, July 8, 1907.

21. "Arnold is Signed by Manager Palmer," *San Diego Evening Tribune*, July 9, 1907.

22. "Many Men Join Professionals."

23. *Los Angeles Times*, July 13, 1907.

24. "Los Angeles Visitors," *Prescott Weekly Journal-Miner*, July 17, 1907. The article notes that "C. Arnold" was one of three visitors arriving from Los Angeles. "Arnold" appears in a game report playing for Humboldt on July 21, with the home team winning 6-4 over Prescott.

25. "Prescott Takes Game From Greens," *Prescott Weekly Journal-Miner*, July 31, 1907.

26. *Prescott Morning Courier*, August 10, 1907.

27. "Bernal Loses His Battle," *Tucson Citizen*, September 17, 1907.

28. "Arnold Pounds Bernal To A Finish," *Bisbee Daily Review*, September 18, 1907.

29. "The City News In Paragraphs," *Tucson Citizen*, September 19, 1907: 5.

30. "Former Arizonan Distinguishes Self," *Arizona Daily Star*, July 29, 1909. This article claims that Gandil "late in the season of 1907 ... joined the Bisbee club and was benched because of incompetency." But he did in fact play in several games for Bisbee in late November-December near the end of the season. One box score shows Arnold going 0-for-4 in the final game between Bisbee and Phoenix on December 1.

31. "Chick Arnold Goes Into Fast Company," *Arizona Daily Star*, July 8, 1909; "Former Arizonan Distinguishes Self."

32. "First Game At Douglas With Cananea," *Bisbee Daily Review*, April 5, 1908.

33. "Baseball Today," *Shreveport Times*, August 16, 1908.

34. "Regulars Take One Game Out of Series," *Daily Arizona Silver Belt*, September 29, 1908.

35. "Pitchers Joe Bills And Lutes Are Here," *Fresno Morning Republican*, February 24, 1909.

36. "'Chic' Arnold Jumps to Sacramento Coasters," "Chic Arnold Wins Game With Stick," *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 21, 1909.

37. "Chic Arnold, Human Frog First Sacker," *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 21, 1909. At least two other players reportedly jumped from Fresno to Sacramento that spring.

38. "'Chic' Arnold Jumps to Sacramento Coasters," *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 21, 1909. On March 24, the paper claimed Gandil had broken into the clubhouse to retrieve his suitcase which contained his uniform.

39. "Fresno, The Loser, Is Squealing," *Sacramento Bee*, March 22, 1909.

40. "First Baseman Gandil Has Some Troubles," *Sacramento Star*, March 24, 1909.

41. "All Claim To Arnold Waived," *Fresno Morning Republican*, March 29, 1909.

42. "Unofficial Averages of Coast League Batting Just Closed," *Los Angeles Herald*, November 7, 1909.

43. "Chat of the Game," *Sacramento Bee*, March 16, 1910.



The Pasadena Merchants winter league team poses for a photo with umpire John “Beans” Reardon, second from right, during the “flu mask” baseball game on January 26, 1919. Among the players on Pasadena’s roster were Emil “Irish” Meusel of the Philadelphia Phillies, Fred McMullin and Frank Shellenback of the Chicago White Sox, George Cutshaw of the Pittsburgh Pirates, and Pete Schneider and Red Killefer of the Cincinnati Reds. The players’ exact order in this photo is unknown. (Photo: RMY Auctions)

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By the end of the week, the mask order was lifted and life slowly returned to normal. But for one Sunday afternoon, baseball could not provide any escape from the real world and a public-health crisis that hit far too close to home.

Baseball in 1918 was affected more by World War I than by the growing influenza pandemic. The major-league regular season was cut short by the US government’s “work or fight” order, requiring all able-bodied men to enlist in the military or take an essential defense-industry job. The World Series between the Boston Red Sox and Chicago Cubs was played in early September. After the season, many players traveled west to California to enjoy the balmy climate and continue playing all winter against top major-league, minor-league, and Negro League stars.³

The opening of the California Winter League season on Sunday, October 6, went smoothly, with a powerhouse team sponsored by the Merchants National Bank in Pasadena squaring off against its top rival, a team based at the Standard-Murphy Oil Company plant in La Habra. Pasadena won 5-4 in the first of nine games they would play each other all winter.

Pasadena’s roster included Emil “Irish” Meusel of the Philadelphia Phillies, Fred McMullin and Frank Shellenback of the Chicago White Sox, George Cutshaw of the Pittsburgh Pirates, and Pete Schneider and Red Killefer of

the Cincinnati Reds.

The Standard Oil lineup had a battery of former New York Giants pitcher Doc Crandall and Yankees catcher Truck Hannah, plus Chick Gandil of the White Sox, Art Griggs of the Detroit Tigers, and Johnny Rawlings of the Boston Braves.

Unfortunately, the flu pandemic that began in the spring of 1918 returned with a vengeance in the fall. The flu’s second wave devastated Southern California before the two

baseball teams could return to the field for their next game. On October 11 the City of Los Angeles declared a public-health emergency, taking quick and decisive action to close down schools, theaters, and public gatherings of any kind.⁴ When the Great War finally ended in November, massive celebrations were held all across the country and the flu reached its peak. But over the following weeks, the infection rate began to subside, and Los Angeles lifted its ban on public gatherings in early December.

As winter-league baseball resumed play after a six-week hiatus, the flu continued to send shock waves throughout the game. Pasadena outfielder Carl Sawyer’s wife, Nell, died of the virus after giving birth to their daughter in October; the child passed away the next day.⁵ Pitchers Frank Shellenback and Walt Slagle and infielder George Cutshaw all reportedly contracted the flu in December and were forced to miss a few games while they recovered at home.⁶ Two more Pasadena-Standard Oil games had to be postponed that month because of health concerns. Major-league umpire Silk O’Loughlin was among the more



Fred McMullin

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than 675,000 Americans who died during the pandemic.⁷

On New Year's Day 1919, the Rose Bowl was played in Pasadena between military service teams instead of college athletes. George Halas, who would make his major-league baseball debut with the New York Yankees a few months later before going on to a legendary NFL coaching career with the Chicago Bears, was named the game's MVP after leading the Illinois-based Great Lakes Naval Station team to a 17-0 win in front of 25,000 fans at Tournament Park.⁸

The Rose Bowl crowd was small by football standards, but that many people gathering together in one place likely helped contribute to a deadly third wave of the flu striking early in the new year. By mid-January, public-health officials were calling for another shutdown to help combat the virus. Fans at some sporting events were required to wear flu masks, including at a University of Missouri men's basketball game and a boxing match in San Francisco.⁹

On January 18 the City of Pasadena issued a strict order requiring that flu masks be worn at all times in public; even dogs were not exempt. Fifty people were arrested and fined for not wearing masks on the first business day after the ordinance took effect.¹⁰ Not everyone was happy about the new law, but city officials were serious about enforcing it.

The Pasadena-Standard Oil winter-league game scheduled for January 19 was postponed after "players on both teams rebelled ... when they learned they were supposed to wear flu masks while engaged in the national pastime," the *Los Angeles Evening Express* reported.¹¹ But soon an idea emerged to Merchants manager Loren Ury: Why not try playing a game while still following the law? "By playing the game with the men wearing masks, the managers of the clubs would have drawn a big crowd," wrote Matt Gallagher of the *Los Angeles Evening Herald*.¹² No one seemed to ask Dr. Luther Powers, the city's health commissioner, what he thought of that bright idea.

Ury invited photographers and "moving picture" cameramen to attend the baseball game, set for the next Sunday, January 26, at Carmelita Park, located just north of the Rose Bowl parade route near Colorado and Orange Grove Boulevards.¹³ No attendance total was recorded, but photos show a sprinkling of fans in small wooden bleachers set up down the third-base and presumably first-base lines. Even Doc Crandall's dog was sporting a gauze mask covering its face.

Behind the plate — wearing a flu mask under his umpire's mask — was 21-year-old John "Beans" Reardon, the most respected amateur arbiter in the city. He began his professional career just a few months later and would go on to call five World Series and three All-Star Games as a National League umpire for 24 seasons.¹⁴

Carl Sawyer provided some comic relief during the

game when he came to the plate using his "trick bat ... aided and abetted by firecrackers, skyrocketes, and sulphur smoke, which was one of the best side shows seen on a local diamond."¹⁵ Truck Hannah, the Standard Oil catcher, "attempted to substitute his catcher's mask for his 'flu' mask, but the health officer spotted him."¹⁶ If anyone else minded wearing a mask, their concerns were quickly dispelled by the excitement of a spirited battle between two strong, competitive teams. As the *Los Angeles Herald* reported, "The rooting of the fans and their 'kill the umpire' cry was somewhat muffled by the gauze masks, but otherwise they appeared to enjoy the contest."¹⁷

The masks seemed to affect the pitchers more than the batters, as the teams combined for 30 hits and 19 runs. Pasadena's John Sullivan and Doc Crandall, Standard Oil's starting pitcher, each connected for two home runs. Hannah and Johnny Rawlings also went deep for Standard, while Irish Meusel "peered over the edge of his mask" to smash four hits for Pasadena.¹⁸

Pasadena tied the game 9-9 with two runs in the bottom of the ninth inning, but Standard rallied to win in the 11th. Karl Crandall — who during the PCL season had broken up his brother Doc's no-hit bid for the Los Angeles Angels¹⁹ — walked with two outs and then advanced to second, then third base on wild pitches by Sullivan. Chick Gandil then "punched out a Texas Leaguer" to score Crandall with the go-ahead run.

Doc Crandall, who pitched all 11 innings for Standard, worked around two singles to retire the side in the bottom half. Sullivan came to the plate seeking his third home run of the day and "the crowd called for him to do something," but he hit a sharp grounder to shortstop Ole Olsen, who handled the play "in a business-like manner" for the final out.²⁰

The flu mask game did not immediately cause much of a stir. When Pasadena lifted its mask ordinance for good four days later, the city rejoiced with an impromptu parade of cars tooting their horns along the main thoroughfares. A police officer burned his mask in the middle of the street, causing other citizens to join in and start a small bonfire on Colorado Boulevard.²¹ The winter-league baseball schedule resumed the following weekend — without masks — until the players had to report for spring training in March.

A few weeks later, the photographs taken at the game began circulating, imprinting this unusual confluence of baseball and a pandemic in the nation's consciousness forever. Norman E. Brown of the Cleveland-based Central Press Association wire service created a series of illustrations with star major-league players wearing flu masks. Newspapers around the country asked fans to guess the identity of each masked player and revealed the answer the next day.²²

Among the players depicted were Shoeless Joe Jackson of the White Sox and Edd Roush of the Reds, who would

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meet up in a fateful World Series that October along with Chick Gandil and Fred McMullin, two participants from the California flu-mask game. By then, the pandemic was largely over and baseball had a new crisis to deal with, a scourge of corruption that threatened the game’s integrity more than its immune system: the Black Sox Scandal.

