

BLACK SOX SCANDAL



Vol. 12, No. 2, December 2020

Research Committee Newsletter

Leading off ...

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Chairman's Corner

By **Jacob Pomrenke**
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On August 6, 2003, Gene Carney sent out a welcome message on Yahoo.com to a group of about a dozen SABR members:

"Thanx for your interest in the B-Sox group. I became mildly addicted to what I used to call 'the Black Sox Scandal' nearly a year ago. I'm not sure I will ever 'recover.' ... I hope this group becomes a place for reasoned and documented discussion, and a place where we can all ask questions. My experience has been that the more we learn about the events of 1919-1924, the more we realize there is to learn — it's just a terrific mystery story, which will continue to fascinate both baseball fans and historians."

That Yahoo email discussion group has been our primary means of communication for any and all Black Sox talk over the past 17 years. The questions and

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This photo, recently sold by Heritage Auctions, taken in March 1917, in Mineral Wells, Texas, is the earliest image of the 1917 World Series champion White Sox. It is very likely the first image with all of the future "Eight Men Out" together and pictured in a White Sox uniform, as well. See page 11 for full photo IDs. (Photo: Heritage Auctions)

Rare 1917 photo shows all Eight Men Out for first time

First documented reference to 'Black Sox' comes in spring training

By **Leman Saunders**
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Images from the past tend to draw in curious minds, as they capture a moment in time and can tell a litany of stories within a single frame. In the 1975 edition of SABR's *Baseball Research Journal*, George W. Hilton made a single team photograph of the 1919 Chicago White Sox the subject of a research article. Hilton set out to identify the players depicted for what he believed was the first time.¹

Recently I found myself in the position to embark on a similar journey with a rarely seen White Sox team photograph.

A good source for finding rare photographs in recent years has been auction houses. In October 2020, Heritage Auctions posted online a vintage White Sox team photo that was labeled as being from 1916-17.² I had seen this photograph before, but in a small, blurry, low-quality image that made it difficult to identify any players. The Heritage image is a much higher resolution and their website allows viewers to zoom in on every inch of the photograph.

The significance of this photograph is twofold: first, because it was taken during spring training, it may be the earliest image of the eventual 1917 World Series champion White Sox. Second,

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SIGN UP FOR OUR NEW EMAIL DISCUSSION GROUP

This December, Yahoo! shut down all of its existing email discussion groups — including the 1919 Black Sox group that we first formed back in 2003.

SABR has launched a new organization-wide account at sabrgroups.org, working with the Groups.io platform, to help facilitate any chapters, committees or special interest groups who wish to maintain an email discussion forum.

You are all invited to join us on the new 1919BlackSox discussion group, which you can do by sending a blank email message to this address:

1919BlackSox+subscribe@sabrgroups.org

You should receive a confirmation email from sabrgroups.org; just click “reply” on that message to officially join the group and start posting/receiving messages at 1919BlackSox@sabrgroups.org.

SABR has preserved the entire message archive of the Yahoo! group going back to its founding by Gene Carney in 2003, and we are working to find a way to make that archive accessible to group members on the SABR website in the near-future.

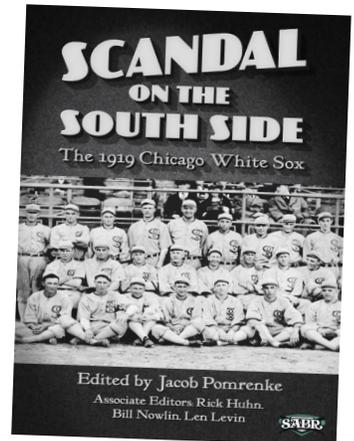
Thanks for being a part of our group, whether you have contributed to our amazing discussions for the last 17 years or just followed along quietly in the background. It’s been an amazing ride, and I’m happy we’ll be able to continue our discussions over at sabrgroups.org in the future.

— Jacob Pomrenke

Catch up on Black Sox committee projects, research

Want to dive deeper into the Black Sox Scandal? Here are a few ways to catch up on some of our recent committee projects:

◆ *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 available from the SABR Digital Library 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.



◆ *Eight Myths Out*, published in 2019, is an online project on the most common errors and misconceptions about the scandal. View it at SABR.org/eight-myths-out.

◆ **2019 Centennial Symposium:** [Listen to highlights](#) from the SABR Black Sox Scandal Centennial Symposium, held on September 28, 2019, at the Chicago History Museum to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1919 World Series.

◆ **Infamous America podcast:** Season 2 of the [Infamous America podcast series](#), produced by Black Barrel Media in 2019, focuses on the Black Sox Scandal, using research from our *Scandal on the South Side* book.

Free download available
at SABR.org/ebooks

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Reluctant or ringleader? Eddie Cicotte's role in the fix

By Bill Lamb

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There is no dispute that Chicago White Sox ace Eddie Cicotte was an active participant in the throwing of the 1919 World Series. When the scandal erupted in late September 1920, several other accused players named Cicotte as a co-conspirator, and Cicotte himself admitted that he had taken a \$10,000 payoff in return for his agreement to join the fix.

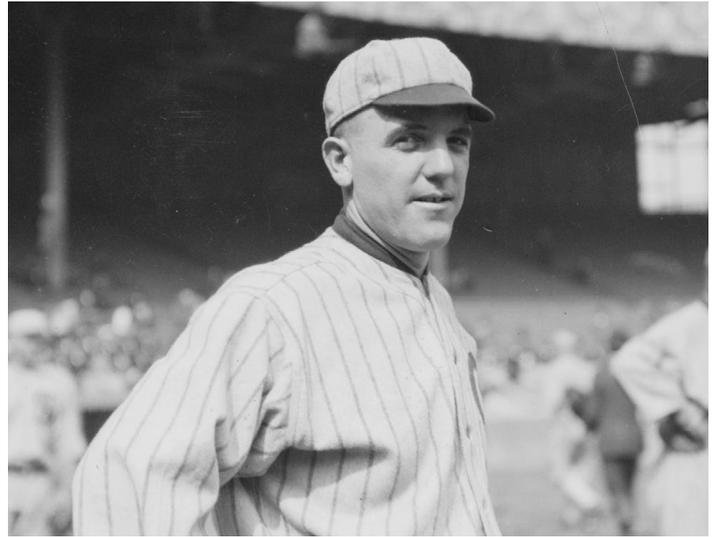
In his grand jury testimony, Cicotte claimed to be a reluctant participant who went along with the plan in order to acquire some much-needed cash. Fix insider Sleepy Bill Burns, meanwhile, maintained that Cicotte was one of the instigators of the plot along with Chick Gandil. This essay analyzes the historical record to determine whether Cicotte was the half-hearted fix actor he claimed to be, a ringleader who was involved from the very beginning, or somewhere in between.

As the 1919 World Series drew near, 35-year-old Edward Victor Cicotte stood atop the pinnacle of an accomplished 14-year major league career. He had been a key member of Chicago's 1917 World Series champions, and was just completing an exceptional season, leading American League hurlers in victories (29), winning percentage (.806), innings pitched (306 2/3), and complete games (30).

Much was expected of Cicotte in the upcoming best-of-nine World Series against the National League pennant-winning Cincinnati Reds, particularly given the unavailability of 1917 Series hero Red Faber, sidelined by injury and illness. About the only thing nagging White Sox supporters was fear that the heavy volume of work had overtaxed Cicotte, as sore-arm concerns required more judicious use of the staff mainstay in the final weeks of the 1919 campaign.

Unbeknownst to the faithful, Cicotte was among the White Sox players bent on throwing the Series in return for secret payoffs from gamblers. In Game One, an abrupt fourth-inning meltdown by Cicotte precipitated a landslide 9-1 Cincinnati triumph. The game-changing rally was triggered by the White Sox's failure to complete what should have been an inning-ending double play involving three of the fixers: Cicotte, shortstop Swede Risberg, and first baseman Gandil.

In Game Four, Cicotte exhibited the pitching artistry expected of him, throwing a complete-game five-hitter. But two egregious fielding misplays by Cicotte himself spelled the difference in a 2-0 Reds victory. With the Sox down 4-0 late in Game Six and on the verge of elimination, slumbering middle-of-the-lineup bats – the American League's best-hitting club had gone an astounding 26 innings without scoring previously – awoke and salvaged



Eddie Cicotte expressed remorse later in life for his role in the 1919 World Series fix, but his words and actions at the time may indicate he was more of an instigator in the Black Sox Scandal than the reluctant go-along as he has been portrayed in popular media. (Photo: Library of Congress)

a 5-4, 10-inning reprieve. Cicotte then set the Reds down smartly in Game Seven, winning 4-1. But when Lefty Williams could not make it out of the first inning the next day, Sox hopes were doomed. A forlorn late-game rally made the final 10-5 score halfway respectable, but the Cincinnati Reds were now world champions.

In a widely syndicated column the following day, respected Chicago sportswriter Hugh Fullerton placed the bona fides of the Series outcome in question. But aside from *Collyer's Eye*, a lightly regarded racetrack sheet, and a handful of other journalists, few shared Fullerton's suspicions. As the 1920 season opened, the insinuations of Series corruption were largely a dead letter – almost a complete year passed before the controversy returned to the front pages.

The events that refocused attention on the integrity of the 1919 World Series are beyond the scope of this essay. Suffice it to say that the simmering Black Sox Scandal exploded when fix insider Billy Maharg went public with an expose published in a Philadelphia newspaper on September 27, 1920. Maharg alleged that Game One, Game Two, and Game Eight of the 1919 World Series had been deliberately lost by White Sox players in return for a clandestine \$100,000 payoff from gamblers.

Within hours, Maharg's charges had circulated nationwide and Cicotte was summoned by White Sox owner Charles Comiskey. On the morning of September 28, the unnerved pitcher was questioned about Series corruption in the law office of attorney Alfred S. Austrian, the team's

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corporate counsel, while a mostly silent Comiskey sat nearby glowering at his star pitcher. Cicotte's interrogation was memorialized by a shorthand reporter and an abridged transcript is among the scandal artifacts now viewable online.¹

Austrian Interrogation

As reflected in available statement excerpts, Cicotte readily admitted fix complicity to Austrian, adding, "I don't know why I did it ... I must have been crazy!"² He then asserted that "Risberg, Gandil, and [Fred] McMullin were at me for a week before the Series began. They wanted me to go crooked. I needed the money. I had the wife and the kids."³

According to Cicotte, the plan to fix the Series originated with Chick Gandil, a product of his long acquaintance with "gamblers and low characters back in Arizona." Thereafter, "eight of us got together in my room three or four days before the Series started. Gandil was master of ceremonies. We talked about it, and decided we could get away with it. We agreed to do it."⁴

For his participation, Cicotte demanded \$10,000 in cash, paid up front. Negotiation about the amount and timing of payment "went on for days ... but I wanted that \$10,000 and I got it."⁵ The evening before the club left for the Series opener in Cincinnati, Cicotte found the \$10,000 under his hotel room pillow, but maintained that he did not know who put it there.⁶ Once he had the cash "there in my fingers," Cicotte went ahead and "threw the [opening Series] game."⁷

Asked to explain how the games were thrown, Cicotte replied, "It's easy. Just a slight hesitation on a player's part will let a man get a base or make a run."⁸ As for his own malfeasance, Eddie stated: "I did it by not putting a thing on the ball. You could have read the trademark on it the way I lobbed it over the plate. A baby could have hit 'em."⁹ He also acknowledged deliberately sabotaging the potential double play comebacker hit to him during the pivotal fourth inning of Game One.¹⁰

Cicotte did the same thing in Game Four, "deliberately" making a bad throw to first on a comebacker to put a runner aboard in a scoreless contest, and then "I intercepted a throw from the outfield and deliberately bobbled it, allowing a run to score. All the runs scored against me [in a 2-0 defeat] were due to my own deliberate errors."¹¹ In short, Cicotte "did not try to win" in Game One and Game Four.¹²

The Cicotte statement concludes with a lament: "I've lived a thousand years in the last twelve months. I would not have done that thing for a million dollars. Now I've

lost everything, job, reputation, everything. ... I'm through with baseball. I'm going to lose myself if I can and start life over again."¹³

Grand Jury Testimony

After his interrogation of Cicotte was finished, Austrian whisked the pitcher to the Cook County Courthouse and presented him to Assistant State's Attorney Hartley Replogle, the lead prosecutor in the ongoing grand jury probe of Series fix allegations.