Sources and Acknowledgments

Thanks to Tom Shieber at the National Baseball Hall of Fame Library for his help in finding additional photos and confirming the players who were involved in this game. Shieber identified the photographer as Frank S. Wilton, a well-known newspaper and film studio cameraman from Huntington Park, California. Thanks also to Eileen King and Christine Rice at the Los Angeles Public Library and Yuriy Shcherbina and Suzanne Noruschat at the University of Southern California for their assistance in tracking down sources.

The most detailed recaps of this game were found in:

- ♦ “Pasadena Ball Game Masked,” *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, January 27, 1919; and
- ♦ “Standard Takes Series from Pasadena,” *Whittier News*, January 28, 1919 (reprinted from the *Pasadena Star-News*).

These accounts were invaluable in piecing together the story of this game, along with:

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- ♦ McNeil, William F. *The California Winter League: America’s First Integrated Professional Baseball League* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2002).
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2. “Los Angeles, California,” *Influenza Encyclopedia*, eds. J. Alex Navarro and Howard Markel, University of Michigan Center for the History of Medicine, influenzaarchive.org/cities/city-losangeles.html, accessed May 7, 2020.
3. William F. McNeil, *The California Winter League: America’s First Integrated Professional Baseball League*



In 1919, Norman E. Brown of the Cleveland-based Central Press Association wire service created a series of illustrations with star major-league players wearing flu masks. Newspapers around the country asked fans to guess the identity of each masked player and revealed the answer the next day. Among the players depicted were Edd Roush (left) of the Reds and Shoeless Joe Jackson of the White Sox. (Photos: *Sandusky Star and Journal*)

(Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2002), 13-15. For most of the California Winter League’s history, it was an integrated league. In 1910 Rube Foster and the Chicago Leland Giants began traveling west to test their skills against white stars from the major and minor leagues. For the next three decades, until World War II forced the league to shut down in the 1940s, Negro League players such as Satchel Paige, Oscar Charleston, Biz Mackey, and Turkey Stearnes played for all-black teams like the Los Angeles White Sox nearly every winter. The 1918-19 season was rare in that no black players were allowed to participate. In 1914, Pacific Coast League President Allen T. Baum “insisted that the color line be drawn” and banned blacks from playing in any of the league’s parks. The ban discouraged Foster and other all-black teams from traveling west during the winter. In 1920, the popular L.A. White Sox built their own ballpark and the league once again thrived with at least one all-black team every year until 1945.

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5. Stephen V. Rice, “Carl Sawyer,” SABR BioProject, sabr.org/bioproj/person/bf817fe2, accessed May 10, 2020.

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New ESPN documentary highlights committee work

On January 19, 2020, ESPN aired the premiere of its *Backstory* documentary series episode, “Banned For Life*,” which included highlights from our Black Sox Scandal committee panel discussion at the 2019 SABR convention in San Diego, along with interviews of committee chair Jacob Pomrenke and SABR member Arlene Marcley, founding director of the Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum in Greenville, South Carolina.

Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Don Van Natta Jr. dove into the story of Jackson and Pete Rose, two baseball players who received the ultimate punishment.

“The stories of Jackson and Rose are even more relevant when considering recent choices by Major League Baseball to embrace legalized sports wagering through sponsorships and other strategies,” Van Natta said.

The episode, which includes an extended tour of the Jackson Museum with author Wright Thompson, also features original interviews with Rose, former MLB commissioner Fay Vincent, and filmmaker John Sayles.

“Is taking money to throw a World Series game the same as betting on your own team to win? It is very different,” Rose said in the interview, which was shot at a casino in Las Vegas where he works signing memorabilia.

The show is now available to watch on the ESPN+ subscription streaming service and occasionally re-airs on TV. Watch a trailer of the episode at espn.com/video/clip?id=27853857



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8. The Rose Bowl played January 1, 1919, capped the 1918 college football season and is statistically recorded as the 1918 Rose Bowl. sports-reference.com/cfb/bowls/rose-bowl.html.

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10. “Pasadena ‘Flu’ Mask Law Wide in Scope; Dogs, Cats Don ‘Em,” *Los Angeles Evening Express*, January 20, 1919.

11. “Pasadena Ball Game Postponed One Week,” *Los Angeles Evening Express*, January 19, 1919.

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Hemingway gambles, loses on 1919 White Sox

By Sharon Hamilton

livesliterary@gmail.com

In *Under Pallor, Under Shadow*, Bill Felber's book on the 1920 American League pennant race, he writes, "Of all its sporting pastimes, the ticket-buying public only invested faith in the integrity of one."¹ Not long before the Cincinnati Reds met the Chicago White Sox in a fateful 1919 World Series, Morris Cohen wrote in *The Dial* magazine, "Baseball is a religion, and the only one that is not sectarian but national."²

Young Ernest Hemingway numbered among those Americans who had faith in baseball — and in the White Sox.

On September 30, 1920, Hemingway wrote a letter to one of his closest friends about his own personal fallout following Shoeless Joe Jackson and Eddie Cicotte's confessions to a Chicago grand jury. The two players admitted on September 28 that they had accepted money from gamblers to fix the 1919 World Series. The 21-year-old Hemingway addressed this letter to Grace Quinlan, a friend who had become like a younger sister to Hemingway. Hemingway wrote the teenaged Grace things he did not confess to anyone else. Consistently, his letters to "Sister Luke" (as he nicknamed her) are among the most vulnerable and revealing of his early letters.³

The months leading up to the fall of 1920 when Hemingway wrote his "Sister Luke" about the White Sox scandal had already been a difficult period for him. Following the end of the First World War, Hemingway returned in January 1919 to his home in Oak Park just outside of Chicago. Hemingway's poor eyesight meant he was not permitted to enlist as a soldier, so he served as a Red Cross volunteer. It was in this role where Hemingway, who was just about to turn 19, had been delivering supplies to Italian soldiers at the front when he was wounded in an Austro-Hungarian mortar attack that almost killed him (the Italian soldier immediately in front of him died). This left him with a permanently damaged right knee.

Hemingway came back to America believing himself engaged to a Red Cross nurse and hoping to make a living as a writer to support them both. In March 1919, the nurse wrote to tell him she had become engaged to someone else.

At least he thought he could still depend on baseball.

Hemingway grew up as a baseball fan. He was fortunate enough to have ready access to a city with two championship teams and he appears to have cheered for them both. Around the age of 16, Hemingway wrote *Baseball Magazine* to order a subscription and to request posters of Chicago White Sox pitchers Big Ed Walsh and Ewell "Reb" Russell along with pictures of Chicago Cubs right fielder Frank "Wildfire" Schulte and catcher Jimmy Archer.⁴



Ernest Hemingway, pictured in 1918 as a Red Cross volunteer in Italy during World War I, grew up as a baseball fan outside Chicago. He appeared to root for both the Cubs and White Sox, and placed a bet on the Sox to win the 1919 World Series. (Ernest Hemingway Collection, John F. Kennedy Library/NARA)

As a fan of teams in both the American and National Leagues, Hemingway not only got to see star players of the Cubs and the White Sox in their glory days, he might also have seen some of baseball's all-time greats on the teams that visited Chicago. Hemingway may have watched Babe Ruth as a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox and by attending games against the Detroit Tigers, he would have seen the player he described in a 1948 letter as the best of all baseball players: Ty Cobb.⁵

Hemingway shared his love of baseball with his father, Clarence, a physician, who appears to have very much enjoyed attending games with his eldest son. In a letter written to his father in early May 1912, when he was 12, Hemingway said he consulted his baseball schedule and saw there was a series coming up between the Cubs and the rival New York Giants.⁶ Hemingway asked his father if they could go to the May 11 game. If they attended that day, they would have seen the Cubs lose 10-3 against the Giants and star pitcher Rube Marquard, one of his favorite players, of whom he would also order a baseball poster.⁷

During his youth there had been many Chicago baseball wins to witness, some of them so transporting for the young author that he later immortalized them in fiction. In his short story "Crossing the Mississippi," Hemingway wrote about the first game of the 1917 World Series between the White Sox and the New York Giants, including a description of Happy Felsch's winning home run. Hemingway could have read about it in the press but it's possible he was there to see it, especially considering that the details included in his story sound like an eyewitness account and not just the result of consulting a box score.⁸

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“This morning in your kitchen we were talking and in came Deggie and discussion occurred in the course of which I was informed by Deggie that it served me right to lose when I bet on the Sox last fall. Thinking the series was honest. And that he didn’t blame the sox for selling it, etc. And becoming somewhat wroth, but not showing it I hope, a great and overpowering desire to spank him laid hold of me. But it was conquered because thought I, ‘Sooth and what will become of the small remnants of my old drag if commit spankage on a dear friend?’”

— Ernest Hemingway letter to Grace Quinlan, September 30, 1920
 (“Deggie” was an acquaintance from Petoskey, Michigan)

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The young man in Hemingway’s story — a lightly fictionalized version of himself named “Nick Adams” — missed the end of the World Series because he (like the real Hemingway) was making his way to Kansas City to seek employment. It was on the train where “Nick” learned the White Sox had won the Series. Hemingway depicted this as a moment of pure joy.⁹ It was this young man and writer who, at age 20, put money on the 1919 White Sox to win the World Series.

Hemingway’s team lost in 1919, but in 1920 his White Sox appeared to be closing in on the American League pennant in a close three-way race with the Cleveland Indians and Babe Ruth’s New York Yankees. His own life at the time remained a mess. Despite his parents’ urgings, he had not enrolled in college and so far as they could see he had no serious intentions of looking for a job. In a searing letter handed to him just days after his 21st birthday, Hemingway’s mother accused him of sponging off his parents and friends, and told him to leave and not to come back until he had proven himself a man.

Although Hemingway continued to write short stories and send them out, he had not been able to sell any of his fiction. In August 1920 he found himself without money or family support. He moved into a boarding house in Boyne City, Michigan, where he wrote to his dear friend Grace Quinlan, his “Sister Luke,” about how hard he found it to have been exiled from home.¹⁰

It was to Grace that Hemingway also wrote a month later, when he learned the news of Joe Jackson and Eddie Cicotte’s confessions about throwing the World Series. It would have been difficult for him to miss, as their testimony made front-page headlines across the nation. Headlines in Michigan included “Eight Sox Men Indicted,”¹¹ “Three Sox Players Confess”¹², and — this could only have come to Hemingway as additionally depressing news — “Players ‘Laid Down’ in Race for 1920 Flag.”¹³ More than one of the Michigan papers also included the now-famous anecdote about a small child asking of Joe Jackson as he left the courtroom, “It ain’t

true, is it, Joe?” The headline read: “The Fallen Idol.”¹⁴

The letter Hemingway wrote to Grace on September 30 likely represented the immediate aftermath of the confessions as this was experienced by many White Sox fans. The scene Hemingway recorded for Grace concerned how he had been having breakfast when an acquaintance saw him and came over to make fun of him for having bet on the White Sox to win the 1919 World Series, and for having believed their play was on the level. Hemingway admitted to Grace that he was tempted to hit the friend who had mocked him but said he had managed to resist.

This letter provides an intimate personal glimpse of scenes as they likely played out for White Sox fans across the nation that week, with a first loss on the field compounded by a second one in the courtroom. Fans like Hemingway found themselves mocked for having believed in the White Sox in the first place, while also living through the knowledge of their betrayal.

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Photos surface of Abe Attell's World Series roommate



In the June 2017 edition of the SABR Black Sox Research Committee newsletter, I wrote an article on Abe Attell's roommates, the two un-indicted gamblers who shared a room at the Sinton Hotel in Cincinnati during the 1919 World Series with Attell, David Zelcer, and the Levi brothers. Many have wondered why the two were never called to testify at the Black Sox criminal trial, as they could have shed light on the activities of the indicted gamblers.

One of the two gamblers was named in the hotel register and newspaper reports as "Jack Davis." My article laid out six proofs that this man's identity was John Henry Davis of Des Moines, Iowa. He was born Yechiel Shanin in 1864 in Dudino, Russia, and changed his name when he emigrated to the United States in 1892.

As I wrote then, "Davis played a lengthier role in the scandal, being named by David Zelcer as one of his companions at a ballgame in Chicago on September 28 (prior to the Series), and having traveled with Zelcer and Ben Levi to Cincinnati. ... It seems clear that people sharing a small room with the noisy and indiscreet Abe Attell would, at a minimum, have had knowledge of the fix and likely have been active participants in the fix."

I recently received an email from Katherine Keller, John Henry Davis's great-granddaughter. Her information helps confirm that this Davis was the gambler Jack Davis. Better still, she shared two photos of Jack Davis — the first photos of this Black Sox figure to surface. One is from his younger days, the other from much later in life.

Thanks to Katherine for sharing these family memories.



— Bruce Allardice

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Author Ernest Hemingway was born in 1899 in Oak Park, Illinois, and spent the first six years of his life in this home. (Carol M. Highsmith Archive, Library of Congress)

Collins: ‘Tough when you can’t trust the man beside you’

By Bruce Allardice

bsa1861@att.net

In an extraordinary, long-forgotten 1920 interview, White Sox outfielder John “Shano” Collins gave what may be the best — certainly the most detailed — contemporary statement by one of the “Clean Sox” about their corrupt teammates who fixed the 1919 World Series. It is the lament of an honest player who feels “knifed in the back” by his crooked teammates.

“Honest John” Collins’s wide-ranging statement was given to his good friend, *Boston Post* sportswriter Paul Shannon,¹ and it contains many highlights:

- ♦ A detailed account of Kid Gleason chewing out his players after Game Two;
- ♦ That the honest Sox suspected their teammates, but, like everyone else, could not prove they were crooked;
- ♦ That the split of the Sox into factions actually started after the 1919 Series;
- ♦ The only player Collins felt sorry for was Joe Jackson.

Below is the heart of the article, as published in the *Boston Post* on November 27, 1920, with my annotated commentary in the endnotes:

Collins Shows Crooks Fooled Fellow Players

By Paul H. Shannon

Now, for the first time in many weeks, one of that faithful little band who struggled hopelessly against the blackest treachery and played the string out to the bitter end, has consented to tell the fans his view of the situation — to let the baseball world know just how the men who stuck to Comiskey and the right, had to fight to remain as factors in a losing battle. For the Chicago White Sox, or at least those now worthy of the name, members of an eight-club league, had to battle eight clubs all the way through the campaign of 1920. And, as the confessions of Cicotte and the others will bear out, they had to battle against traitors in their own camp as well as the Cincinnati Reds in the World’s Series struggle of the year before.

Throws Light on Scandal

Only one of the actors in this strange drama can throw light on the inside workings of such an organization, and Shano Collins, a Greater Boston boy, a Chicago veteran, and a player whose name has always stood for the very best in baseball, is willing to discuss a bad situation and give the fans some idea of the difficulties against which he and the loyal White Sox had to contend. He makes no direct charges. He wastes no time in dilating upon the treachery of individual players. He is satisfied that the courts and the public will see the name of baseball cleared eventually of



Just two months after his teammates confessed to fixing the 1919 World Series, John “Shano” Collins gave a detailed interview to Paul Shannon of the *Boston Post* in which he said he felt “knifed in the back” by the Black Sox. (Chicago Daily News Collection, Chicago History Museum, SDN-058434)

the stain which dishonest men have placed on it.

“It is an awful thing to talk about,” says Collins, “and it comes especially hard when you have to criticize men with whom you have worked for years — men in whose honesty and integrity you placed the fullest confidence. I don’t need to add that the blow was a stunning one. The exposure of scandal paralyzed the fans undoubtedly. But just put yourselves in our places when we came to realize that the men we had played with, traveled with, slept with for years were really knifing us in the back.

Had any one told me at the start of the world’s series a year ago that Cicotte, Weaver and others had gone wrong, I don’t know what I would have done. He’d have had to be a whole lot bigger than me to return to his family. For baseball has always been an altogether on the level sport and the men who played it have always been strictly on the square, too.

Laughed at Yarn

“You may remember that after that opening game in Chicago you yourself came to me in the lobby of the Hotel Sinton at Cincinnati and asked if I had heard of any talk of crookedness going around. You told me what the gamblers were saying and I laughed at the yarn. And if you had not been a very good friend of mine I would probably have expressed myself a great deal more forcibly.

“I had heard some talk but we all laughed at it. Cicotte of course had been badly beaten in the opening game. But we were willing to make allowance for that. You see ‘Knuckles’ had been complaining of a sore arm during the last month of the regular season. You may remember that the only contest in which he worked during the last few weeks was the final

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game at St. Louis where he pitched rather indifferently. He only went in then to keep in shape for the big series.²

Explains a Lot

“Now that the baseball world has heard his confession it is easy to account for what happened. You can now see the reason for his delayed throw to second in the fourth, a play which started the Reds’ stampede.³ You can appreciate his wildness in the first round (inning) when he let the Reds get away to a one-run lead; and Cicotte is seldom wild. But at the time we were willing to accept the explanation that he gave you — that McMullin had scouted the Reds for two weeks and that he, Cicotte, had pitched according to McMullin’s dope, all of which he said was wrong. So we figured it was only an off day for him.

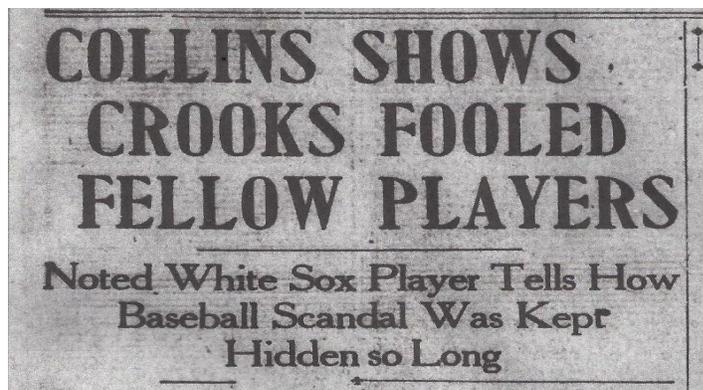
“Our second defeat, next day, when ‘Lefty’ Williams was on the rubber, was unexpected. In this game we outthit the Reds better than two to one and yet we were hopelessly beaten. We outfielded them too and on the train that night on our way back to Chicago we talked the situation over but couldn’t seem to understand what was going on. Of course Williams’ wildness was mainly responsible. But long afterwards in comparing the respective scores and figuring out ten hits against the Reds’ four we made note of the fact that none of our ten hits came at the right time.

‘Kid’ Reads Riot Act

“Kid Gleason sprung a sensation on us in that opening battle at Chicago. When we reported at the grounds Gleason called us into the clubhouse, chased out the trainer and clubhouse boy and then read the riot act. He told us that the word was going around that some of the Chicago White Sox had sold out the series and that it was up to us to throttle the rumor.

“‘You are all my pals,’ said the Kid, ‘and anything that hurts you hurts me. The gamblers say that four of my men are crooked and are dumping the rest. Even Commie [owner Charles Comiskey] has got hold of this story and asked me to investigate it. I laughed at him, but you can answer this slander best yourselves. Go in there today and show the fans just where we stand.’⁴

“This talk put us on edge, and we went in against the Reds to give them a real battle. Little Dick Kerr pitched this game, and it was the first of the series we won. We never knew, Kerr never dreamed, that he and four loyal players were downing Cincinnati and half of his own team. The alleged testimony of Jackson and others has stated how little Dick won in spite of treachery by his mates. And even at that it took a couple of lucky breaks to get us the decision.



Headline from the *Boston Post*, November 27, 1920

Lucky Hit Wins Game

“In that game [Ray] Fisher’s wild throw put him and the Reds in bad. Then [Chick] Gandil, whom many believe was behind all this trickery, came to bat with two men on base. Three times on the day before he had failed in the pinch and this was the game where we outthit the Reds better than two to one. He came to bat on this occasion and it looked as though he tried to get out of the way of the first ball pitched, but it glanced off his bat and rolled between first and second for the luckiest kind of single. Two runs scored and this practically decided the outcome.⁵

“The next game was another upset. I think it was here that our players really began to be convinced that there was something really wrong. Cicotte worked again and while the Reds didn’t get many hits Cicotte tossed away his own game. His interception of a throw which would have cut a man down at home, his own two errors and a failure to tighten up in the pinches, proved disastrous. We were feeling rather downcast that night. I don’t mind saying right now that some of us began to pay a little more attention to those stories that were circulating more widely every hour.

Stars Acted Queerly

“There isn’t much use in discussing the rest of that awful series. Kerr, as you know, won again. Williams again proved a disappointment. You saw the way that some of our men played all through that series. Felsch, one of the best outfielders in baseball, acted queerly when he went after two of those long drives. Others made errors, too. The series was a tremendous disappointment, especially to those who realized the really great strength of the White Sox outfit.