Unlike the grand jury testimony of Joe Jackson and Lefty Williams, the transcript of the ensuing Cicotte testimony has not survived. Rather, what we know of its content derives from two sources: (1) a synopsis of the Cicotte testimony contemporaneously created by an unidentified prosecutor,¹⁴ and (2) those aspects of Cicotte's testimony embedded in his January 14, 1924 deposition for the breach of contract civil lawsuit later filed by Joe Jackson.¹⁵

Cicotte's grand jury appearance began with the witness's formal waiver of his legal rights, including the protection against self-incrimination.¹⁶ Cicotte then proceeded to render an account of his involvement in the fix of the 1919 World Series – one significantly different from the events related to Alfred Austrian.

In this version, Cicotte traced the fix to a meeting of eight White Sox players – Chick Gandil, Joe Jackson, Lefty Williams, Buck Weaver, Swede Risberg, Happy Felsch, Fred McMullin, and himself – held at the Ansonia Hotel in New York in mid-September as the White Sox closed in on the pennant.¹⁷ Discussion of the fix was initiated by either Gandil or McMullin, who stated that "we could make a good thing (i.e., money) if we threw the world's series to Cincinnati." Asked his price to join the fix, Cicotte said "I would not do anything like that for less than \$10,000," to which they replied, "Well, we can get that together and fix it up."¹⁸

Fix discussions resumed several days before the Series was to start in Cicotte's room at the Warner Hotel in Chicago. Also attending the gathering were Gandil, Felsch, Weaver, and perhaps Williams and McMullin.¹⁹ Cicotte renewed his demand to be paid up front, and "wanted the money put in my hands before we started to Cincinnati." Gandil assured him that would be done.

Cicotte then left the room to socialize with teammates Red Faber and Shano Collins "who were not in on this thing." When he returned, he discovered \$10,000 under his bed pillow. Cicotte took the money with him to Cincinnati, and later used it to pay off the \$4,000 mortgage on his farm. The other \$6,000 was spent "fixing up the place, buying stock, feed, etc."²⁰

Contrary to the admissions he made to Austrian, Cicotte told the grand jury that he "tried to win" Game One, having an instant change of heart once he inadvertently hit

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Reds leadoff hitter Morrie Rath.²¹ That evening after the one-sided Sox loss, a worried Cicotte spent a sleepless night, telling roommate Felsch, “Happy, it will never be done again.”²² As for the 4-2 Chicago defeat in Game Two, the only thing that struck Cicotte as suspicious was starter Lefty Williams’s “wildness.”²³

Cicotte was hazy about a meeting of corrupted players held at the Sinton Hotel in Cincinnati, and was not pressed on the subject during his grand jury testimony. He was similarly vague about the financing of the fix but “supposed some gamblers made some money” via knowledge of prearranged game outcomes.²⁴ Nor did he offer any insight into Game Three, won by Chicago, 3-0, behind the sterling pitching of uncorrupted hurler Dickey Kerr. But the victory did not overly concern Cicotte, as the Sox did not have to lose every game, just the Series itself.²⁵

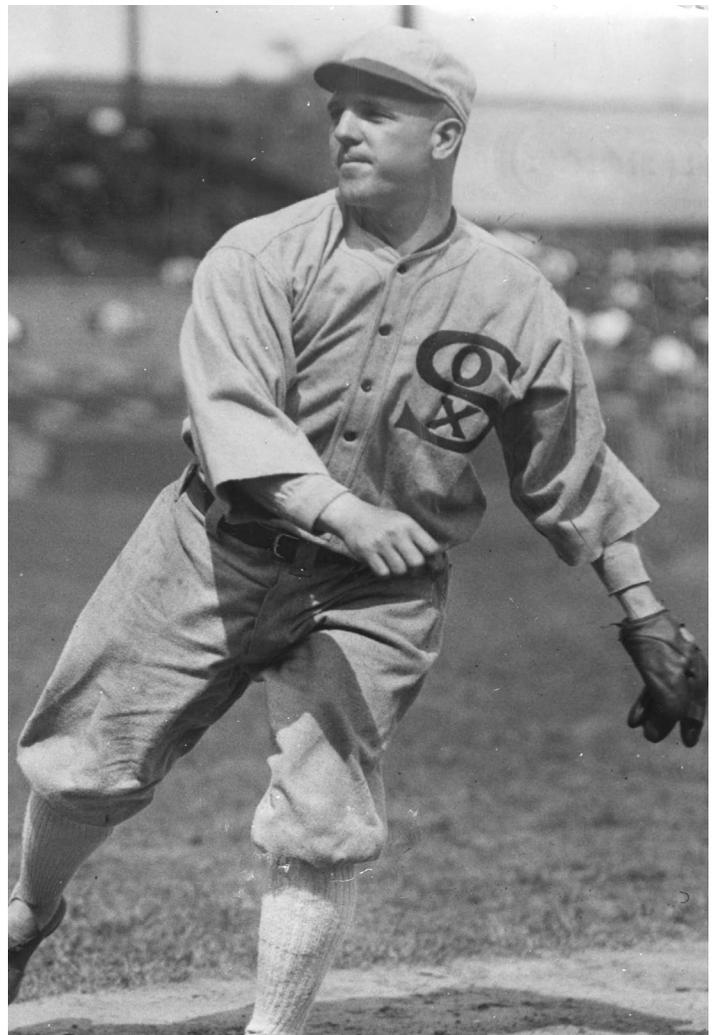
When it came to Game Four, however, Cicotte radically deviated from the account that he had offered attorney Austrian hours earlier. Now, Cicotte insisted that he had “tried to win. I didn’t care whether I got shot out there the next minute. I was going to win that game and the Series.”²⁶ He insisted he “tried to make good” and that his two critical fielding errors had not been deliberate. If White Sox hitters had scored any runs for him, Cicotte would have won Game Four.²⁷

Cicotte then doubled back to Game One, repudiating his previous admission that he had deliberately botched the potential inning-ending double play comebacker in the five-run Cincinnati fourth. Now, Cicotte maintained that he had been “absolutely honest” on that play and laid the blame on shortstop Risberg for stumbling over second base after taking Cicotte’s throw. The barrage of Reds base hits that he surrendered immediately thereafter, he said, were all “clean hits.”²⁸

With the mandate of grand jury secrecy having been ignored throughout the proceedings, next-day press accounts of the Cicotte testimony were curious. Rather than recounting the actual Cicotte testimony, the Associated Press and its outlets published his far-more incriminating statement in the Austrian law office instead.²⁹

Also widely reported was Joe Jackson’s grand jury admission that he had agreed to join the Series fix in return for a promised \$20,000 payoff — of which, he complained to grand jury presiding Judge Charles A. McDonald, he only received \$5,000.³⁰ Lefty Williams’s inculpatory grand jury testimony the following day also received prominent newspaper space, while Happy Felsch’s private confession of fix involvement was a scoop published in the *Chicago Evening American* of September 30.

One month later on October 29, 1920, the Cook County grand jury returned indictments charging Cicotte and



Eddie Cicotte told far different versions of his role in the Black Sox Scandal, claiming on occasion that he had abandoned the fix after Game One but also admitting that he had done his best to ensure a White Sox loss.

(Photo: National Baseball Hall of Fame Library)

seven other White Sox players with multiple counts of conspiracy to obtain money by means of false pretenses or via a confidence game. Five fix-connected gamblers, including ex-major league pitcher Bill Burns, were similarly charged.

In late March 1921, superseding indictments charged all of the previously accused plus five more gamblers with substantive fraud-related offenses in addition to unlawful conspiracy. The trial of seven of the indicted players, by now dubbed the Black Sox, and gambler defendants David Zelcer, Carl Zork, and brothers Ben and Lou Levi commenced in late June 1921.³¹

Criminal Trial Revelations

An entirely different light was cast on Cicotte by the

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trial testimony of the prosecution’s star witness, Bill Burns. As Burns told it, the plot to fix the 1919 World Series had not originated with gamblers. Rather, it was Eddie Cicotte who approached old acquaintance Burns with the fix proposition in September 1919. Later, Burns met with Cicotte and Gandil at the Ansonia Hotel where he was informed that the players wanted a \$100,000 payoff in return for losing the Series.³² To punctuate his commitment to the plot, Cicotte told Burns that he would lose Game One “if he had to throw the ball out of the park.”³³

Subsequently, Burns’s testimony was corroborated by his fix sidekick, unindicted co-conspirator Billy Maharg. He, too, identified Cicotte as instigator of the Series plot, and named him and Gandil as joint overseers of the player end of the scheme.³⁴ The prosecution also presented the Cicotte (and Jackson and Williams) grand jury testimony, read into the record at length before the jury.

Aside from testifying at a mid-trial motion to prohibit prosecution use of his grand jury testimony – the application was denied by the court – Cicotte kept silent during trial. Nor was any exculpatory evidence offered by the Cicotte defense. Notwithstanding the unrebutted nature of the charges against him, Cicotte, as well as the other accused, was swiftly acquitted by the jury.³⁵ Less than 24 hours later, Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis issued his famous edict permanently banning Cicotte and the seven other Black Sox from Organized Baseball.

Postscript

Although Cicotte was not among the expelled players who subsequently sued the White Sox for unpaid salary – Cicotte told a private investigator retained by the club that Comiskey “paid every nickel that I was entitled to ... and I have no ill feelings against him”³⁶ – he could not avoid being ensnared in the litigation. Uncooperative and evasive at a deposition session conducted in January 1924, Cicotte would not repeat his grand jury testimony, but reluctantly acknowledged the truth of whatever he had said in that testimony. But Cicotte refused to expand upon his grand jury recitals.³⁷ Even the threat of being held in contempt could not get him to talk about those who had financed the Series fix.³⁸

Unlike other scandal actors, Cicotte was closed-mouthed about the Series fix for the remainder of his days. In a late-life interview, however, he acknowledged his complicity in the Series fix: “I admit I did wrong,” Cicotte said, but hastened to add that “I’ve paid for it for the past 46 years. ... I’ve tried to make up for it by living as clean a life as I could.”³⁹

Cicotte’s remorse seemed genuine, and subsequent

portrayals of his role in the Black Sox affair tended to be sympathetic, particularly John Sayles’s 1988 film version of *Eight Men Out* which cast Cicotte as a victim of club boss Comiskey’s tightfistedness and a most reluctant fix enlistee. Does the historical record support that viewpoint?

Analysis and Conclusions

Far less disposed to talk than teammates like Shoeless Joe Jackson,⁴⁰ Eddie Cicotte told very different stories about his participation in the debasement of the 1919 World Series. In the Austrian law office, Cicotte said he did whatever he could to ensure Chicago losses in two of the games that he pitched. Hours later before the Cook County grand jury, Eddie maintained that he abandoned the conspiracy in the first inning of Game One and thereafter endeavored to win.

Common to both of these irreconcilable accounts, however, is one constant: Cicotte’s portrayal of himself as a hesitant, half-hearted fix enlistee who went along with a scheme foisted upon him by Chick Gandil, Swede Risberg, and Fred McMullin in return for \$10,000 cash, paid in advance.

An altogether different picture of Cicotte’s involvement in the Series corruption was painted by fix insider Bill Burns and corroborated by sidekick Billy Maharg. They identified Cicotte as no less than the instigator of the Series fix.

Although the issue is not susceptible to definitive resolution, the historical record and reason most readily support the view that (1) the engine of the plot to throw the 1919 World Series was Chick Gandil and/or Boston gambler Sport Sullivan, not Cicotte; (2) that Gandil quickly recruited Cicotte, an indispensable prerequisite to the fix’s viability, to the cause and that Cicotte thereafter assumed the position of assistant player ringleader of the Series conspiracy; and (3) that Cicotte deliberately lost both Game One and Game Four in furtherance of the fix.

Cicotte was a well-compensated star — the second-highest paid pitcher in major league baseball for the 1918-19 seasons⁴¹ – and an affable, generally well-liked man. But he was not an over-large personality or particularly driven. What most concerned the 35-year-old was the approaching end of his playing days, supporting his growing family thereafter, and the need to finance his debt and other personal obligations.

Gandil was altogether different. An everyday first baseman but mostly a journeyman, Gandil had never drawn a star player’s salary, nor had he enjoyed much public acclaim or job security. Temperamentally, Gandil was a much tougher guy than Cicotte, a hardened ex-mining town prizefighter and not especially likeable, but aggressive, strong-willed, self-confident, and forceful — a natural leader. More important, Gandil’s hardscrabble

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background placed him in contact with all sorts of unsavory characters, including gamblers. He had long been on friendly terms with Joseph “Sport” Sullivan, perhaps Boston’s biggest bookmaker who was long suspected of trying to rig sporting events.

Various scandal sleuths trace the origin of the World Series fix to a meeting between Gandil and Sullivan at the Buckminster Hotel in Boston in late August 1919.⁴² According to the self-serving and unreliable interview that Gandil gave to *Sports Illustrated* decades later, the fix was Sullivan’s idea.⁴³ Whoever proposed the idea, it was hardly an original one, as rumor that previous World Series had been corrupted (including the Boston Red Sox-Chicago Cubs clash of 1918)⁴⁴ was widespread. Whether Sullivan’s proposition or his own, Gandil — not Cicotte — was the Sox player with the gambler contacts. Likewise, Gandil was the one chummy with Sport Sullivan, and it was Gandil who was present at ground zero of the Black Sox conspiracy. In culinary terms, Gandil was the fix’s player-chef, Cicotte no more than the stew’s main ingredient.

That said, for the Series fix to have any prospect for success, the enlistment of staff ace Eddie Cicotte was indispensable. Indeed, the fix could not get off the drawing board without Cicotte’s involvement, a reality likely driven home to Gandil by teammate Red Faber’s three victories for the White Sox in the 1917 World Series. Corrupting Cicotte was, therefore, the necessary starting point and, indeed, the linchpin of the fix conspiracy, particularly given the fact that the 1919 Series had been expanded to the best-of-nine games. If the championship match went the limit, Cicotte might be handed the ball four times. In fact, the potential length of the Series necessitated Gandil’s subsequent recruitment of a second Sox starter, the talented but malleable Lefty Williams.⁴⁵

Black Sox scholar Bruce Allardice and others place Cicotte with Gandil at a follow-up fix meeting with Sullivan conducted at the Hotel Lenox in Boston.⁴⁶ Thereafter, Gandil was the conspiracy’s primary agent, privately recruiting star outfielder Shoeless Joe Jackson and 23-game winner Williams.⁴⁷ But Cicotte also played a leadership role, co-hosting the initial fix player meeting at the Ansonia Hotel in New York and lending his room to the player-gambler gathering at the Warner Hotel in Chicago.

It was Cicotte who approached former American League pitcher-turned-gambler Bill Burns about financing a World Series fix. Cicotte also was present in Cincinnati’s Sinton Hotel on the eve of Game One when the corrupted players finalized their arrangements with a second group of fix backers promising them yet another \$100,000 payoff: the Abe Attell/David Zelcer/Bill Burns cartel.

In short, Cicotte was far from a reluctant fix participant. His \$10,000 in hand payoff (with the expectation of more

from Attell/Zelcer/Burns) was most welcome, allowing him to discharge the mortgage on his recently purchased farm, to lay in supplies, and to generally renovate the premises.

Like others, Cicotte was well aware of reputed payoffs to players in previous World Series.⁴⁸ But nothing had ever happened, and official disinclination to investigate, much less punish, major league game-fixing had only been reinforced in players’ minds by the National League’s recent exoneration of the notoriously corrupt Hal Chase. Given that, Cicotte had every reason to perceive the throwing of the Series as a low risk/high reward proposition. Joining the Series fix, moreover, held an additional attraction: the promise of more secret paydays from gamblers in the future.

The lure of game-fixing rewards in 1920 and beyond is an often-overlooked aspect of the scandal, one that ties back into Cicotte’s performance during the 1919 World Series. While other players may have been upset at the gamblers shortchanging them, Cicotte had been paid in full by the agents of New York underworld financier Arnold Rothstein, the original underwriter of the World Series fix. The same night that the players received Rothstein emissaries Sport Sullivan and Nat Evans (aka “Rachael Brown”) at the Warner Hotel in Chicago, Cicotte received the \$10,000 cash that he had demanded in advance. Having taken Rothstein’s money, there was no way Cicotte was not going to fulfill his end of the deal. As promised, he lost the Series opener.

Because Rothstein was only betting on the outcome of the World Series, not individual Series games, the Black Sox plan was to lose the first three contests, but to win Game Four for Cicotte’s benefit in upcoming contract negotiations with club boss Comiskey. Overweening Black Sox confidence in their own superiority and their disdain of the Reds was palpable. Gandil, Cicotte, and company blithely presumed that the Sox could win or lose Series games as they chose. The fix blueprint was upset, however, in Game Three by their own side when the shutout pitching of uncorrupted “busher” Dickey Kerr yielded an unscripted Sox victory. Later, Joe Jackson informed the press that “the eight of us did our best to kick it but little Dick Kerr won the game by his pitching.”⁴⁹

To get the fix back on schedule, Cicotte almost single-handedly engineered the Chicago loss in Game Four, deliberately sabotaging a standout pitching effort with the two pivotal defensive miscues needed to ensure a Sox defeat. Although his fielding was not notably strong, Eddie’s wild heave over first base on a fifth-inning tapper to the mound by slow-footed Pat Duncan was not accidental. Nor was Cicotte’s otherwise inexplicable attempt to cut off an outfield throw home and deflection of the ball out of play, allowing a scoreless tie to be broken. Cicotte’s subsequent claims of good-faith effort to the grand jury notwithstanding

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ing, the more reasonable construction of events suggests those errors were deliberate — as Cicotte had admitted to Alfred Austrian — and committed in fulfillment of a pledge to lose made to an underworld figure not lightly double-crossed.

When the scandal exploded in late September 1920, Cicotte was understandably unnerved. His breakdown under questioning by attorney Austrian is unremarkable and his confession of fix participation has the ring of truth, particularly when it came to explaining how skilled ballplayers can disguise crooked play, a point reiterated some 40 years later by coconspirator Happy Felsch.⁵⁰ But several hours later, Cicotte had collected enough of his wits to minimize his culpability, offering the grand jury an implausible story of an on-the-mound conversion after throwing two pitches in Game One and recanting the admissions of Game Four crookedness revealed earlier the same date to Austrian and club boss Comiskey. Between the two accounts, Cicotte's statement to Austrian is far more credible than his subsequent grand jury testimony. And far more revelatory about his Series misconduct.

Bruce Allardice has made a persuasive case that Cicotte and the other Black Sox continued throwing games during the 1920 regular season.⁵¹ The reaction of Clean Sox players to the perfidy of their teammates is collected in Allardice's essays and need not be re-printed here. But representative of those sentiments were the post-1920 season remarks of embittered team captain Eddie Collins, who declared, "If gamblers didn't have Weaver and Cicotte in their pocket, then I don't know anything about baseball."⁵²

By throwing games in 1920, Cicotte and the other corrupted players demonstrated the hollowness of assertions that the Black Sox abandoned the Series fix after Game Two or after Game Five, etc. The events of the very next season demonstrate they did no such thing. Rather, the corrupted players won just enough times — three, including Cicotte's coveted contract negotiating-chip victory in Game Seven — to give the outcome of the 1919 Series a veneer of respectability, while not jeopardizing their access to gambler payoffs during the coming 1920 campaign.

That Eddie Cicotte was a likeable fellow, or that his eventual remorse for having joined the fix was genuine, misses the point. From its inception, the throwing of the 1919 World Series was dependent upon the unwavering fix participation of the White Sox staff ace. A reasonable reading of the historical record confirms that Cicotte did not let down those depending on him.

Notes

1. Among other places, the Cicotte interview transcript is posted on the invaluable BlackBetsy.com website. Read-

ers should note, however, that the Eddie Cicotte Transcripts [hereafter ECT] provide an abridged, eight paragraph version of the full Austrian-Cicotte interview. The effect that editing may have on assessment of Cicotte's involvement in the fix is unknowable without the full text of the interrogation available for comparison purposes.

2. ECT, para.1, line 1; elisions as in published document.

3. ECT, para.1, lines 1-3. Cicotte further related that he used his fix payoff to satisfy a \$4,000 mortgage on a farm that he had recently purchased.

4. ECT, para. 2, lines 1-4.

5. ECT, para. 3, lines 2-6 and para. 4, lines 4-5.

6. ECT, para. 5, lines 1-3.

7. ECT, para. 5, lines 4-5.

8. ECT, para.6, lines 1-2.

9. ECT, para. 6, lines 2-3.

10. ECT, para. 6, lines 5-8.

11. ECT, para. 7, lines 1-3.

12. ECT, para. 7, lines 4-5.

13. ECT, para. 8, lines 1-4.

14. The typed "Synopsis of Testimony of Edward V. Cicotte" is among the artifacts contained in the Black Sox Scandal collection maintained by the Chicago History Museum. In all probability, the 24-paragraph synopsis was created by Replogle or fellow Black Sox grand jury prosecutor Ota P. Lightfoot.

15. The Cicotte deposition is memorialized in part on pages 1206 to 1302 of the transcript of the Jackson v. Chicago White Sox breach of contract proceedings. The rare and difficult-to-access civil case record was reviewed by the writer at the Chicago Baseball Museum over a three-day period in May 2010.

16. Synopsis, para. 1. The original Cicotte waiver has been lost, but a facsimile is contained in the Black Sox Scandal documents maintained at the CHM.

17. Synopsis, para. 3.

18. Synopsis, para. 4.

19. During the season, Cicotte and Felsch resided at the Warner. Lefty Williams later testified that he attended the Warner Hotel fix meeting.

20. Synopsis, para. 8.

21. Synopsis, para. 10. Cicotte maintained that he had been trying to walk Rath and hit him by accident. See also, Cicotte deposition of January 14, 1924, as embedded in the Jackson civil trial transcript [hereinafter JTT] 1245 to JTT 1247.

22. Synopsis, para. 11.

23. Synopsis, para. 12 and 13. Walks issued by the normally strike-throwing Williams figured in all four of the runs scored by Cincinnati.