“Some of the men accused of crookedness have pointed to the fact that they hit well up in the averages for this series, and that their fielding was well nigh faultless. I won’t argue with them along this line. I will only state that very few of these hits were made at the proper time and that

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errors were made just when they cost the most. By the end of the struggle a great team was disorganized.

Figure Out Traitors

“Then we [the honest Sox] went to our homes to mull over matters. Before we left Chicago rumor already hinted that eight of the White Sox were involved in the scandal. We started to figure out who these could be by process of elimination. And one by one we were able to decide, although there was nothing tangible upon which to base our suspicions. We were just like you and a good many others — we couldn’t prove anything.

“Some of us got into communications with each other during the winter, and by the time spring arrived we had practically decided upon who the traitors really were. When we reported at the training camp the ugly talk began to be revived. Yet there was no threshing out.

“You see Cicotte was the only one of the men suspected who reported early. For a long time there were only two of the suspects in camp.⁶ One by one they appeared upon the scene and one by one began to get together in a different faction. Suspicion pervaded the White Sox atmosphere but there were no charges made—no attempt to seek an explanation.

“But we were two different outfits in the same club. Eddie Murphy, [Red] Faber, Kerr, Williamson,⁷ Eddie Collins, [Roy] Wilkinson, [Nemo] Leibold and one or two others of us hung closely together. The others made up a group by themselves. The old days of card playing and knocking about together had passed away. I know that several of the men were anxious to get away. It’s tough when you can’t trust the man beside you. That’s the way we felt.

Factions Split Up

“You might have noticed a difference in the way the players acted. In batting practice before the game, at Comiskey Park as well as along the circuit, the loyal players stood at one side of the plate and the others were by themselves. We seldom spoke, excepting to discuss a play or something connected with the game. There was no more friendship among us.

“We fought a losing battle all this year. We had a fine team and we seldom were defeated by any wide margin. We had the strength to stay up there, to win if everything had been right, and yet at the critical moment something would always happen.

Lose Three to Red Sox

“You may remember our last visit this year to Boston. Just before we came there the Red Sox had started a spurt

and were beating all comers.⁸ This allowed us to creep up to the top, or very near it, for we had been fattening at Cleveland’s and New York’s expense. And we reached the Hub with a splendid chance to go away out in front.⁹

“Well, we lost all three games. Cicotte was batted out of the box. Our men were hopeless at bat.¹⁰ The big stickers fell down miserably. I have heard a lot about certain players watching the score board while playing in the Hub and not trying as hard as they might.¹¹ Well, I’m not going to discuss that, I only know that we lost three straight to the Red Sox, that our defeat put the Indians in first place and that we left Boston with every hope blasted.¹²

Crisis at Cleveland

“Then came that crucial series at Cleveland. You were over there. You know that news of the scandal broke then, and word was passed out that we had to lose and let Cleveland win the series. I wish you could realize how downcast we felt. How ashamed we were when we had to face that big crowd of fans at Cleveland. I can hear those yells of ‘crook,’ ‘traitor,’ ‘look for the grand jury’ yet ringing in my ears. It’s a wonder that the fans didn’t mob some of the team.¹³

“We were weeded out in Chicago [Comiskey suspended the suspected players] and we started to St. Louis after taking the series from Cleveland. But we didn’t have a chance. All the men suspected were suspended, and we went to St. Louis without any of our former strength.¹⁴ So Cleveland won eventually.

Comiskey Digs for Players

“I’m not as bitter now as I was. The money part of the series doesn’t mean much to any of the fellows who were on the level. In fact, Mr. Comiskey gave each one of us who were right \$1,500, or the difference between the winning and losing end of the series. And it came right out of his own pocket. Poor Comiskey is to be pitied. I don’t blame him in the least for the retarded [delayed] investigation.

“In fact after those first two games in Cincinnati in 1919, Comiskey went to [National League President] John Heydler and demanded that an investigation be made. He told the National League president that there were all sorts of rumors going about — that there was something going on he couldn’t understand. Heydler pooh-poohed the idea, he believed Comiskey was peeved at the victories of Cincinnati, and he had underestimated the Reds’ strength. But Comiskey held doggedly to his convictions. Yet Commie should have gone to [American League President] Ban Johnson then. The reason he didn’t was that they were on the outs.

Probe Was Delayed

“It would have been better had that investigation started

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and the smoke cleared up right then. It was unfortunate for every one concerned that it was delayed until this fall.

“Now, while I blame the gamblers and feel that they should be stamped out if the game is to continue, no one can tell me that any gambler in the world could go to any ball club and pick out the men who could be reached, just think of it! They say that eight of our club were crooked. No gambler could know enough of any club to pick out eight men and corrupt them. In my opinion there was a go-between — a ball player on our club — who was directly responsible. I hope that they can bring him to book for his evil work.”¹⁵

Pities Joe Jackson

“The only one of the crooks that I could make the slightest excuse for is Joe Jackson. His ignorance and illiteracy left him out to a great extent. I think he is easily influenced. But for the others I have no sympathy. They hurt themselves and the game — not the ones who were on the level.

“Just think how foolish these fellows were. Eight men, and four of them stars, who could have continued for seven or eight more years in the game. Cicotte was good for two or three more years; Felsch, Jackson, Williams and Weaver, if the latter is proven guilty, have forfeited seven or eight years as big league starters. It’s a warning to youngsters who start in the game. The names of these men will never be forgotten.

“While the grand jury is taking all the credit for the investigation that ferreted out the traitors, I want to give the lion’s share of the credit to Jimmie Crusinberry, a Chicago newspaper man. Had it not been for his activity the game might not have been purged for a long time to come.”

Notes

1. Paul H. Shannon (1873-1949) was the *Boston Post’s* lead sportswriter, and Collins’s close friend. Shannon was a founding member of the Baseball Writer’s Association of America. For more on Collins, see his SABR biography by Andy Sturgill at sabr.org/bioproj/person/5a062789.

2. Cicotte’s two-inning “tune-up” start on September 28 was against the Detroit Tigers, not St. Louis. He had made his regular turn in the rotation on September 19, a 3-2 win over Boston, and September 24 against the Browns in Chicago. On that day, Cicotte pitched poorly (5 R in 7 IP) but the White Sox rallied late to clinch the pennant on Shoeless Joe Jackson’s walk-off single.

3. The botched double play was headlined as the “Fatal Play” in the *Boston Post*, October 2, 1919. Watch the play online at SABR.org: sabr.org/latest/rare-footage-1919-world-series-action-discovered-canadian-archive

4. Swede Risberg and several others recalled this

meeting. See Gene Carney, *Burying the Black Sox. How Baseball’s Cover-Up of the 1919 World Series Fix Almost Succeeded* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2007), 46-47, and sources cited there. Risberg remembered Shano Collins replying that talk of the fix “was a lot of bunk.”

5. In the second inning of Game Three, Fisher’s wild throw to second base put runners on second and third. Most newspaper accounts commented on how softly hit Gandil’s single was. However, Shannon labeled the single “a healthy crack.” See the *Boston Post*, October 4, 1919. The Sox won this game 3-0.

6. Risberg, Weaver, and Gandil held out. The first two eventually reported, but Gandil quit professional baseball.

7. No player named Williamson played for the White Sox in 1920. Collins doesn’t list catcher Ray Schalk here, perhaps by mistake.

8. The article says Boston had this spurt. While the Red Sox had taken four of five from Cleveland early that week, they then lost three in a row to the lowly Browns immediately prior to the series with the White Sox, and lost two of three to New York after the White Sox left town.

9. Collins’ memory played him false here. In fact, the Sox had a two-game lead entering the Boston series.

10. The White Sox scored only five runs in three games.

11. See Byrd Lynn’s statement in the *New York Times*, October 4, 1920.

12. This series was played August 30-September 1. The White Sox lost all three games, and historians have long suspected that the same Boston gamblers who fixed the 1919 Series induced the Sox to throw these games. See Rick Huhn, *Eddie Collins: A Baseball Biography* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2008), 171-172; Bruce Allardice, “Playing Rotten, It Ain’t That Hard to Do’: How the Black Sox Threw the 1920 Pennant.” *SABR Baseball Research Journal*, Spring 2016, covers the accusations of these and other thrown games in 1920. While Collins may have felt the White Sox’s pennant hopes were “blasted” by the Boston series, the White Sox recovered and tied for first on September 10.

13. Even after news of the grand jury investigation, the White Sox won two out of three in this series, which was played September 23-25. “Black Sox” Joe Jackson and Lefty Williams starred in the final game of the series, a 5-1 Sox victory, leading the *Chicago Tribune* to proclaim “Sox Give Lie to ‘Don’t Dare to Win’ Story.” See the *Chicago Tribune*, September 26, 1920, which noted that “The White Sox who were on the doubtful list were the men who won the game.”

14. After the Cleveland series the Sox won two straight against the lowly Detroit Tigers. The weakened Sox lost two of three to St. Louis on the final weekend. Interestingly, the Sox went 18-8 in September — suggesting that during the pennant push, and when not playing Boston, the players played honest ball. They were 5-3 after the grand jury news broke.

15. Collins clearly implicates Chick Gandil here.

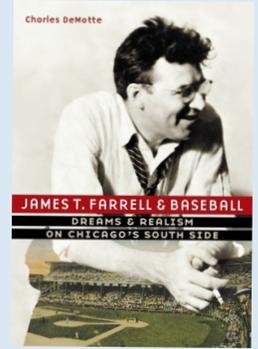
DeMotte's Farrell book wins 2020 Ritter Award

Charles DeMotte's *James T. Farrell and Baseball: Dreams and Realism on Chicago's South Side* was selected as a co-winner of the 2020 Larry Ritter Book Award by SABR's Deadball Era Committee, along with Jeremy Beer's *Oscar Charleston: The Life and Legend of Baseball's Greatest Forgotten Player*.

The award is granted annually by SABR's Deadball Era Committee to the author of the best book

about baseball between 1901 and 1919 published during the previous calendar year.

DeMotte vividly demonstrates that Farrell's experience as a fan of the White Sox — who won the World Series in 1917 when he was 13 and then disillusioned him two years later in 1919 — his participation in baseball as a young player, and his childhood experiences on the streets of South Side Chicago, shaped Farrell's writing.



► CHAIRMAN

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As Mark Twain once said, “History doesn’t repeat itself, but it often rhymes.”

We’ll never fully understand what life must have been like for the Chicago White Sox leading up to the 1919 season. The differences to our world today are stark, but there are plenty of similarities. They spent their offseason under quarantine, too, as public health officials struggled to contain the spread of the lethal H1N1 influenza virus that killed upwards of 50 million people. Some embraced the public health restrictions that were prescribed, such as wearing face masks and limiting large gatherings, and others fought against them. We see the same battles being fought today, from city to city and state to state.