24. Synopsis, para. 14 to para. 16.

25. Cicotte deposition, JTT 1274.

26. JTT, 1274, et seq.

► Continued on page 9

► CICOTTE

Continued from page 8

27. JTT, 1274, et seq.
28. Approximately JTT 1276 to JTT 1290.
29. "Gandil Was Master of Ceremonies, Cicotte Says," *Charlotte News*, September 29, 1920: 1; "Confess Throwing 1919 World Series," *Fall River Globe*, September 29, 1920: 7; "I Played Crooked and Lost," Cicotte Confesses in Tears," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 29, 1920: 1.
30. Later that date, Jackson repeated his fix short-change complaint to the press, as reported in the *Chicago Journal*, *Chicago Tribune*, and newspapers nationwide September 29-30, 1920. Cicotte had scolded Jackson as "a God damn fool" for not getting his full fix payoff up front like he had.
31. The charges against late-arriving player-defendant Fred McMullin were severed for separate trial at a subsequent date, while gambler-defendants Hal Chase and Abe Attell defeated attempts to extradite them to Illinois. Gambler defendant Benjamin Franklin, meanwhile, was excused from trial because of ill health.
32. "Cicotte Hatched Plot to 'Throw' Series, Says Burns," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, July 22, 1921: 2; "Hatching of Plot Laid to Players," (Portland) *Oregonian*, July 22, 1921: 12; "Cicotte Arch Plotter," *Seattle Times*, July 22, 1921: 14, and newspapers nationwide.
33. "Cicotte Promised To Throw Ball Out of Yard," *Duluth (Minnesota) News-Tribune*, July 20, 1921: 7; "Burns Tells Of Alleged Pact To Throw World Series Games in Trial of Former White Sox," *Grand Forks (North Dakota) Herald*, July 21, 1921: 10; "Inside Story of Ball Scandal," *New York Daily News*, July 20, 1921: 2.
34. "Maharg Testimony To Show That Cicotte Made Advances First To Throw Series Games," *Denver Post*, July 25, 1921: 10; Maharg Tells Story of \$100,000 Sell-Out," *Washington (DC) Evening Star*, July 27, 1921: 25.
35. For the writer's assessment of the verdict, see Bill 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.
36. Letter of John R. Hunter to Alfred S. Austrian, July 5, 1922, contained in the Black Sox collection at the CHM.
37. Cicotte deposition at JTT 1223.
38. Cicotte deposition at JTT 1263 to JTT 1272.
39. Joe Falls, "Cicotte 46 Years Later," *Baseball Digest*, February 1966, 17.
40. For analysis of the irreconcilable scandal yarns told by Jackson, see Bill Lamb, "An Ever-Changing Story: Exposition and Analysis of Shoeless Joe Jackson's Public Statements on the Black Sox Scandal," *SABR Baseball Research Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 1 (Spring 2019), 37-48.
41. Bob Hoie, "Black Sox Salary Histories, Part II," *The Inside Game*, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (May 2013), 22-25. Only the immortal Walter Johnson earned more than Cicotte those two seasons.
42. Bruce Allardice, "Out of the Shadows: Joseph J. 'Sport' Sullivan," *SABR Black Sox Scandal Research Committee Newsletter*, June 2014, 11; Daniel A. Nathan, *Saying It's So: A Cultural History of the Black Sox Scandal* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 114.
43. Chick Gandil as told to Mel Durslag, "This Is My Story of the Black Sox Series," *Sports Illustrated*, September 17, 1956.
44. A wafer-thin case that the 1918 World Series was fixed is presented by Sean Deveney in *The Original Curse: Did the Cubs Throw the 1918 World Series to Babe Ruth's Red Sox and Incite the Black Sox Scandal?* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010).
45. Williams's advancement to the number two spot on the Chicago pitching staff was a result of the season-long illness and injury problems of Red Faber, who was declared unavailable for the 1919 World Series. In the view of this writer and others in the Black Sox Scandal research community, had the incorruptible Faber been healthy and available for Series pitching duty, the fix would likely have been seen as impracticable and never attempted.
46. Allardice, 11, citing a report published in the *Bridgeport (Connecticut) Telegram*, October 1, 1920.
47. According to the grand jury testimony of both Jackson and Williams.
48. Bribe money being offered to unnamed Chicago Cubs players to throw the 1918 World Series is specifically mentioned in an unsigned affidavit drafted for Cicotte found among the scandal artifacts possessed by the CHM.
49. See again, *Chicago Journal* and *Chicago Tribune*, September 29, 1920.
50. Felsch told *Eight Men Out* author Eliot Asinof, "Playing rotten, it ain't that hard to do once you get the hang of it. It ain't hard to hit a pop-up while taking what looks like a good cut at the ball." Eliot Asinof, *Bleeding Between the Lines* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1979), 117.
51. Bruce Allardice, " 'Playing Rotten, It Ain't That Hard To Do': How the Black Sox Lost the 1920 Pennant," *SABR Baseball Research Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Spring 2016). See also, Allardice, "New Evidence That White Sox Threw More Games in 1920," *SABR Black Sox Scandal Research Committee Newsletter*, June 2019. Note that Chick Gandil refused to sign his White Sox contract and was suspended for the 1920 season. Fred McMullin reputedly assumed Gandil's place as liaison between gambler interests and Black Sox players.
52. "Collins Charges 1920 Games Fixed," *Collyer's Eye*, October 30, 1920. This author does not share the view that Buck Weaver went unpaid for his participation in throwing the 1919 World Series. But a dissertation on Weaver's fix compensation is an essay for another issue of the newsletter. Suffice it to say that if Weaver was not paid for his efforts during the 1919 Series, he would have had no reason to do gamblers' dirty work in 1920.

Joe Jackson Museum on the move again in Greenville

During an all-star charity game, Shoeless Joe Jackson once won a contest for throwing a baseball nearly 400 feet on the fly. When the museum in his name re-opens soon, it will have moved about the same distance down the street in Greenville, South Carolina.

The red brick building that houses the Jackson Museum — where Joe and his wife Katie lived for years until their deaths in the 1950s — was relocated on July 31, 2020, to the western end of Field Street across from Fluor Field in Greenville. The move was driven by the construction of a new mixed-use apartment complex called .408 Jackson on the original museum site.

In exchange for the museum's relocation, Charlotte-based Woodfield Development agreed to build an 837-square-foot addition for a new gift shop and make other structural improvements to the Jackson Museum, including a new roof and new HVAC system.

“As the building continued to age, those expenses were surely around the corner. So this move truly was mutually beneficial, and will allow the museum to grow and prosper for years into the future,” said Dan Wallach, the museum's executive director.

Wallach said the museum was forced to delay its reopening due to the coronavirus pandemic but he hopes to open up again in early 2021. The Jackson house was also moved in 2006 from its first location at 119 E. Wilburn Ave. (where Joe and Katie actually lived) to the ballpark site on Field Street, a more suitable site for a museum.

Photos and video of this summer's relocation can be found on the museum's website at ShoelessJoeJackson.org.



Shoeless Joe Jackson's former house, now a museum in his honor, was moved about 100 yards down the block to the end of Field Street on July 31, 2020, in Greenville, South Carolina. A new mixed-use apartment complex called .408 Jackson will occupy the museum's old location, which is directly across the street from Fluor Field. (Photo: Dan Wallach / Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum)



Photo: Harrison Heritage News

Hervey McClellan 1919 White Sox sweater donated to Ky. museum

Hervey McClellan's Chicago White Sox warmup sweater was donated recently to the Cynthiana-Harrison County Museum in Kentucky.

In this 2016 photo, Mike Taylor, right, presents the sweater to Bill Penn of the Harrison County Historical Society.

According to the museum, Taylor “received many offers to buy the rare and valuable baseball collectible, [but] he wanted it to go back to where McClellan grew up in Cynthiana,” which is about halfway between Cincinnati, Ohio, and Lexington, Kentucky.

McClellan made his major-league debut with the 1919 White Sox and spent six seasons as a backup infielder with the team until his untimely death at the age of 30 from cancer. He played in 344 games, mostly at shortstop, and hit .221 during his brief career.



1917 White Sox, as identified by Lemman Saunders. Top row, from left to right: Swede Risberg, Clarence Rowland (manager), Nemo Leibold, Joe Jackson, Joe Jenkins, Bruno Haas, Mel Wolfgang, Jim Scott, Reb Russell, Hap Felsch, Kid Gleason (coach). Second row: Byrd Lynn, Jack Fournier, Fred McMullin, Walter Mayer, Johnny Walker, Frank Shellenback, John Collins, Red Faber, Joe Benz. Third row: Ray Schalk, Andrew Norman, Bruce Hartford, Wilbur Gray, Lefty Williams, Zeb Terry, Snake Henry, Red Ainsworth, Dave Danforth. Bottom row: Ted Jourdan, George Lyons, Eddie Collins, Ross Eldred, Ziggy Hasbrook, Eddie Cicotte, Chick Gandil, Martin Lamers, Buck Weaver. Not pictured: Eddie Murphy. (Photo: Heritage Auctions)

► PHOTO

Continued from page 1

it is very likely the first image with all of the future “Eight Men Out” together and pictured in a White Sox uniform.

Having spent more than two decades staring at the faces of the players involved in the Black Sox Scandal, their faces are as easy to pick out as those of my own family. Easily identifiable are veterans Joe Jackson, Buck Weaver, Eddie Collins, and Eddie Cicotte with his arm on the shoulder of the team’s newest addition, Chick Gandil.

The presence of Gandil helps narrow the year of the image down to three: 1917, 1918, or 1919, which makes it almost certain the photo was taken in Mineral Wells, Texas, the White Sox’s spring training site for those years. Furthermore, the presence of both manager Clarence “Pants” Rowland and Kid Gleason rules out 1918 (when Gleason was in a contract dispute and not in training camp) and 1919 (Rowland was no longer manager or involved with the Sox.) So we can safely say this photograph had to be taken in 1917. Jim Scott’s presence in the top row also helps confirm that date, as 1917 would be his last year in spring training with the Sox.

With the year settled, we can then try to pull together a full spring training roster to identify everyone in the photo.

To start the 1917 campaign, Comiskey’s “luxurious

special train numbered sixty-four” with a bulk of the Sox players, staff, writers, and fans left Chicago on the night of March 4 and arrived in Mineral Wells two days later.³ From reports of players on board the train leaving Chicago and those listed as already on the ground in Texas or reporting soon after, we get a solid checklist of spring training invitees. The expected roster was 40 — 38 players, plus Rowland and Gleason — but pitcher Speed Martin held out and never reported.⁴ Piecing together the reports and box scores from training camp here is a list of those 37 players who showed up:

Red Ainsworth, Joe Benz, Eddie Cicotte, Eddie Collins, John Collins, Dave Danforth, Ross Eldred, Red Faber, Happy Felsch, Jack Fournier, Chick Gandil, Wilbur Gray, Bruno Haas, Bruce Hartford, Ziggy Hasbrook, Snake Henry, Ted Jourdan, Byrd Lynn, Joe Jackson, Joe Jenkins, Martin Lamers, Nemo Leibold, George Lyons, Walter Mayer, Fred McMullin, Eddie Murphy, Andrew Norman, Swede Risberg, Reb Russell, Ray Schalk, Jim Scott, Frank Shellenback, Zeb Terry, Johnny Walker, Buck Weaver, Lefty Williams, Mel Wolfgang.

The Heritage Auctions photograph includes 36 people — as we’ll see, Eddie Murphy seems to be the only player missing.

The white and blue uniforms worn give us some solid

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► PHOTO

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clues, as well. The White Sox traditionally split up into two teams during training and when it came time to break camp, they would travel separately with each team playing their own games. The first team was dubbed the “Regulars” or “Whites,” and the second team was often called “Yannigans,” “Goofs,” or “Blues.”

To start training in 1917 the Regulars wore white uniforms and the Yannigans wore blue, as we see in this photograph. However, that arrangement didn’t last long. On March 17, in the Regulars’ first real exhibition game against the Fort Worth Panthers — played during the opening of the Texas State Fair in Fort Worth — a unique groundskeeping choice forced a change in uniform and likely gave birth to a legend.

In order to help keep the Texas winds from kicking up dust on the ballfield, the Panthers elected to treat their baselines with oil. When the White Sox “Regulars” came to town, they decided to give their legs an extra workout by attempting to steal and take extra bases whenever possible resulting in countless slides. The mix of oil and dirt stained their uniforms so badly that they had to switch to their “gray traveling suits of 1914” as their white uniforms were “ruined by the oiled base lines in Fort Worth.”⁵ I.E. Sanborn of the *Chicago Tribune* reported:

“The local diamond is better than the one of the Chicago south side except for the base lines, which are oiled to keep the Texas zephyrs from blowing them away. The Sox ran wild on the bases and hit the dirt so often that their suits were a sight to make John D. Rockefeller nervous. They may have to change their name from White to Black Sox.”⁶

This appears to be the very first reference to this group of White Sox players — which included all eight of the players who were later banned for fixing the World Series — as the “Black Sox” due to dirty uniforms. There is a long-held legend that the White Sox played in dirty uniforms in a quasi-protest for having to personally pay for their laundering, resulting in the team being called the “Black Sox.” This incident, along with a few others during the same time period referencing dirty uniforms, is the likely nexus of at least part of this legend.⁷

Since the White Sox are wearing clean white uniforms in the photograph, it seems likely that it was taken prior to March 18. Chick Gandil’s presence once again helps us narrow the timeline down as he did not report to training camp until March 8 and was not in uniform until the next day.

The absence of Eddie Murphy also helps us narrow down the time frame a little more. It was reported that Murphy missed workouts on the 12th due to a “mild attack

Whites.					Blues.				
	R	H	P	A		R	H	P	A
Hired, rf.	0	1	1	0	Leibold, cf.	0	1	1	0
Bisberg, ss.	0	2	1	0	M'Mul'n, 3b	0	0	2	3
E. Collins, 2b	2	2	2	3	J. Collins, lf.	0	0	1	0
Jackson, lf.	0	0	0	0	Haas, lf.	0	0	1	0
Plesch, cf.	0	0	3	1	Fournier, rf	2	1	3	0
Gandil, 1b.	0	1	9	0	Henry, 1b.	0	0	5	0
Jourdan, 1b	0	6	6	0	Hasbr'k, 1b	0	0	5	1
Weaver, 3b.	2	2	2	4	Terry, 2b.	1	0	3	5
Jenkins, c.	2	1	2	1	Lynn, c.	0	1	0	1
Gray, c.	0	0	1	0	Mayer, c.	0	1	1	1
Lamers, p.	0	0	0	1	Hartf'd, ss.	0	1	1	2
Lyons, p.	0	0	0	1	Schel'ch, p	0	0	0	1
					Ainsw'th, p	0	1	1	1
Totals	6	9	27	17	Totals	3	6	24	15
Whites	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Blues	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Errors—Bisberg, Henry, Hartford, Schellenbach (2).	Two base hits—Weaver, Jenkins.								
Three base hits—Leibold.	Sacrifice hits—								
Jackson, Lyons, Henry, Lynn.	Struck out—								
Lamers, 1; Ainsworth, 1.	Stolen bases—E.								
Collins, Fournier, Terry.	Bases on balls—								
Lamers, 3; Lyons, 3; Schellenbach, 2.	Umpire—Gleason.								
	Time—1:26.								

In the White Sox’s first intrasquad game on March 11, 1917, the regular starters played as the “Whites” and the second team was called the “Blues.” All six of the Black Sox position players appeared in this game. (*Chicago Tribune*, March 12, 1917)

of tonsillitis, which is not severe enough to confine him to bed.”⁸ Two weeks later, the *Tribune* reported that Murphy, who had returned to the field on the 19th, was back on “compulsory rest” to “ward off threatened appendicitis.”⁹ Given all that information, the photograph was likely taken between March 12 and 17.¹⁰

The White Sox’s first intrasquad game was played on March 8 with the first box score appearing for a game played on the 11th. That box score listed 25 players playing in that day’s game between the Whites and Blues, and all the easily identifiable players with the uniforms they are wearing in this photograph match up with this box score as well as previous mentions of players on the respective squads such as Mel Wolfgang and Lefty Williams on the Blues.¹¹ On March 15, manager Rowland split up his roster into two traveling squads to play various local and minor-league teams in exhibitions. Some switches were made but the two squads remained almost the same as they had been from the start of camp.¹²

The hardest players to identify are obviously the invitees that did not make the Opening Day roster. Luckily, almost all the 1917 White Sox invitees had either a stint in the major leagues or a solid career in the Pacific Coast League which increases the chances of comparison photos

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► PHOTO

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to be found. The three exceptions for this 1917 roster were Andrew Norman, Wilbur Gray, and Martin Lamers. Fortunately, the *Chicago Tribune* featured individual pictures of Norman and Gray from Mineral Wells in their uniforms and Norman was the *Tribune's* amateur tryout contest winner, so his photo made the paper in 1916 and 1917.¹³

I was able to track down a photograph of Martin Lamers on a Facebook historical group page. The Village of Little Chute (Wisconsin) Facebook page had posted a very clear picture of the 1914 Little Chute baseball team, which included Marty Lamers, who was a lifelong resident of Little Chute. He played into the 1930s for Wisconsin low-level professional and semipro teams. In 1966, Lamers was honored with an award by the Appleton Foxes minor-league team and a nice headshot of him from 1916 accompanied an article in the *Appleton Post-Crescent*.¹⁴

Lamers bore a resemblance to Ross “Brick” Eldred and both were playing on the Regulars in white uniforms. Eldred gained some fame playing in the PCL in Sacramento and Seattle and was elected to the league’s Hall of Fame in 2003. I sought out opinions separately from people knowledgeable on both men and both confirmed/backed my identification.¹⁵

The most difficult to identify were minor-league journeymen Red Ainsworth, Bruce Hartford, Johnny Walker, and George Lyons, who all shared a vague resemblance to each other. George “Tony” Lyons was listed on the Regulars in the box score from March 11 and with the identification of Lamers and Eldred (also listed on the Regulars), Lyons was the last player in white who was unaccounted for. Lyons played on the Los Angeles Angels from 1921-23 and had a few brief appearances in the majors with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1920 and St. Louis Browns in 1924.

The remaining three players were all listed on the Yannigans and would be in blue uniforms. Earl “Red” Ainsworth, who never played in the majors, was the hardest to locate. Described by Sanborn as “a slim lad with a John Evers chin,”¹⁶ he was one of the first cut from training on March 19.¹⁷ Luckily I found a clear photograph of Ainsworth, showing his chin and close-set beady eyes, in the *Dayton Daily News* on July 16, 1916, while he was pitching for the Terre Haute Highlanders.

Johnny Walker and Bruce Hartford both had stints in the majors and several good headshots can be found for them both. These were the last two I had left to identify — and the last two are always the hardest — but with some help of eagle-eyed experts I believe I have them labeled correctly.¹⁸

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to Jacob Pomrenke, Andrew Aronstein,

Cary Smith, David Eskenazi, Jo Havlik, and Kris Lamers for their help in identifying players.

Notes

1. George W. Hilton, “[The 1919 White Sox Depicted](#),” *SABR Baseball Research Journal*, 1975, 42-44. Hilton does misidentify one player. He incorrectly has Red Faber in the picture, Faber is not present and the player is actually Hervey McClellan. Hilton also tries to suggest that the players’ placement for the photograph correlates to the team being “split” into two factions, a story often told about the White Sox of that era. However, this is unlikely as there are several different versions of 1919 White Sox team photos, with a mixing and intermingling of players throughout each of them. The team splitting into two factions became more of an issue in the 1920 season, after the fixed World Series rather than in 1919 or earlier.

2. “[1916-17 Chicago White Sox Original Team Photograph](#),” Heritage Auctions, Lot #59200.

3. “[Away They Go! 3,000 Rooters Cheering Sox](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 5, 1917, 16.

4. “[Tribune Find Helps Rookies Beat Sox, 5 To 2](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 9, 1917, 9; “[Tenshun! Company! Hep! Hep! Sox In Line](#),” *Chicago Daily News*, March 8, 1917, 1.

5. “[Hurler Faber Goes Distance, Winning, 6 To 3](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 25, 1917, 17.

6. “[Regulars Cop 10 To 4 Victory At Fort Worth](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 18, 1917, 17.

7. See also “[HC of Laundry Keeps White Sox Uniforms Dirty](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, July 12, 1921, 3; Jacob Pomrenke, “[Dirty Laundry and the ‘Black Sox’](#),” *SABR Black Sox Scandal Committee Newsletter*, June 2017.

8. “[Rookies’ Rally Beat Sox Vets By 2 To 1 Count](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 13, 1917, 11.

9. “[Four Cornered Scrap For Job In Sox Garden](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 23, 1917, 14; “[Eddie Murphy, III, May Come Back To Chicago](#),” *The Day Book*, March 14, 1917, 10. The *Day Book* reported that Murphy may be shipped back to Chicago because of the illness.

10. I think the photograph was likely taken on March 12; the uniforms and players match that day’s box score and we know for sure Murphy was not present at practice that day.

11. “[Bosses of Sox Turn Lamps on Rook Hurlers](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 12, 1917, 11.

12. “[White Sox Boss Picks Regulars And Yannigans](#),” *Chicago Tribune*, March 16, 1917, 9. The article only lists 29 players and it is unclear why some players were not listed in the roster split as the first cuts did not happen until the 19th. Since the first switching up of players happened on the 15th I think that narrows the date of the photo to being taken between the 12th and 15th, but it is possible the players just switched teams and kept their originally assigned uniform.

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AROUND THE WEB

David Fleitz's 10th baseball book, *Eddie Cicotte: The Life and Career of the Banned Black Sox Pitcher*, was published by McFarland & Company on August 31. It is the first full-length biography of the Chicago White Sox ace known as "Knuckles," who is now known as one of the instigators of the Black Sox Scandal.

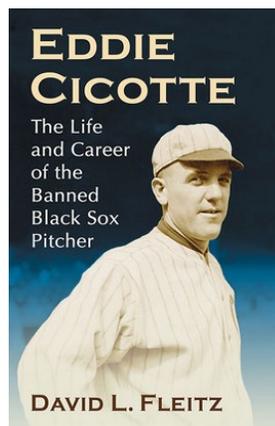
Fleitz is a web developer and database analyst who lives in Troy, Michigan. His book *Shoeless: The Life and Times of Joe Jackson* was published in 2001.

In October, Fleitz gave a virtual interview to SABR's Northwest Ohio Chapter to discuss his new book on Cicotte. [Click here](#) to watch a replay of his presentation.

◆ SABR's Century Committee hosted a special panel discussion on the 100th anniversary of the 1920 World Series, which capped off a historic and scandalous baseball season, on November 18.

Guest speakers included **Mike Sowell**, author of *The Pitch That Killed*; **Scott Longert**, author of *The Best They Could Be: How the Cleveland Indians became the Kings of Baseball, 1916-1920*; **Jeremy Feador**, Cleveland Indians team historian; **Jacob Pomrenke**, chair of SABR's Black Sox Scandal committee; and moderator **Sharon Hamilton**, co-chair of SABR's Century Committee. [Click here](#) to watch a replay of this panel on YouTube.

◆ **Don Zminda's** new book, *Double Plays And*



Double Crosses The Black Sox and Baseball in 1920, is scheduled to be published by Rowman & Littlefield in March 2021. Pre-order a copy of his book [here](#).

◆ In an article on Babe Ruth's first feature film, *Headin' Home*, **Tom Shieber** relates how the movie was [funded in part by Abe Attell](#) — who reportedly had "fortified himself with a bank-roll of at least \$100,000," just one year after the organizing the fix of the 1919 World Series.

◆ **Kevin Kernan** [interviews Dan Wallach](#), executive director of the Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum, for BallNine.com.

◆ **Gary Cieradkowski's** new [illustrated baseball card](#) depicts a young Joe Jackson and the game he played in South Carolina without shoes, at Studio Gary C.

◆ **Celia Storey** examines how the Black Sox Scandal [affected two pitchers](#) who ended up on the Arkansas Travelers minor-league team in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*.

◆ **Anson Whaley** takes a look at Eddie Cicotte's [most affordable and collectible](#) vintage baseball cards at Sports Collectors Daily.

◆ In his MiLB.com series on overlooked stars of the minor leagues, **Andrew Battifarano** [looks back at Frank Shellenback](#), the one-time White Sox spitball pitcher who won more than 300 games in the minors.

◆ **Jeff Cohen** [interviews Shoeless Joe Jackson historian Mike Nola](#) for the Baseball and BBQ podcast.

► PHOTO

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13. "Home Talent," *Chicago Tribune*, March 11, 1917, 19. A picture montage featuring spring training photos of Andrew Norman, Wilbur Gray, and Johnny Walker. A head shot of Norman also appeared in the February 7, 1917 *Tribune* article "Andy Norman, 'Trib' Amateur Signed By Sox."

14. "Martin (Dago) Lamers Will Receive Second Red Smith Award," *Appleton Post-Crescent*, December 6, 1966. Richard "Red" Smith was a former New York Giants catcher and Notre Dame football star who also coached in both sports for many years.

15. After reading David Eskenazi's article ["Wayback](#)

[Machine: Seattle's First 200-Hit Machine"](#) (Sportspress NW, July 23, 2013), on Brick Eldred, I reached out for his opinion on Eldred in the 1917 White Sox photograph. Without prompting, he confirmed my identification. Also through Facebook, I was able to find a family member of Martin Lamers and they sent me a few photos and confirmed my identification of Lamers in the photo.