How did this experience affect Shoeless Joe Jackson, Eddie Cicotte, Chick Gandil, and other ballplayers around the country? We sometimes like to think that sports is an escape from the real world, but that white lie only holds true within the white lines. The reality is, baseball players are human beings, too. It’s foolish to assume they had no thoughts about life under quarantine, or the race and labor riots throughout the summer of 1919, or anything else happening around the world. Unfortunately, no one asked them about these events so we can’t truly know what was on their minds.

It seems unlikely that the influenza pandemic had any direct connection to the Black Sox Scandal. A perfect storm of factors was already in place: the intertwined nature of baseball and betting; the National Commission’s reluctance to enforce punishments for players engaged in bribery; the financial concerns of a shortened season, an inflation bubble, and the reserve clause; and the stakes of a huge payoff from gamblers. It was a high-reward, low-risk proposition for these players to consider fixing the World Series.

But consider these facts: Fred McMullin had a young son who turned 2 years old during the fall of 1918, when

the influenza infection rate was at its peak. Frank Shellenback and Red Faber reportedly caught the flu that winter. Cicotte and Swede Risberg had pregnant wives during the baseball season; their children were born within 10 days of each other just after the 1919 World Series ended.

How did these players feel when they left their families back home and headed to spring training in Mineral Wells, Texas? Did they itch to get out of quarantine as badly as many of us do today? Did they feel invincible and unaffected, as do so many young athletes in the prime of their lives? Did this experience, plus the end of World War I, help them adopt a devil-may-care attitude after the flu subsided in the spring of 1919 — let’s get what we can now since life is so short?

We may never know what was inside their heads. But we know what’s inside ours during the current health crisis.

We know how Mike Trout feels about the risks of playing baseball during a pandemic. He recently told ESPN, “My wife [Jessica] is my biggest concern. It’s a scary, scary time for [her]. ... I’m not missing the birth of my first child [due in August]. I know that.”

We know how Max Scherzer feels about the vulnerability of older coaches, athletic trainers, and other people who are instrumental in putting on sporting events: “They’re [doctors] constantly working with every single player on the team, and understanding how infectious this disease is, that’s where you worry that you could be putting somebody in harm’s way,” he said.

It’s worth considering how these events affected ballplayers’ lives 100 years ago. It helps us put our current predicament into perspective. None of what we’re facing today is unprecedented. None of our problems can’t be solved. We can’t see into the future to know how it’s all going to turn out, but we can look to the past for guidance, to help us understand how we got here and what we can do to make our world better for everyone to come after us. That’s what history is all about.

For more information about SABR’s Black Sox Scandal Research Committee, e-mail buckweaver@gmail.com.

George Gorman, lead prosecutor in the Black Sox trial

By Bill Lamb

wflamb12@yahoo.com

At the time of his sudden death in January 1935, George E. Gorman was a pillar of Chicago's political, legal, and civic establishments. Local obituaries extolled his lengthy career as a Windy City attorney, US Congressman, master in chancery, and leader of Irish-American fraternal-political groups.¹

Unmentioned in these memorials was the one event for which Gorman is remembered, albeit faintly, today: his service as lead prosecutor in the 1921 Black Sox criminal trial. In retrospect, this is not entirely surprising. While the Black Sox Scandal remains an outsized entry in the annals of baseball, it was quickly relegated to a historical footnote by Chicagoans more concerned with Prohibition-fueled street violence, racial tensions, rampant municipal corruption, and the pressing problems of day-to-day life.

For its government and defense attorneys, the Black Sox trial was neither a resume highlight nor a career-killer. For Gorman and others, it was simply another high-profile case in a professional lifetime full of them.

George Edmund Gorman was born in Chicago on April 13, 1873. He was the oldest of eight children born to carpenter Patrick Gorman (1840-1910) and his wife Mary (1840-1904), both Irish-Catholic immigrants. Young George was educated in Chicago public schools through high school graduation. He matriculated to Georgetown University in Washington, DC, receiving his bachelor of law degree in 1895. Gorman returned home and was admitted to the Illinois bar the following year. After a brief stint in private law practice, he was appointed an assistant city attorney in April 1897.² About that time, he also began dabbling in local Democratic Party politics.

In June 1900, Gorman married Chicago native Marguerite O'Connor, and in time the couple would have five children. Gorman left the city attorney's office in August 1901 to return to private practice.³ Apart from an abortive stab at gaining appointment to the Chicago Municipal Court bench,⁴ Gorman kept a low public profile until he emerged as a contender for the Democratic Party nomination for a congressional seat in 1912. He won the ensuing primary and was swept into office as Illinois Third District congressman on the electoral tide that carried Chicago Democrats to victory — although the Gorman vote margin over five-term Republican incumbent William Warfield Wilson was relatively small.⁵

An undistinguished back-bencher during the 63rd Congress, Gorman did not seek re-election to his seat. Instead, he stood as the party's candidate for Chicago city treasurer in the April 1915 municipal elections, but was defeated handily by Republican Charles H. Sergel.⁶ Afterward, Gorman returned to his law practice, representing, among other



George E. Gorman was elected to Congress in 1912 from Illinois' 3rd district and served as Assistant State's Attorney in Chicago's Cook County from 1920-28, including during the Black Sox criminal trial. (Photo: Chicago History Museum, *Chicago Daily News*, SDN-0079192)

clients, Irish-American groups opposed to any German-Irish alliance in the run-up to American entry into World War I.⁷ He also gave the occasional speech on the Democratic Party banquet circuit.

Overage for military service when America joined the conflict, Gorman served on the local draft exemption board in 1917-18. More important for our purposes, Gorman had by now made acquaintance with Robert E. Crowe, a young Illinois Superior Court judge and a rising star in Chicago Republican Party ranks. Their differing political affiliations aside, the two men had much in common, both being the sons of Irish-Catholic immigrants and devoted to the cause of political independence for Ireland.

They soon became friends, and when Crowe stepped down from the bench to seek election as Cook County State's Attorney, Gorman was among various Democrats who publicly supported him.⁸ Taking advantage of Democratic Party disarray during the 1920 elections, Republicans cruised to landslide victories nationally, and in Chicago as well, where Crowe easily captured the State's Attorney post. Among those gathered into the new SAO administration was George E. Gorman, appointed Second Assistant State's Attorney.

Sworn into office as Chicago's chief prosecutor in December 1920, Crowe had his hands full. The Beer Wars spawned by Prohibition had rendered Chicago streets unsafe, particularly at night. Meanwhile, racial tensions — the city had been the scene of race riots in 1919 that left 38

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dead and hundreds injured — continued to simmer. And after eight years of Democrat predecessor Maclay Hoyne's relentless investigation of Republican officeholders, there were political scores for Crowe to settle. The baseball game-fixing conspiracy indictments inherited from the Hoyne regime were not high on the new administration's agenda.

There is little evidence that Robert Crowe was a sports fan or that he had any particular interest in the corruption of the 1919 World Series. To him, the so-called Black Sox Scandal was largely a nuisance, a distraction from the far more important prosecutorial duties he had been elected to perform. Crowe, however, was unable to ignore public interest in the baseball charges. He also received pressure from American League President Ban Johnson, White Sox owner Charles Comiskey, and other prominent Chicagoans to take more aggressive action in the matter. Largely to placate those so interested, he assigned the Black Sox case to his new Second Assistant and directed Gorman to have the case court-ready within the next three weeks.⁹

Not known to be a baseball enthusiast and entirely unfamiliar with the Black Sox grand jury record, Gorman was immediately besieged with difficulties. The staff attorneys who had presented the evidence to the grand jury were no longer available to assist him, having left office after the election for private practice.¹⁰

Also confronting Gorman was a recent decision by a Los Angeles judge that dismissed game-fixing indictments returned against Pacific Coast League players on the grounds that the conduct alleged did not constitute a criminal offense under California law.¹¹ Worse yet, the case file was in disarray, with the investigation incomplete and evidential material, including the transcriptions of the Eddie Cicotte, Shoeless Joe Jackson, and Lefty Williams grand jury testimony, missing from the SAO vault.

Perhaps worst of all, Gorman was out of his depth. His 25 years of legal practice had been spent as a civil litigator. Despite a title that made him a top echelon member of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, Gorman had no real experience prosecuting a criminal case, much less a high-profile one against multiple defendants armed with some of Chicago's finest defense lawyers.

In time, Gorman would have two able assistants, both recruited by Crowe from the powerhouse Chicago law firm of Barrett & Barrett. Edward A. Prindiville, a former SAO First Assistant and an experienced prosecutor of headline-producing cases, had the criminal courtroom experience that Gorman lacked and would do much of the heavy lifting for the State during the Black Sox trial. Meanwhile, the scholarly John F. Tyrrell would respond to the blizzard of pretrial motions soon to be filed by the Black Sox defense.¹² Until then, however, Gorman was pretty much on



Robert E. Crowe, seated center, was elected as State's Attorney in Chicago's Cook County in 1920 and quickly assigned the Black Sox case to his new Second Assistant, George Gorman, second from left. Also pictured in this 1923 photo are attorneys Thomas Peden, far left, and Oscar Wolff, who were not involved in the Black Sox trial. (Photo: Chicago History Museum, *Chicago Daily News*, SDN-0075898)

his own.

On February 4, 1921, the first public proceeding in the matter ended in serious setback for the prosecution, with Circuit Court Judge William E. Dever unexpectedly denying a motion for continuance designed to allow the government more time to prepare for trial. Instead, the court gave the Black Sox case a short, preemptory trial date.

Rather than see an unready case taken to trial, Crowe responded to Dever's ruling with an unanticipated maneuver of his own. He administratively dismissed the indictments, but directed Gorman to re-present the Black Sox case to a new grand jury. Using the transcript of the original proceedings rather than presenting live witnesses anew, Gorman swiftly carried out his boss's directive. Within days, superseding indictments were returned against all 13 defendants previously charged, and five more gambler defendants were added.¹³

The filing of new charges achieved the immediate objective of buying the prosecution extra time to get ready for trial, but came at a steep price. The expansion of the accused roster complicated and obscured what had previously been a straightforward prosecution theory of the case — that the performance of eight White Sox players had been compromised by the agents of unindicted New York City underworld financier Arnold Rothstein for the purpose of winning high-stakes bets on a World Series whose outcome had secretly been predetermined.

The addition of the new gambler defendants, mostly Midwestern tinhorns targeted for indictment by AL President Johnson, injected incoherence into the prosecution storyline, making the case more difficult to prove. It also added two particularly resourceful defense attorneys, A.