16. "Bosses of Sox Turn Lamps On Rook Hurlers," *Chicago Tribune*, March 12, 1917, 11.

17. "Rowland Drops Three Rookies From Squad," *Chicago Tribune*, March 20, 1917, 13.

18. I sought the opinion of baseball photograph aficionados and collectors Andrew Aronstein and Cary Smith on the identification between Johnny Walker, Bruce Hartford, and Red Ainsworth.

Ernest Hemingway and the Black Sox trial

By Sharon Hamilton

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“Cook County what crimes are committed in thy name”
— Ernest Hemingway, letter to a friend, August 1921

Things were looking good for aspiring author Ernest Hemingway in the summer of 1921. He had recently become engaged and on July 21 — his twenty-second birthday — he wrote excitedly to his close friend Grace Quinlan to gush about his future wife.

“Suppose you want to hear all about Hadley,” he wrote. He explained that his fiancé, Hadley Richardson, was a great tennis player and the “best pianist I ever heard.” He felt she was, all in all, “a sort of terribly fine article.” Married to her, he believed he would no longer experience that loneliness “that’s with you even when you’re in a crowd of people that are fond of you.”¹

Hadley had already tried on her wedding dress. From her home in St. Louis, she wrote Hemingway that it made her look like “a human hazelnut tart.”² Although Hemingway was still having trouble selling his fiction, he had found a job as a magazine writer, and he was looking forward to his wedding in the fall.

At the same time, Hemingway was also living through circumstances painful to him as someone who had grown up as a fan of the Chicago White Sox. While Hemingway was going to his job in the Loop District of downtown Chicago, seven members of the White Sox were on trial in the nearby Cook County Criminal Court Building, accused of having colluded with gamblers to throw the 1919 World Series.

Missing him, Hadley made arrangements to visit Hemingway in Chicago at the beginning of August. She arrived in a city alive with tension. It must have felt something like the moment when a high-wire artist wobbles slightly on the narrow line stretched taut high above and you feel that sudden sharp twinge of fear.

Chicago’s residents must have carried a similar disquiet within them as they wondered how things would turn out for Shoeless Joe Jackson and the other accused White Sox players. When Hadley arrived in Chicago on August 1, the

White Sox criminal trial was nearing its conclusion. The *Chicago Tribune* announced: “Defense Pleas of ‘Black Sox’ to Start Today” and “Case Expected to Reach Jury Wednesday.”³

Such events always seem to mark us, the watchers, more profoundly than we expect — a situation I suspect holds especially true during the idealistic days of our youth. Because although we are not directly involved, we have seen these athletes run. We have seen what it means for a mere mortal to transform into something fluid and beautiful on a playing field. Perhaps this is why it is especially when sports heroes are accused of doing something dreadful that we instinctively register this as something momentous, as if a Greek myth were being enacted before our eyes.

What was going to happen? That was the question on everybody’s lips. It makes sense to believe that just like everyone else in Chicago that week, Hadley and Hemingway discussed this subject together. The Cook County Criminal Court Building, at 54 West Hubbard Street just north of the Chicago River, sat not far from Hemingway’s place of employment at 128 North Wells Street, so he may even have taken Hadley, as a visitor to the city, to wander past the building’s imposing neo-classical structure and wonder about what was transpiring inside.

On Tuesday, August 2, the *Tribune* confirmed that the Black Sox jurors would “retire to deliberate sometime after 5 o’clock this afternoon.”⁴ Their deliberations did not take long. The next day a huge headline in thick block letters on the front page of the *Tribune* declared, “JURY FREES BASEBALL

MEN.”⁵ The accused Chicago players were acquitted on a single ballot. The Black Sox wouldn’t go to jail.

Hemingway was disgusted. After he read the news, he wrote to his good friend Bill Smith Jr. to express his anger at how things had played out. This was a team he had loved,⁶ and they had returned his trust by conspiring with gamblers — charges made against them during the trial that Hemingway’s letter makes it clear he believed.

Most of his letter to his friend Bill concerns personal affairs. He devotes relatively little space to discussing the results of the White Sox criminal trial but what he does say

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Ernest and Hadley Hemingway are pictured in Chamby, Switzerland, in 1922. (Ernest Hemingway Collection, John F. Kennedy Library/NARA)

“You probably by now have viewed a peper [sic, joke spelling of newspaper] telling of the Hose aquital [sic]. Cook County what crimes are committed in thy name. Where else could it have been done? New York probably. You recall the Abe Attell angle? Acquitted in the face of Burns and Maharg’s testimony and their own confessions! My Gawd Justice has about as much of a petition here as the Madame would have being tried for the murder of Lyle Shanahan before a picked Venire of Local Boys.”

— Ernest Hemingway letter to William B. Smith
circa August 3-5, 1921

► HEMINGWAY

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makes it clear Hemingway was incredulous that the White Sox had been acquitted in spite of the confessions made by Shoeless Joe Jackson, Eddie Cicotte, and Lefty Williams before a grand jury 11 months earlier and in the face of the strong trial testimony against them made by gambler Bill Burns and his “sidekick,” Billy Maharg.⁷ Hemingway rhetorically asks himself in his letter to his friend if something as astounding as this ruling could have happened anywhere else: “Cook County what crimes are committed in thy name”⁸

Hemingway followed the Black Sox trial closely enough to have intuited a theory that researcher Bill Lamb has also expressed about this trial’s results. As Lamb explained in a 2016 article for SABR’s *Baseball Research Journal*, the “extraordinary exhibition of camaraderie” between jury members and the indicted White Sox immediately after the trial “suggests that the verdict may have been a product of that courthouse phenomenon that all prosecutors dread: jury nullification.”

Lamb observed that “in a criminal case, jurors are carefully instructed to abjure passion, prejudice, sympathy, and other emotion in rendering judgment.” In some instances, though, this injunction can fail. In the case of the Black Sox trial, it appeared to Lamb that the defense counsel “worked assiduously to cultivate a bond between the working-class men on the jury and the blue-collar defendants.”⁹

Hemingway would almost certainly have read in the *Chicago Tribune*’s coverage of the trial’s outcome on August 3 that following the trial’s verdict “the courtroom was like a love feast as the jurors, lawyers, and defendants clapped each other on the back and exchanged congratulations.”¹⁰ From this, Hemingway appears to have arrived at the conclusion that the jury identifying with the ball players had been a key factor in the acquittal.

To his friend Bill Smith, Hemingway exclaimed in his letter, “My Gawd Justice has about as much of a petition here as the Madame would have being tried for the murder of Lyle Shanahan before a picked Venire of Local Boys.”¹¹

According to Hemingway scholars Sandra Spanier and Robert Trogdon, “Madame” was Hemingway’s way of referring to Bill Smith’s aunt, and Shanahan was a “broad-minded citizen of sterling worth” who lived, as did Smith’s aunt, in Michigan. Hemingway’s analogy for the White Sox trial suggested that if Bill Smith’s aunt had murdered a highly respected member of her community she could expect to be let off, as the White Sox had been, as long as the jury consisted of local cronies.”¹²

On August 6, their last day together in the city before she had to head for home, Hadley and Hemingway ate lunch at a German restaurant. In a letter Hadley wrote Hemingway after arriving in St. Louis, she told him how she felt during that final meal together: “I could’ve kissed you so hard,” she wrote, “so easily, at any moment.”¹³ Despite the baseball crisis that had been going on around them during her stay, it had been a wonderful visit.

In retrospect, the gloomy historical context for their warm prenuptial meeting seems somewhat fitting. It was only a few years into their marriage when Hemingway began having an affair with the woman who would become his second wife. Against the hopes and dreams nurtured during that precious week they had spent in Chicago, against the backdrop of the Black Sox trial, lurked the dark truth the trial had underscored: love can be rewarded by betrayal at any time.

Notes

1. Ernest Hemingway letter to Grace Quinlan, July 21, 1921 in *The Letters of Ernest Hemingway 1907-1922*.

Vol. 1; eds. Sandra Spanier and Robert W. Trogdon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 289-90.

2. Hadley Richardson letter to Ernest Hemingway, July 16, 1921, qtd. in Gioia Diliberto, *Paris Without End: The True Story of Hemingway’s First Wife* (Harper Perennial, 2011), ebook.

3. “Defense Pleas of ‘Black Sox’ to Start Today,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 1, 1921: 12.

4. “‘Black Sox’ Case to Be Given Jury Sometime Today,”

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► CHAIRMAN

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discussions have ebbed and flowed over time, with occasional periods of inactivity punctured by bursts of frenzied conversation.

In the early days, Gene initiated most of the messages, welcomed newcomers with his tireless passion and generous spirit, and made the Yahoo group a comfy home for all of us like-minded souls who were wandering what he called the “Black Sox trail.” In recent years, with the advent of social media taking over as the focal point for our daily interactions, the Yahoo group has mostly served as a vehicle for us to collaborate and spread the word about our SABR committee projects.

But that original message became the driving force that led to so many accomplishments in Black Sox scholarship over the past 17 years, including ESPN television specials in 2005 and 2020, the creation of our SABR research committee in 2008, an MLB Network documentary in 2010, our *Scandal on the South Side* book in 2015, and a special 100th anniversary symposium in Chicago in 2019.

Countless authors, including Gene himself, have been influenced by the back-and-forth discussion we’ve enjoyed in the Yahoo group, leading to new books by Bill Lamb, Rick Huhn, Susan Dellinger, David Fleitz, Daniel Nathan, Brian Cooper, Bill Felber, Tim Hornbaker, Thomas Rathkamp, Mike Lynch, Robert Cottrell, James Elfers, and Martin Kohout — all of whom were or still are active committee members — along with research articles by many, many others. These works have greatly advanced our knowledge and understanding of the Black Sox Scandal.

So many people first became involved in baseball

research and SABR through their connection with the Yahoo group. I count myself among them. I signed up in early 2004 and lurked for a while before I began posting regularly about a year later. I sent Gene Carney a tip that he included in his seminal 2006 book, *Burying the Black Sox*, and my very first Black Sox article was published that same year in SABR’s *The National Pastime*.

None of that would have been possible without Gene — with the help of Rod Nelson — launching the Yahoo group and welcoming so many of us into the fold before his untimely death in 2009. Our committee has now grown to nearly 450 SABR members, and whether you are an active researcher or you just like to listen in on all the questions and answers (and new questions) that have populated our inboxes for so long, it’s a testament to everyone reading this that we’ve all been able to learn so much more about the Black Sox story.

Your interest in the subject inspires all of us to keep diving deeper, uncovering new facts and re-analyzing old ones, so we can better understand what happened a century ago and how it impacts baseball and our world today.

Now, after 17 years and nearly 5,000 message threads, Yahoo is forcing us to move on from our old, beloved discussion group. SABR has launched a new email forum that should function largely the same way at 1919BlackSox@sabrgroups.org. We invite all of you to sign up for the new group so we can keep the discussion going for many more years.

We encourage anyone new to ask a question or let us know what they may be working on. Who knows, maybe it could eventually lead to an article in a future edition of this newsletter — or even your own book someday!

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

► HEMINGWAY

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Chicago Tribune, August 2, 1921: 10.

5. “Jury Frees Baseball Men,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1921: 1.

6. For more on Hemingway’s belief in the Chicago White Sox and his personal reaction to the September 1920 White Sox confessions, see Sharon Hamilton, “Hemingway Gambles, Loses on 1919 White Sox,” *SABR Black Sox Scandal Committee Newsletter*, June 2020: 12-13.

7. Bill Lamb, “[The Black Sox Scandal](#),” in Jacob Pomrenke, ed., *Scandal on the South Side: The 1919 Chicago White Sox* (Phoenix: SABR, 2015), accessed December 1, 2020.

8. Ernest Hemingway to William B. Smith Jr. [c. Aug. 3-5, 1921] in *Letters, Vol. 1*, 293-94.

9. Lamb, “[The Black Sox Scandal](#).” For more on the

White Sox trial and jury nullification, see Bill Lamb, “[Jury Nullification and the Not Guilty Verdicts in the Black Sox Case](#),” *SABR Baseball Research Journal*, Spring 2016, accessed December 1, 2020.

10. “Jury Frees Baseball Men,” *Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1921: 1. For more on the post-trial celebrations and the intimacy of the jurors and the players they acquitted, see Jacob Pomrenke, “[Diamond Joe and the Black Sox jury celebration](#),” *SABR Black Sox Scandal Committee Newsletter*, December 2017, accessed December 1, 2020.

11. Ernest Hemingway to William B. Smith Jr. [c. Aug., 3-5, 1921] in *Letters, Vol. 1*, 293-94.

12. Ernest Hemingway to William B. Smith Jr. [c. Aug., 3-5 1921] in *Letters, Vol. 1*, 294, and footnote 2 in *Letters, Vol. 1*, 297.

13. Hadley Richardson letter to Ernest Hemingway August 10, 1921, qtd. in Gioia Diliberto, *Paris Without End: The True Story of Hemingway’s First Wife* (Harper Perennial, 2011), ebook.

Branded by the Black Sox: Ed Brandt's unlikely rise

By Jacob Pomrenke

buckweaver@gmail.com

For a few years, Ed Brandt was one of baseball's best left-handed pitchers, winning 68 games between 1931 and 1934 with the Boston Braves. The highlight of his 11 seasons in the big leagues came on Opening Day in 1935, when he outdueled Carl Hubbell of the New York Giants to win in Babe Ruth's first National League game with Boston.

A decade earlier, Brandt's major-league career was nearly derailed before it began — after he found himself on the same field as Chick Gandil in an “outlaw” game in Oregon. As a result, he was suspended from Organized Baseball for one season and barred from playing in the Pacific Coast League when he was 21 years old.

Even though Gandil was playing under an assumed name, they were on opposing teams, and Brandt was only on the field with the disgraced Black Sox first baseman for just one afternoon, none of those details mattered to baseball commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis. “Birds of a feather flock together,” he had once said.¹

What makes Brandt's story unusual is not that he played independent baseball with the banished Black Sox, as thousands of other amateur and semipro players did throughout the 1920s and '30s. But Brandt may have been the only future major-leaguer who was actually punished for doing so.

“I didn't know Gandil from Adam's off-ox,” Brandt later said. “But I was outlawed.”²

Almost no one else on that field that day in Oregon knew for sure if Chick Gandil was there, either.



When Judge Landis announced that Gandil and the other seven Chicago White Sox players who fixed the 1919 World Series were banned from ever playing professional baseball again, he also made it clear that any ballplayer who associated with them would face the same punishment.

Just six weeks after Landis issued his ban in August 1921, he sent a threatening letter to a team in Saginaw, Michigan, that attempted to hire Eddie Cicotte to pitch for them: “Any baseball player engaging in the sport with or against Eddie Cicotte in a scheduled semi-pro game here Saturday will be placed on the ineligible list, fined, and barred from further participation in professional baseball.”³

Landis worked hard over the next few years to follow through on his threat, expanding his “ineligible” list to include dozens of players who breached a contract, refused to report to his team, or otherwise found themselves in the commissioner's cross-hairs. In that era, the reserve-clause system bound a player to one team for his entire career; his only leverage was to walk away from Organized Baseball and play for an independent team that was unaffiliated with the major or minor leagues.⁴ This, too, was seen by Landis as a reason to suspend a player indefinitely.



Before Ed Brandt reached the big leagues with the Boston Braves in 1928, he played outlaw baseball against Chick Gandil in eastern Oregon. He had to serve a one-year suspension before he was allowed to return to Organized Baseball. (1925 Zeenut / Trading Card Database)

During the Roaring Twenties, thousands of independent teams flourished in big cities and small towns across the United States, propped up by rabid fan support and sponsored by local businesses and benefactors. Many talented ballplayers with major- or minor-league experience found a lucrative way to make a living that way, hired as ringers to provide an edge against rival teams.

Ed Brandt was one of those players. A hard-throwing left-hander born in Spokane, Washington, his pitching prowess as a teenager attracted attention from the Seattle Indians of the Pacific Coast League in 1922, when he was just 17. He became homesick during his first spring training in California and left camp early. The Indians persuaded him to go pitch in a smaller Class D minor league in South Dakota, but as SABR biographer Paul Rogers wrote, “he again became plagued with self-doubt and headed home.”⁵

Brandt made four appearances for Seattle in 1924 and pitched in five more games in 1925, but he left the team early each season for more comfortable surroundings near his home in the Pacific Northwest. A Boston Braves scout

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saw him pitch in Wallace, Idaho, and tried to convince him to travel to Chicago for a tryout when the team was on a road trip. But Brandt apparently failed to show up.⁶

In May 1925, he joined an independent, semipro team in Baker, Oregon, instead. Brandt was reportedly paid \$250 per month to pitch one game a week in the Blue Mountain League. His considerable talent placed him head and shoulders above the weekend warriors who made up the bulk of the four-team circuit. Brandt made up his mind that “never again would I try out in Organized Baseball,” he later told *The Sporting News*.⁷

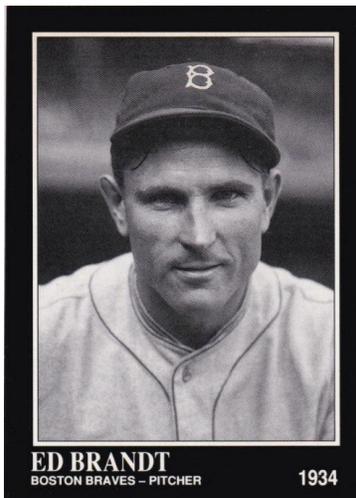


The whispers began almost as soon as Tom Gossett stepped onto the field that summer in La Grande, Oregon, a working-class lumber mill town at the foot of the Blue Mountains. Baker and La Grande were separated by about 50 miles, following Lewis and Clark’s old route along the Oregon Trail. The other two teams in the league were just farther north, in Pendleton, Oregon, and across the Washington state line in Walla Walla.

Gossett, a strapping 6-foot-1 athlete with broad shoulders, large hands, and intense, deep-set eyes, told everyone he was a first baseman, but his La Grande Pirates teammates soon learned he could play every position well. He was installed at third base to fill a hole in the roster, but when the starting catcher was beamed, Gossett filled in behind the plate for one game, too.

He hit longer drives than anyone else on the team, and he could be counted on to come through in clutch situations. On April 26, Gossett doubled and scored a run in the Pirates’ home opener against Pendleton, whose star left-handed pitcher, Earl Dunlap, had struck out 17 batters in his previous start.⁸ Two weeks later, Gossett “whacked [a double] along the motor row where it hid among the cars,” a key hit in a 6-0 win against Baker that featured a no-hitter by La Grande pitcher Buck Hein.⁹ The only other La Grande player with any significant athletic experience was shortstop Hughie McKenna, who had been a multisport star at Oregon Agricultural College (now Oregon State University).¹⁰

In addition to his considerable skills on the diamond, La Grande’s new third baseman had charisma and a highly developed baseball intelligence, leading to his being named team captain by manager Harris French, who owned an automobile dealership in town. Gossett was also an “all-around authority” on other sports, too, volunteering to serve as a boxing referee at the Oddfellows Gymnasium for a bout.¹¹



By mid-summer, fans were abuzz that Tom Gossett had a more distinguished baseball pedigree than he may have let on. Toward the end of May, the rumors grew wilder:

“A report printed in the (Pendleton) *East Oregonian* states that Chick Gandil, Chicago Black Sox, is playing regularly with the LaGrande club of the Blue Mountain League. Positive identification of Gandil has been made by a former minor league associate, according to the article, which states that Buck Weaver and Swede Risberg are generally believed to be on the LaGrande roster under the names of Holtz and Williams.”¹²

A wire service picked up the report and spread the rumors in newspapers all across the country. But the report greatly exaggerated how many former big-leaguers were in eastern Oregon. Gandil and his old pal Weaver would indeed become teammates again in 1925, but not in La Grande.¹³ Swede Risberg, meanwhile, could be found playing for a team based in Scobey, Montana, near the Canadian border — where he was joined by Happy Felsch.¹⁴ None of the other Black Sox were on the La Grande team with “Tom Gossett,” however.

It’s unclear why Gandil chose to play under a pseudonym in La Grande, when he and the other Black Sox had spent years playing “outlaw” baseball under their real names

in order to draw larger crowds and make more money from gate receipts. Unlike most of the other Black Sox, Gandil had experience using an alias to play ball, having done so for several years as a teenager in the minor leagues.¹⁵ He had also spent time in this part of the country before, so perhaps he was trying to keep a lower profile for some reason.

Back in 1920, after he refused to report to the Chicago White Sox in a contract dispute, Gandil spent several months as a player-manager with an independent team in St. Anthony, Idaho, on the eastern end of the Snake River, a full day’s drive from La Grande. Gandil abruptly left Idaho in mid-season after suffering from a bout of appendicitis. He was still recuperating from his appendix surgery when the Black Sox Scandal was publicly exposed in September. Gandil released a statement denying any involvement in the fixed World Series, and that’s where another clue to his identity in La Grande can be found. It was reported that Gandil left the hospital and went to Lufkin, Texas — “to the home of his wife’s parents, T.R. Gossett.”¹⁶



Although rumors were flying all over the Blue Mountain League, as far as the La Grande team was concerned their third baseman was still Tom Gossett, who had also taken over as manager from Harris French. The local *Observer*

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newspaper had not yet linked Gossett to Gandil, perhaps giving their players a sense of plausible deniability if any questions arose in the future.

Ed Brandt and the Baker Bears came to town for a highly anticipated game on Sunday, June 21. A Baker win would put them in a tie for first place with the Pirates, with just five games remaining on the schedule. But La Grande took an early four-run lead, their final run coming on Gossett's third-inning RBI double, which proved to be the difference in a 4-3 win that "had all the excitement possible except a run by the fire department."¹⁷ It was Brandt's first loss of the season.

After winning two of their next three games, La Grande clinched the pennant with a 12-0 shutout against Baker (Ed Brandt did not pitch) on July 12. Gossett did not record a hit, but the "peppy manager whose work has really won the pennant for La Grande ... drew a great deal of applause every time he lifted the willow."¹⁸

In 14 of the 15 Pirates games where box scores could be found, Gossett batted .313 with five doubles, two triples, and seven runs scored. He also recorded a .946 fielding percentage at third base, a position that Chick Gandil never played in his professional career.

The following day, the *La Grande Observer* reported that Gossett wouldn't stick around to help the team celebrate:

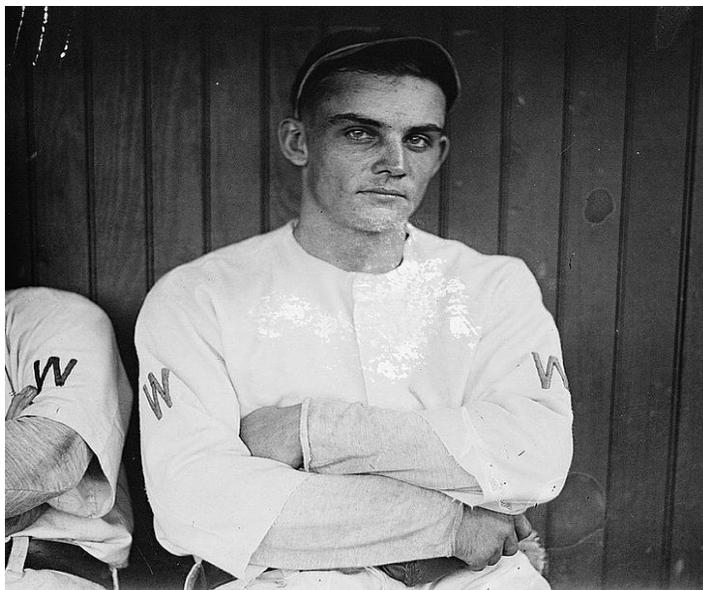
"Gossett left this morning for Douglas, Arizona, to play baseball with teams in Arizona and Mexico. Tom will finish out the season there with a number of his old friends and expects to return to La Grande some time in October to locate here. Several jobs have been offered him — he is an expert pipe fitter and plumber and he plans to remain in La Grande over the winter. Gossett was accompanied on the trip by Mrs. Gossett."¹⁹

Five days later on July 18, a new first baseman made his debut with the Douglas Blues of the outlaw Copper League: Chick Gandil, back now under his real name. His shortstop for that first game in El Paso, Texas, was a familiar face, Buck Weaver, who had joined the team a week earlier. Both of them were recruited by Douglas's manager, former major-leaguer Hal Chase, known as the "Black Prince of Baseball" both for his defensive wizardry and his ethical lapses when it came to fixing games.²⁰

Gandil and Weaver spent three summers together playing outlaw baseball in the Southwest. When Chase became injured and left the team, they called upon pitcher Claude "Lefty" Williams, another old Chicago teammate, to help out.