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Morgan Frumberg and Henry A. Berger, counsel for St. Louis gambler Carl Zork. Once in the case, the Zork defense duo bedeviled prosecutors from start to finish.¹⁴

The State was also beset with problems trying to get the indicted gamblers into court. Defendant Abe Attell, cast as fix financier Arnold Rothstein's principal intermediary, defeated attempts to extradite him from New York in Bronx courtroom proceedings that bordered on farce.¹⁵ Gorman feigned nonchalance over the outcome, informing the press, "It simply means that Attell will not stand trial and consequently there will be one less man in the penitentiary when the case is finished."¹⁶

The proceedings would also be conducted without co-conspirator Hal Chase (who beat extradition from California), gambler defendants Sport Sullivan and Rachael Brown (who could not be located) and Ben Franklin (ill), and White Sox utilityman Fred McMullin (who was severed from trial when he was late arriving in Chicago.)

After trial judge Hugo M. Friend denied most of the defense pretrial motions, jury selection commenced with a 12-person, all-white male panel of self-professed non-baseball fans selected to sit in judgment of the case. Gorman delivered the prosecution's opening statement. Although a criminal courtroom novice, the lead prosecutor was a skilled and experienced orator and his allegations of Black Sox wrongdoing elicited audible oohs and aahs from spell-bound gallery spectators.¹⁷

Subsequently, he and Special Prosecutor Prindiville shepherded a parade of prosecution witnesses to the stand. The most important was former big-league pitcher Bill Burns, a defendant-turned-State's evidence with intimate firsthand knowledge of how the 1919 World Series had been fixed.¹⁸ Belying his "Sleepy Bill" nickname, Burns proved more than a match for sneering Black Sox defense attorneys, and by the time his three days on the witness stand ended, prosecutors were reportedly jubilant.¹⁹

Immediately afterward, the State was compelled to pay the price for having over-indicted the case, as the proceedings became sidetracked by several days of weak and distracting testimony concerning the unlikely involvement of Carl Zork and the other Midwestern gambler defendants in the Rothstein-funded Series fix.

Prosecution reading of the incriminating Cicotte, Jackson, and Williams grand jury testimony also seemed to have less than the desired effect, as the editing which had removed the names of the non-confessing defendants from the transcripts rendered much of the confessions unintelligible.²⁰ The State, however, ended its case on an upbeat note, with unindicted co-conspirator Billy Maharg providing facially credible corroboration of star witness Burns's account of Black Sox participation in the fix plot.

The prosecution interposed no objection to the mid-trial

dismissal of the charges against gamblers Ben and Lou Levi, but opposed (probably ill-advisedly) the same relief being granted to defendants Carl Zork, Buck Weaver, and Happy Felsch. A prima facie case having been presented — barely — against these accused, Judge Friend reluctantly allowed the prosecution to move forward, but placed the State on notice that any convictions returned against Zork, Weaver, and/or Felsch might be overturned by the court post-verdict.²¹

The only accused to testify in his own behalf was gambler David Zelcer, whose denial of fix involvement was bruised by effective cross-examination from prosecutor Prindiville. Little headway, however, was made attacking witnesses presented by the Zork defense, with Gorman getting into an unseemly exchange with defense counsel Frumberg that got so heated the two almost came to blows. Hours later, an abashed Gorman apologized to Frumberg and asked the court to strike his remarks from the record.²²

The Gandil defense followed with testimony intended to undermine the credibility of Bill Burns, with negligible results. Then, with the courthouse poised for Chick to take the witness stand, his defense rested. So did the defense of the other player defendants, none of whom testified or offered any evidence. The proof-taking phase of the case ended shortly thereafter.

The State's summation was delivered by Special Prosecutor Prindiville, who largely confined his remarks to ringing denunciation of grand jury-confessing defendants Cicotte, Jackson, and Williams, fix ringleader Gandil, and gambler David Zelcer, condemned as conspirators who had tried "to kill baseball, to murder our greatest sport."²³ Following hours of oratory by various defense counsel, Gorman brought the attorney speeches to a close with a brief rebuttal that endeavored to focus jury attention on the real victims of the fix of the 1919 World Series: the fans. "They came to see a ball game," Gorman observed. "But all they saw was a con game."²⁴

When its turn finally came, the jury made short work of the case, returning a verdict of not-guilty on all charges against all defendants after less than three hours' deliberation.²⁵ Crushed by the totality of their defeat, prosecutors had little to say after trial. "We did our best," said Gorman, glumly. "But I did my talking to the jury."²⁶ Post-verdict celebrations by the Black Sox were short-lived. Less than 24 hours after their acquittal, Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis issued his famous edict permanently banning Joe Jackson, Buck Weaver, Eddie Cicotte, and the others from Organized Baseball.

Little interested in the Black Sox case to begin with, State's Attorney Crowe brought the criminal proceedings to a swift close a day later, administratively dismissing the charges still pending against Fred McMullin and the other untried defendants.²⁷ Office attention was then returned to prosecution of Chicago murderers, municipal corruption investigations, and other urgent matters.

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► GORMAN

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The Black Sox's acquittal had no detrimental effect on the legal reputation of George Gorman or on his standing with Crowe. He remained a confidante and trusted advisor of the Cook County State's Attorney. And when SAO First Assistant Edgar Jonas was appointed to a judgeship in December 1923, Crowe promoted Gorman into that position.²⁸

The new First Assistant never developed into a top-flight homicide case prosecutor; his only true high-profile murder trial, that of lawyer-accused poisoner William Darling Shepherd in 1926, ended in acquittal. Where Gorman excelled was in handling the sensitive government corruption, labor union graft, and voter fraud cases that inundated the Crowe administration. Here, Gorman's tact, political savvy and experience, and public relations skills served his boss well.

Over time, Gorman also transitioned from Chicago Democrat to Crowe-faction Republican, cementing local party ties with the ambitious chief prosecutor. Crowe's plans for political advancement were derailed, however, in 1928 when he lost a Republican primary bid for a third term in office. While he plotted a political comeback, Crowe retreated to private practice, forming a partnership with his friend Gorman and former SAO assistant prosecutor Joseph P. Savage.²⁹

Making open and unapologetic use of its connections to Chicago political, business, and civic institutions, the firm prospered, with Gorman, appointed to the financially rewarding post of master in chancery, regularly hauling in substantial fees for the firm.³⁰ He also served as counsel to the Chicago Parks District, another lucrative political sinecure. Meanwhile, Gorman remained active in the cause of Irish independence, using his post as president of Chicago's Irish-American Fellowship as a bully pulpit.

Comfortable and content, the serene life of George Edmund Gorman came to an abrupt end. On the morning of January 13, 1935, he suffered a fatal heart attack while at home getting ready for work. He was 61, and the first of the Black Sox criminal trial attorneys to pass away. Following a Requiem Mass at St. Barnabas Church, his remains were interred at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Chicago. Survivors included his widow Marguerite and their five adult children.

Notes

1. George Gorman, Ex-Congressman and Lawyer, Dies," *Chicago Tribune*, January 14, 1935; "Plan Gorman Funeral Rites for Wednesday," *Chicago Daily News*, January 14, 1935; "Rites Tomorrow for G.E. Gorman," *Chicago Times*, January 15, 1935.

2. "Harrison's First Day," *Chicago Record*, April 17, 1897.

3. "Fraud Damage Suits," *Chicago Daily News*,

October 25, 1905.

4. *Chicago Daily News*, September 25 and 27, 1906.

5. Gorman out-pollled Wilson by 1,855 votes, according to the congressional race vote tally published in the *Rock Island (Illinois) Argus*, November 7, 1912. See also, "Wins in Congress Fight," *Chicago Daily News*, November 7, 1912.

6. "Progressives Swept into City Hall in GOP Win," *Chicago Tribune*, April 7, 1915.

7. "Irish Societies' Split over War Argued in Court," *Chicago Tribune*, August 5, 1915.

8. "McGarry Leads Crowe Club," *Chicago Daily News*, October 8, 1920: 4. Crowe opponent Michael L. Igoe had won a divisive Democratic Party primary and was heartily disliked by unseated incumbent State's Attorney Maclay Hoyne and other prominent Chicago Democrats.

9. "Eight Indicted Sox To Be Put on Trial within Three Weeks," *Chicago Tribune*, December 29, 1920; "Indicted White Sox Hearing Soon," *New York Evening World*, December 29, 1920; "Preliminary Hearings Ordered for Accused," *Washington Evening Star*, December 29, 1920.

10. The grand jurors had recommended that departed lead grand jury prosecutor Hartley Replogle be retained to try the case, but SA Crowe was non-committal about enlisting him, as noted in the articles cited in Note 9 above. As it turned out, Replogle only appeared at trial as a witness, not a prosecutor, testifying at a mid-trial hearing on the issue of the admissibility of the grand jury testimony of defendants Eddie Cicotte, Joe Jackson, and Lefty Williams.

11. In the view of Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Frank R. Willis, the fixing of professional baseball games was a breach of contract-type civil wrong, not a criminal offense, under California law, as reported in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and elsewhere, December 25, 1920.

12. During the pretrial stage of the Black Sox case, the interests of the American League in the proceedings were represented by recently retired judge George F. Barrett, retained by AL President Ban Johnson.

13. The newly added gambler defendants were Carl Zork and Benjamin Franklin of St. Louis, David Zelcer of Des Moines, and Ben and Lou Levi of Kokomo, Indiana, all targets designated by AL President Johnson, the silent underwriter of the Black Sox prosecution. Johnson's heavy behind-the-scenes influence upon the prosecution is memorialized in private correspondence contained in the Black Sox file at the Giamatti Research Center of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown.

14. In the writer's opinion, the tandem of Frumberg and Berger provided the most effective representation in the Black Sox case.

15. Attell attorney William J. Fallon, briefly the star of the NYC criminal defense bar, prevailed on the facially ludicrous contention that his client was not the same Abe Attell who had been indicted by the Cook County grand jury.

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16. As quoted in the *Boston Globe* and *New York Times*, June 21, 1921.

17. "Came Near Blows at Baseball Trial," *New York Times*, July 19, 1921.

18. Burns had been retrieved from a Texas hideout near the Mexican border by his friend and fix accomplice Billy Maharg, whose expenses were paid by AL President Johnson. Once back in Chicago, Burns agreed to flip on his co-defendants in return for full immunity from prosecution.

19. "Burns Says Players Made First Offer," *New York Times*, July 22, 1921. Press reviews of Burns's testimony were glowing, with the *Los Angeles Times* of July 22, 1921, observing: "The State's chief witness ... hurled excellent ball, permitting the defense few hits in the grilling cross-examination."

20. After the theft of the original grand jury minutes was discovered, grand jury stenographers recreated the transcripts from their retained handwritten notes, and the Black Sox defense did not contest the accuracy, reliability, or authenticity of these second-generation transcripts. Instead, it sought their suppression on the ground that the Cicotte, Jackson, and Williams testimony had been induced by broken off-the-record promises of non-prosecution and, hence, was involuntary in the legal sense. At the conclusion of a mid-trial hearing conducted out of the jury's presence, Judge Friend ruled the Cicotte, Jackson, and Williams grand jury testimony was voluntary and admissible — but only against those three accused. Mention of other defendants had to be scrubbed from the Cicotte/Jackson/Williams grand jury transcripts, with the anonym *Mr. Blank* inserted every time the name of Chick Gandil, Buck Weaver, Happy Felsch, etc., was mentioned in the text. The end product was an often-indecipherable mess.

21. The redaction of Weaver and Felsch from the codefendant confessions had drained much of the vitality of the prosecution case against them, while the case against Zork was inherently flimsy, resting almost entirely on the testimony of disgruntled World Series betting loser Harry Redmon whose testimony had been impeached by effective cross-examination by Zork defense co-counsel Henry A. Berger.

22. *Chicago Herald-Examiner*, July 29, 1921.

23. As quoted in the *Boston Globe*, *Washington Post*, and elsewhere, July 31, 1921.

24. Per selected excerpts of prosecution and defense closing arguments posted online at law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox.trialssummations.html.

25. This notwithstanding a near-overwhelming case for conviction presented against defendants Cicotte, Jackson, and Williams, and a strong, albeit circumstantial, one against Chick Gandil, Swede Risberg, and gambler David Zelcer, if not the other accused. For the author's theory on the basis of the trial's outcome, see William F.

Lamb, "Jury Nullification and the Not Guilty Verdicts in the Black Sox Case," *SABR Baseball Research Journal*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (Fall 2015), 47-56.

26. As quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1921.

27. As reported in the *Boston Globe*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, and elsewhere, August 4, 1921.

28. "Nine Judges Speed Up Criminal Trials," *Chicago Daily News*, December 1, 1923.

29. Affiliated with the law firm of Crowe, Gorman & Savage, Esqs., was newly admitted attorney Gerald Gorman, our subject's oldest son.

30. A master in chancery served as a court-appointed administrator of estates, trusts, failing businesses, and other concerns in need of judicial supervision and was a highly-sought-after political plum. Following Gorman's death, audit of the firm's accounts revealed that Gorman had received over \$250,000 in master's fees over a five-year period ending in December 1934. See "Gorman Income Told as Crowe Suit Nears End," *Chicago Tribune*, January 24, 1936.

"Sign for the Tip Money Comiskey Offered? Never!" — Swede Risberg

Vernon Infielder Tells of Secret Trip Made by Ham Patterson to This City; Del Crespi Signed

Swede Risberg, late of the Vernon Tigers and just now nominally the property of the Chicago White Sox, is one holdout who says he intends to stay put.

"Honestly, I'd be ashamed to tell you what Comiskey offered me. Why, it's no more than tip money. It's not anywhere near what the Vernon club has been paying me. ... It came to me just before our own season closed, and I just naturally threw it in the waste basket and forgot all about it.

"What'll I do? There are other ways of earning a living than playing baseball. Say, I can play in the bushes on Sundays and holidays and pick up as much money as Comiskey offered me.

"I wish there was a Federal League running. You couldn't see me jump for the dust I would make. I was foolish not to have gone to the Federals when the chance came over a year ago. One year under the old Feds would have been better than three years with the White Sox at Comiskey's starvation wages."

— **San Francisco Chronicle**
December 23, 1916

What would it take to fix the 2019 World Series?

By Bruce Allardice

bsa1861@att.net

At the [SABR Black Sox Scandal Centennial Symposium](#) in Chicago last year, betting expert Kevin Braig gave a presentation in which he said the 1919 World Series scandal couldn't happen today, given skyrocketing player salaries and changes in sports betting rules which would make it impossible for any one gambler, or consortium of gamblers, to place enough wagers to finance such a fix.¹

As a perhaps unintended consequence of skyrocketing baseball player salaries, these higher pay levels work to make baseball more honest — or rather, make it less likely that gamblers could bribe players to throw games.² Assuming for the sake of discussion that eight players on a modern championship team could be lured into throwing a World Series, what kind of money would be required?

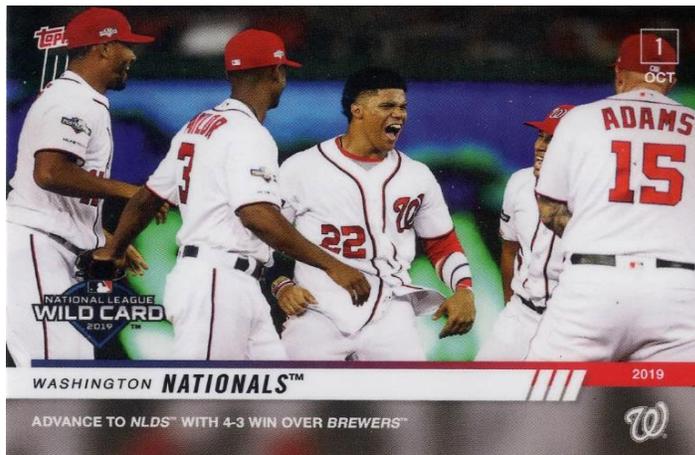
As discussed below, the bribes that the Black Sox players agreed to amounted to about two to four years' salary. What they actually received was about one year's salary apiece. With that as a benchmark, let's try and find 2019 equivalents. For purposes of this article, I'll compare the salaries of the 1919 Sox to those of the 2019 World Series winners, the Washington Nationals.

The Black Sox included a star pitcher (Eddie Cicotte), a solid number-two starter (Lefty Williams), stars at left field, center field, and third base (Joe Jackson, Happy Felsch and Buck Weaver), two average infielders (Chick Gandil and Swede Risberg), and one utility/backup infielder (Fred McMullin).

I found close comps in talent and experience on the Nats for seven of these players: pitchers Max Scherzer and Patrick Corbin, right fielder Adam Eaton, third baseman Anthony Rendon, first baseman Ryan Zimmerman, short-stop Trea Turner, and backup infielder Wilmer Difo. For Shoeless Joe Jackson, the comparable Washington outfielders were young, both under the age of 23, so I substituted the second-best (and second-highest paid) outfielder in the American League, Giancarlo Stanton of the New York Yankees. Observers might disagree about one or more names on this list, but I think it's a good starting point for comparison.

The combined 2019 salaries of the eight players named was \$126 million.³ Given that salary benchmark, gamblers would have to offer these players 2-3 years' salary — around \$300 million — to match the offer made to the players in 1919, and actually pay at least \$150 million in cash. The gamblers would also have to come up with at least twice that sum to place wagers and earn enough money to both pay the players and still make a profit off a World Series fix.

Wagers of this size are basically unknown in modern times. For the 2019 World Series, reports came in from ESPN and *USA Today* that a Houston furniture store owner, Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale, wagered and lost



For modern gamblers to match the offers made to the 1919 White Sox to fix the World Series, based on a comparison of salaries, they would need to come up with around \$300 million to bribe a group of players from the 2019 champion Washington Nationals. (Photo: The Topps Company)

\$13.5 million betting on the Astros. McIngvale had to jump through several regulatory hoops in order to place the \$13.5 million bet. The reports stated that in recent years, wagers of \$1 million were rare, and that, for one wager of \$5 million, FanDuel had to obtain special permission from gaming authorities to accept such a high bet.⁴

Wagers sufficient to pay \$150 million to ballplayers and still make a profit simply would not be accepted by major betting sources and, even if accepted, would be so quickly known to authorities as to immediately invite investigation. In the case of a high roller like McIngvale, the \$13.5 million he stood to win on his World Series wager would not be enough to bribe even *one* good player with two to four years of that player's salary, let alone bribe enough players (8) to throw a World Series.

Could the fix work today — if baseball's pay scales resembled 1919?

By now, most informed baseball fans realize the 1919 White Sox were in fact a well-paid team by 1919 standards. The work of SABR members Bob Hoie and Mike Haupert, among others, has dispelled the myth that the underpaid Sox, angry over their low salaries, fixed games in order to get back at their skinflint owner, Charles Comiskey.⁵

Looking back at the monies involved in the Black Sox Scandal, a modern reader might be forgiven if he or she fails to comprehend the impact of these paltry — by 2020 standards — sums. Take, for example, star pitcher Eddie Cicotte's \$8,000 salary. Today, Mike Trout earns much more than \$60,000 every time he goes to bat and \$37 million for the entire season.⁶

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A bit of perspective is needed: While \$8,000 may not sound like much today, it was over four times the average salary of a skilled trade worker in 1919. To give but one example, bakers in Chicago earned \$29-35 per week (\$1,508-1,820 per year), depending on their skill level.⁷ Even the lowest paid White Sox earned more than that, and the Sox players were free in the offseason to earn more money.

One inflation calculator posits a 15.57-1 ratio from 1919 to 2019.⁸ Thus Cicotte's salary, in 2019 equivalents, would be \$124,560. This still isn't close to what Mike Trout earns in a single game ... but I suspect most Americans would be delighted with such a salary. I also suspect most Americans believe MLB players should be paid a lot closer to \$124,560 than \$37 million.

Looked at via 2019 equivalents, the Sox don't seem to be quite so underpaid (see chart below.) They may not make the 2019 major-league minimum, but with the exception of Fred McMullin, they all make more than the average American wage earner does.⁹ The adjusted total team payroll of over \$1.3 million looks a lot better, too.

By throwing the World Series, the Black Sox also forfeited the difference between the winner's and loser's share — about \$1,500 in 1919, which translates to around \$31,000 in 2019 dollars.¹⁰ The Black Sox demanded and received bribes worth far more than that. Sport Sullivan's offer to each of them was \$10,000 apiece for a sum total of \$80,000, or \$1.24 million in today's money. This amount alone motivated the players to join the conspiracy.

The players also agreed with Abe Attell on payments of \$20,000 for each game lost, or \$100,000 for the group (\$1.56 million in today's money).¹¹ Divided equally among eight players, Attell's full payoff would have netted the players \$12,500 apiece (or \$194,625 in 2019 money — close to the loser's share of the 2019 Series.)

The gamblers did not actually pay the players anything close to this — but for purposes of joining the conspiracy, the promised payoffs were enough to motivate the players to throw the games.

If players today were paid 1919-scale salaries, it might be possible to raise enough bribe money to tempt them.¹² The sums involved for 1919-scale promised bribes — \$2.8 million if you combine the Sullivan and Attell offers — would arguably be within the reach of a modern bettor who could wager, and earn, \$13.5 million on a World Series, such as “Mattress Mack” McIngvale.