The La Grande newspaper finally acknowledged the truth about their star infielder on August 4:



Chick Gandil, seen here in 1913, played outlaw baseball under the name "Tom Gossett" in eastern Oregon during the summer of 1925. He hit .313 and managed the La Grande Pirates to the pennant in the independent Blue Mountain League. (Photo: Library of Congress, Bain Collection)

"Gandil, if Gossett really is the famous ex-leaguer, was one of the most popular players on the team. ... He was treated with respect and given a welcome in every city where he led the Pirates. ... Many believe that the trend of circumstances will react favorably toward the ultimate reinstatement of Gandil in organized baseball."²¹

By then, the Blue Mountain League season was over and Ed Brandt was back home in Spokane, pitching in a semipro city league to finish out the year. In early 1926, the Seattle Indians again tried to persuade the talented 21-year-old left-hander to return to the Pacific Coast League. This time, they received shocking news. The National Association, which governed baseball's minor leagues, had placed Brandt on the "ineligible list." He was suspended indefinitely for two of Judge Landis's most despised crimes: breaking his contract with Seattle the previous year and playing on the same field as one of the Black Sox.

National Association president John H. Farrell told Seattle club officers that Brandt "would have to refrain from playing with ineligible players for one year before he could gain admission" to the Coast League.²²

Brandt wasn't the only player to press his luck by stepping on the field against the banished Black Sox in the 1920s. Ernie Wingard had been a teammate of Shoeless Joe Jackson's in Louisiana before joining the St. Louis Browns in 1923. Vern Underhill (Cleveland Indians) and Syd Cohen (Washington Senators) were both on the 1926 El Paso team that faced off against Gandil and Weaver every weekend

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before they reached the majors.²³ None were punished for their transgressions like Ed Brandt.

Brandt spent most of his year under suspension pitching semipro ball in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, until Seattle's request to let him return was finally approved in late September. Brandt made his PCL season debut on October 5, pitching two-plus innings in a loss to the Oakland Oaks. In 1927, he returned to the Coast League and had a breakout season, winning 19 games for Seattle — where he pitched occasionally to catcher Joe Jenkins, a long-ago teammate of Gandil and Weaver on the 1919 White Sox.²⁴

At the age of 23, Brandt's contract was sold to the Boston Braves and he made his major-league debut on April 15, 1928, at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, pitching in front of two Hall of Fame infielders, George Sisler and Rogers Hornsby. He struggled on a terrible Braves team as a rookie, losing 21 games and any shred of confidence he possessed on the mound. But he stuck with it and when Bill McKechnie was hired in 1930, the manager's gentle urging helped him turn things around.

"This kid, for years, was licked," McKechnie said. "He knew he couldn't make the grade up from the semipro clubs to the major leagues. Big-league scouts knew just as positively that he was ready for major league service. Brandt suffered from a terrible inferiority complex. Eventually he got rid of it so that today he is a great star."²⁵

Notes

1. "Buck Weaver Asks For Reinstatement," *New York Herald*, January 14, 1922.

2. Harry T. Brundidge, "Ed Brandt Won Belated Success With Boston Braves After Prolonged Battle to Gain Confidence in Himself," *The Sporting News*, November 19, 1931, 7.

3. "Landis to Bar Players in Game with Cicotte," *New York Tribune*, September 22, 1921.

4. In the 1951 Celler Committee hearings in the US House of Representatives on baseball's antitrust exemption, a partial list was introduced of players who were suspended by Judge Landis for playing against "ineligibles." One of these players was James Thompson "Doc" Prothro, who was suspended for appearing in a semipro game in Chicago with Dickey Kerr, the 1919 World Series hero who found himself barred from the major leagues for three seasons because of a contract dispute with White Sox owner Charles Comiskey.

5. C. Paul Rogers III, "Ed Brandt," SABR BioProject, accessed December 10, 2020.

6. Rogers, SABR BioProject.

7. Brundidge, *The Sporting News*.

8. "Pendleton Defeated by Pirates," *La Grande*

Observer, April 27, 1925. Dunlap, a US Navy veteran in World War I who had once tried out for the Oakland Oaks of the Pacific Coast League, reportedly had been invited to spring training with the New York Yankees in 1925. But he does not appear to have made any appearances in professional baseball. See *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, June 30, 1925.

9. "Hein Pitches No-Hit, No-Run Game," *La Grande Observer*, May 11, 1925.

10. "Pirates Play Bucks Sunday," *La Grande Observer*, June 25, 1925.

11. "Fighters to Meet Tonight," *La Grande Observer*, June 8, 1925. Gandil had also been a well-regarded amateur boxer before he made the major leagues, so he knew his way around a ring.

12. "Black Sox Outcast Plays in Oregon," *Medford Mail Tribune*, May 21, 1925.

13. On the same weekend as the initial report about Buck Weaver playing in Oregon, he was actually in Reedsburg, Wisconsin, playing in a game there against the Gilkerson Union Giants. See *Madison Capital Times*, May 26, 1925.

14. Alan Muchlinski, *After the Black Sox: The Swede Risberg Story* (Bloomington, Indiana: AuthorHouse, 2005).

15. Leman Saunders, "Alias 'Chick Arnold': Gandil's Wild West Days," *SABR Black Sox Scandal Committee Newsletter*, June 2020.

16. "Chick Gandil Talks," *Montreal Gazette*, October 9, 1920.

17. "La Grande Trounces Baker," *La Grande Observer*, June 22, 1925.

18. "La Grande Wins 1925 Gonfalon," *La Grande Observer*, July 13, 1925; "Credit for Winning of Pennant Due Gossett," *La Grande Observer*, July 13, 1925.

19. "Gossett to Play With Douglas, Arizona, Team," *La Grande Observer*, July 14, 1925.

20. Lynn Bevill, "Outlaw Baseball Players in the Copper League: 1925-27" (master's thesis, Western New Mexico University, 1988), accessed online at BevillsAdvocate.org.

21. "Dick Kerr Reinstated by Landis," *La Grande Observer*, August 4, 1925. As the headline shows, this was the same day Judge Landis reinstated pitcher Dickey Kerr from his three-year suspension for jumping his contract with the White Sox.

22. "Brandt May Go To Seattle," *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, March 30, 1926.

23. Several other future major-leaguers, including Emmett Nelson, Verdo Elmore, and Otis Brannan, also played outlaw baseball against the Black Sox before they made the big leagues. Dozens of other minor-leaguers also played against the Black Sox prior to joining Organized Baseball. But none had to serve a one-year suspension for playing against the Black Sox like Ed Brandt did.

24. "1927 Seattle Indians," Baseball-Reference.com, accessed December 10, 2020.

25. Brundidge, *The Sporting News*.

World Series memories and the West Coast connection

Editor's note: This is an excerpt from Warren Brown's Win, Lose, or Draw (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1947). Brown was the 1973 recipient of the J.G. Taylor Spink Award, author of a history book on the Chicago White Sox, and a newspaper editor and columnist for more than 50 years.

By Warren Brown

The year 1919 was the one in which the rest of the sports world seemed to draw closer to California and the Pacific Coast than it had ever done before.



Swede Risberg

Pitching for Cincinnati was Dutch Ruether, my old teammate of the collegiate and semipro circuit. He was now grown to one of baseball's best left-handers, pitcher and hitter.

On the Chicago side were Swede Risberg, Claude Williams, and Buck Weaver. Risberg and I had been members of the Telegraph Hill Boys Club in our 115-pound days. Williams had been a teammate of mine at Sacramento as I drifted in and out of professional baseball. Weaver, the greatest third baseman I have ever seen, was as familiar to me as my next-door neighbor. ...



Warren Brown

From two thousand miles away, in the midst of that first World Series game, a visitor from San Jose dropped in to see how things were going. A wise guy. One who knew all the answers.

"The series is phony," he said. "It's all fixed for the Reds to win."

We told him he was nuts. Nobody could fix a ball game. He was probably sore because the White Sox were getting beaten, and they were getting beaten because Ruether was the greatest pitcher who ever lived. We laughed at him. Dirty laughs.

"I ain't kidding," he insisted. "We got the word. You know who from ..."

None of us knew "who from" ... and none of us then gave any thought to Hal Chase, who sometimes wintered in San Jose. He wasn't in the series, anyhow. None of us thought about Abe Attell, or old Bill Burns, who had pitched on the Coast before he went up to Washington. None of us had ever heard of Arnold Rothstein. We drove our visitor out finally.

Some time after the Reds had won the game and the story was bedded down nicely in the paper, I thought of calling some of the lads on Telegraph Hill who were cronies

of Risberg.

I approached the matter cautiously, simply asking if they had heard anything from the Swede about the White Sox chances. Several of them had. The White Sox were a cinch, Risberg had said. Go the limit on them. ...

A few years after the White Sox scandal, in a strictly informal way I took it up with Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, one of my closest personal friends.

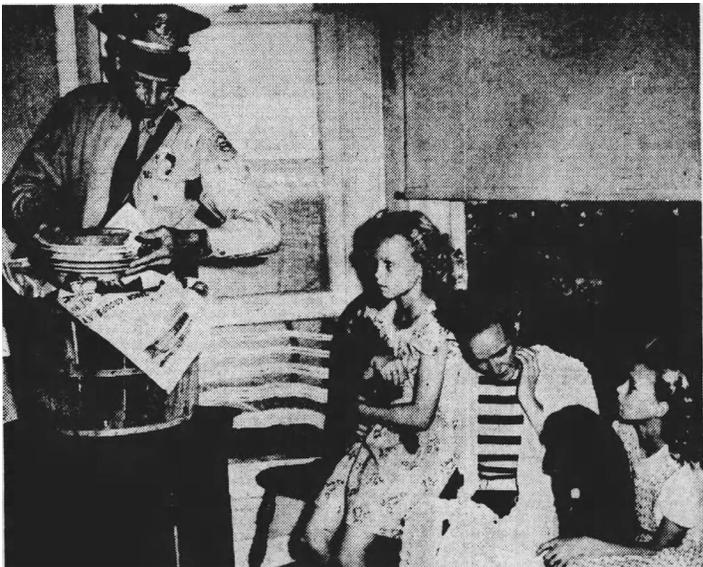
I reviewed the case of the White Sox. I recalled that among those implicated, Risberg, Claude Williams, Chick Gandil, Fred McMullin, and Buck Weaver all had their beginnings in the Pacific Coast League, or had served there while in the reshaping process. So, too, had Bill Burns and Joe Gedeon. ...

Elsewhere in the Coast League in my time, there had been another wholesale dismissal in several clubs of players who were caught in a mess. All these things I placed before Landis.

"Well, what do you make of it?" I asked him finally.

He poked me in the chest with a bony finger and said, "That, sir, is something for a Californian to determine. I am a native of Indiana. But don't it beat hell how all those fellows seemed to come from the same place?"

It certainly did.



This photo of Fred McMullin in the *San Pedro (California) News-Pilot* of October 5, 1948, was discovered recently by SABR member Leman Saunders. It is the only known photo of McMullin after his baseball career ended with the Black Sox Scandal in 1920. McMullin is pictured serving an eviction notice in his job as a Los Angeles County marshal to Peggy Grenzer and her two daughters, Gertrude and Dolores, inside their apartment on Fifth Street in San Pedro. McMullin began his law enforcement career with the county in 1940 and was later promoted to captain, where he supervised a division of marshals. He held that job until his death in 1952.