Notes

1. Kevin Braig's presentation can be found at sabr.org/2019-black-sox-symposium.

2. As we've seen with the Houston Astros, cheating to win — cheating that doesn't involve bribes — still exists.

Selected Players	1919 Salary	2019 Equivalent
E. Collins	\$15,000	\$233,550
Cicotte	\$8,000	\$124,560
Weaver	\$7,250	\$112,882
Schalk	\$7,083	\$110,282
Jackson	\$6,000	\$93,420
Faber	\$4,000	\$62,280
Felsch	\$3,750	\$58,387
Williams	\$3,500	\$54,495
Gandil	\$3,500	\$54,495
Risberg	\$3,250	\$50,602
McMullin	\$2,750	\$42,817
Leibold	\$2,650	\$41,075
S. Collins	\$2,625	\$40,871
Kerr	\$2,200	\$34,254
Team Payroll ¹³	\$88,461	\$1,377,337

3. Salary numbers from sportrac.com.

4. See David Purdum, “‘Mattress Mack’ places \$3.5 million bet on Astros to win World Series,” ESPN.com, October 1, 2019, and Charles Curtis, “Houston-area furniture store owner ‘Mattress Mack’ lost \$13M betting on the Astros,” *USA Today*, October 31, 2019. Most sportbooks limit bets to \$1,000-2,500 per bet. Books with higher limits usually require a cash deposit by the bettor.

5. A good summary can be found in Jacob Pomrenke, “1919 American League Salaries,” *Scandal on the South Side: The 1919 Chicago White Sox* (Phoenix, Arizona: SABR, 2015), accessed online at sabr.org/research/1919-american-league-salaries.

6. Trout's 2019 salary (including a bonus) was \$37.1 million, according to Baseball-Reference.com. On a 162-game schedule, he earns \$229,115 per game, or about \$60,000 per plate appearance. For the 1919 White Sox, the figures are for salary only, and don't include ancillary income such as endorsement income — which was minimal by modern standards.

7. See the US Department of Labor's May 15, 1919, report, “Union Scale of Wages and Hours of Labor,” accessed online at fraser.stlouisfed.org/files/docs/publications/bls/bls_0274_1920.pdf.

8. Per online inflation calculator at dollartimes.com/inflation/inflation.php?amount=1&year=1919.

9. In early 2019, \$47,060 was the median wage for a 40-hour week.

10. For a detailed discussion of the economics of the scandal, see my article, “The Economics of the Black Sox

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AROUND THE WEB

Before the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic disrupted the sports world, the biggest story in baseball was the Houston Astros' sign-stealing scandal, which led to the firings of GM Jeff Luhnow and manager A.J. Hinch, along with two other skippers, Alex Cora of the Boston Red Sox and Carlos Beltran of the New York Mets.

Some compared the Astros' 2017 World Series title and 2019 American League pennant to the Chicago White Sox's scandal from a century ago.

On **Rob Neyer's** SABRcast podcast, Jacob Pomrenke, Joe Sheehan, and Jason Turbow [offered insight](#) into how the Astros' scandal stacks up in baseball history and whether the punishments fit the crimes.

Brant James of Bookies.com examined [how the Astros' sign-stealing scandal](#) compares to the Black Sox.

Ben Hoyle of *The Times of London* also looked at baseball's [long history of cheating](#) on and off the field.

Here are some other Black Sox-related stories of interest:

◆ **Adam Berenbak** has a [new SABR Games Project story](#) about the Black Sox's final major-league game on September 27, 1920, before the scandal came crashing down.

◆ **Phil Williams** wrote a [SABR BioProject profile](#) of Walter Schlichter, the Philadelphia writer and boxing promoter who played a crucial role in exposing the Black Sox Scandal.

◆ **David Fleitz's** new book, *Eddie Cicotte: The Life and Career of the Banned Black Sox Pitcher*, is now available for pre-order and due out in September from McFarland & Co.

◆ **Dan Wallach** wrote about changing perceptions of Shoeless Joe Jackson for the SABR Emil Rothe Chicago Chapter's [January 2020 newsletter](#).

◆ **Jennifer Greening** wrote about MLB's changing stance on Shoeless Joe Jackson's Hall of Fame eligibility for the SABR Emil Rothe Chicago Chapter's [May 2020 newsletter](#).

◆ **Rick Huhn** reviewed Dan Helpingstine's new book, *The Black Sox Scandal*, from Arcadia Publishing, in the SABR Deadball Era Committee's [April 2020 newsletter](#).



◆ **Jeremy Feador's** "Our Tribe History" podcast series followed the 1920 pennant race between the Cleveland Indians and Chicago White Sox.

◆ **Gary Ashwill** looked at how the Negro Leagues' Chicago American Giants were [affected by the 1919 race riots](#) on the South Side at his Agate Type blog.

◆ **Phil Thompson** at the *Chicago Tribune* [offered a recap](#) of the sports world during the 1918 influenza pandemic, with a focus on the Cubs and White Sox in the World Series.

◆ **Terry Bonadonna's** new podcast series, "Chicago's Civil War," looked back at the Cubs-White Sox postseason City Series in the early 20th century.

◆ **Warren Rogan** interviews Dr. Susan Dellinger, granddaughter of Hall of Famer Edd Roush, for his "Sports' Forgotten Heroes" podcast ([scroll down to Episode 79](#)).

◆ **J. Scott Sewell** penned an essay for the *Cincinnati Enquirer* on the [1919 Reds](#) and their deserving World Series championship.

◆ **Anthony Bush** told the story of when the Black Sox [played outlaw baseball](#) on Minnesota's Iron Range in 1922 for Hometown Focus.

◆ **Kent Youngblood** of the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* [spoke with Stew Thornley](#) about the White Sox and Cubs playing exhibition games in Minnesota before the 1917 season.

◆ **Laurence Holmes** of The Score (670-AM) in Chicago [talked with Jacob Pomrenke](#) about the 100th anniversary of the Black Sox Scandal.

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Bribery," in the [June 2015 SABR Black Sox Scandal committee newsletter](#).

11. William F. Lamb, *Black Sox in the Courtroom: The Grand Jury, Criminal Trial and Civil Litigation* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2013), 113. \$100,000 divided among eight players equals \$12,500 apiece. Any additional promised bribes would not alter this article's conclusions.

12. Again, I wish to emphasize that this study looks only at salaries. Modern players earn far more in endorsements and World Series shares than their 1919 counterparts.

13. This total was for the Opening Day roster. By the end of the season, the combined salaries and bonus money paid out to the 23 World Series-eligible White Sox players was \$93,053. According to Jacob Pomrenke, "If you include total salary payouts plus earned bonuses at the end of the season, the White Sox ended up with the top payroll in the major leagues for 1919, \$10,000 more than the Boston Red Sox."

When Mr. Heydler went to Cooperstown

By Jacob Pomrenke
buckweaver@gmail.com

In the middle of the biggest crisis baseball had ever faced, National League president John Heydler took a trip home to upstate New York to help support a project that would develop into the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

On September 6, 1920, Heydler visited the village of Cooperstown to serve as an umpire at the grand opening of Doubleday Field — the site where, legend had it, Civil War military hero Abner Doubleday organized the first game of baseball among local schoolboys back in 1839.¹

Cooperstown's civic celebration during Labor Day weekend was the first step in an effort to create a permanent memorial for Doubleday's "creation", honoring the sport that had already become America's national pastime.² In addition to an afternoon of games on the playing field, a street fair, parade, and concert were planned down Main Street in the picturesque village on Otsego Lake.³

Heydler, who got his start in baseball as an umpire⁴ before moving into the executive ranks, and NL umpire Barry McCormick went to Cooperstown to officiate a game between the village's top amateur nine and the neighboring town of Milford. Rain hampered the festivities and less than \$500 was raised in the village's quest to purchase the ballpark land, at Elihu Phinney's family farm west of the lake.⁵

In the meantime, Heydler and baseball's powers-that-be had more worrisome matters to deal with. One week earlier, Chicago Cubs president William Veeck reported that gamblers had attempted to fix a game between the Cubs and Philadelphia Phillies. Before traveling to New York, Heydler met with AL president Ban Johnson and Judge Charles McDonald, who called for a grand jury in Chicago to investigate the fix rumors. McDonald's order came down on September 7, one day after the Cooperstown celebration.⁶

The grand jury soon expanded its focus to the fixing of the 1919 World Series and, by the end of the month, eight Chicago White Sox players would be implicated in the Black Sox Scandal. They were all banned for life and eventually deemed ineligible for election to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, which opened in 1939.

Baseball historians long ago debunked the idea that Abner Doubleday had anything to do with the origins of the national pastime. As SABR's Mark Pestana wrote, "Elementary fact-checking reveals the future General Doubleday to have been enrolled at [the US Military Academy in] West Point at the time of his alleged invention. ... Numerous accounts of earlier baseball activity have since been documented."

Despite Doubleday's lack of involvement in baseball, Cooperstown remains the national pastime's spiritual home, thanks to the lasting success of the Hall of Fame, and Doubleday Field is one of its crown jewels. In 1923,



Just weeks before the Black Sox Scandal exploded, National League president John Heydler visited the village of Cooperstown in upstate New York to dedicate Doubleday Field on September 6, 1920. (Chicago History Museum, *Chicago Daily News*, SDN-062287)

the village finally raised the \$5,000 needed to purchase the ballpark land. A decade later, the Works Progress Administration helped renovate the field and built a new steel-and-concrete grandstand, raising the seating capacity to nearly 10,000 spectators.⁷

The refurbished ballpark was ready in time for the Hall of Fame's grand opening on June 12, 1939, when Heydler — now retired after 32 years of service to the National League — introduced commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis to dedicate this one-of-a-kind shrine to baseball.⁸

Notes

1. Bill Francis, "History of Doubleday Field," National Baseball Hall of Fame, accessed online on May 20, 2020.
2. For an analysis of the Abner Doubleday legend, see Mark Pestana, "The Doubleday Game," SABR Games Project, accessed online on May 20, 2020.
3. "Today is Baseball Day," *Oneonta Star*, September 6, 1920.
4. Stephen V. Rice, "John Heydler," SABR BioProject, accessed online on May 20, 2020.
5. Heydler wrote a personal check for \$100 to help the fundraising drive. "President Heydler Manifests Interest by Being in Cooperstown Monday," *Oneonta Star*, September 8, 1920.
6. William F. Lamb, *Black Sox in the Courtroom: The Grand Jury, Criminal Trial and Civil Litigation* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2013), 29-30.
7. Francis, "History of Doubleday Field."
8. "Baseball Hall of Fame Dedicated," *Des Moines Tribune*, June 12, 1939.