When the Cleveland Indians opened the 2007 season, a new historical exhibit called Heritage Park greeted fans at Jacobs Field. The special space behind the center-field bleachers was a celebration of the Indians’ rich history after more than 100 years in the American League, with plaques devoted to all the players who had been inducted into the team’s Hall of Fame.

One of the signature artifacts on display at Heritage Park was a 175-pound bronze memorial to Ray Chapman, the popular Cleveland shortstop killed by a pitched ball in 1920, the only major-leaguer to suffer a fatality on the field. The ornate plaque honoring Chapman, which was erected at League Park after his death, had been recently rediscovered after sitting neglected for decades in storage, gathering dust and dirt.

Few fans remembered the last time the Chapman plaque had been seen in public. Even fewer remembered the last time the Indians held a grand opening for the team’s brand-new Hall of Fame — a historic project that was the first of its kind — back in the 1950s at Municipal Stadium.

The story of the Cleveland Indians Hall of Fame stretches for more than sixty-five years, from its unlikely creation, to its abandonment by new ownership desperate to cut costs, and then a sudden rebirth in the 21st century.

Shoeless Joe Jackson’s Baseball-Reference page has a new note in its biographical section: “There is dispute as to whether his middle name was Walker, Wofford, or Jefferson.” If you’ll recall, the most recent issue of this newsletter included an article on the subject of Jackson’s middle name. For years, it’s been listed in reference sources as Wofford or Jefferson, or a combination of the two.

But these names seem to have no clear origins and there is no record of Jackson’s birth in South Carolina to confirm. His death certificate only uses the initial W, as do other legal forms like his final will and his driver’s license.

In this photo from 1970, visitors to the Cleveland Indians Hall of Fame at Municipal Stadium view a display of team uniforms from the franchise’s inaugural season of 1901, the World Series years of 1920 and 1948, and a modern replica. In the foreground is a plastic, illuminated baseball adorned with the signatures of the original Indians Hall of Fame class of 1951, including Shoeless Joe Jackson, along with later inductees. (Courtesy of the Cleveland Indians)
Last year, researcher Jimmy Keenan found two separate newspaper interviews from 1912 in which Jackson is quoted as saying his middle name is Walker. SABR’s Biographical Committee accepted this evidence and updated Jackson’s name while adding a note of clarification about the dispute.

At SABR’s national convention in Miami this past summer, attendees at our Black Sox Scandal Committee meeting had a wide-ranging discussion on the subject of Joe Jackson’s middle name — but we couldn’t exactly come to a consensus.

When we put it to a vote about how Jackson’s middle name ought to be reflected in the major baseball reference sources, the highest recommendation was to just use the initial W over one of the three disputed names, since there seems to be no definitive evidence to confirm any of them. I have passed on that recommendation to Bill Carle, who maintains SABR’s biographical database.

Unfortunately, we may never know the answer for sure.

The Jackson family Bible was lost in a fire many years ago, and that was likely the only reliable source of information in the absence of official birth records.

However, Mike Nola of BlackBetsy.com said, “It was and is well known among the Jackson clan that Joe’s middle name was Wofford or Jefferson … depending on who you talk to, and that Walker was a nickname given him by [his brothers] either Dave or Jerry.”

So, after all this, we’re still taking suggestions on how Joe Jackson’s name should be listed in the SABR bio database and at Baseball-Reference.com? Please post your thoughts in our Yahoo! discussion group if you have any thoughts on the matter.

I’ve never been one to make “five-year plans” — but I want to look ahead for a moment, because we are beginning to approach some important anniversaries that promise to shine a bright spotlight on the Black Sox Scandal and the work of our committee.

The centennial of the 1919 World Series will be here before we know it, and I’m curious to hear your ideas on how we ought to commemorate or recognize that anniversary. We could organize a one-day research symposium in 2019, perhaps at the Chicago History Museum; we could launch a new website or social media project designed around the 100th anniversary; we could work on another collaborative publication, with a different focus than the BioProject book.

These are all just suggestions, but if you have any ideas in mind or you think we ought to pursue, please don’t hesitate to get in touch!

For more information about SABR’s Black Sox Scandal Research Committee, e-mail buckweaver@gmail.com.
One of the many welcome aspects of recent Black Sox scholarship gives Collyer’s Eye, a somewhat disreputable Chicago-based horse racing publication, and its reporter, “Frank O. Klein,” credit for being the first to report the Black Sox scandal.

In a remarkable series of articles starting October 18 (a week after the World Series ended) and extending through the end of 1919, Klein and Collyer’s named the names that the rest of the publishing world did not dare to. They named seven of the “Eight Men Out” — everyone except Buck Weaver.

They named Abe Attell as one of the gamblers involved in the fix. They gave details of the ballplayers’ goings-on during the offseason. They offered to furnish their findings to baseball authorities. And they did it months before any of the more reputable publications in Chicago or around the country.

The late Gene Carney wrote of publisher Bert Collyer and Klein, the special investigator: In another era, they “might have gone down in history as famously as Woodward and Bernstein.”

Yet the primary reporter credited for uncovering this mess, Klein, remains a mystery. Lengthy articles have been penned about other journalists who helped expose the fix, especially Hugh Fullerton. Yet no scholar ever seems to have explored who this “Frank O. Klein” was, or how he obtained his inside information. In this article I’ll share the results of my investigation, which shows that “Frank O. Klein” was, in all probability, a “man who never was,” a pseudonym for other reporters.

What do we know about “Frank O. Klein?” Articles under this man’s name were published in Collyer’s Eye in 1918 and for the next two decades. He was usually billed as Collyer’s “special investigator,” and reported more on horse racing scandals — Collyer’s bread-and-butter topic — than on baseball. He also uncovered alleged scandals in wrestling, boxing and other sports, along with betting lines on these sports. Later, his name was attached to horse racing predictions and odds-making. His articles were datelined Louisville, New Orleans, New York City, and the articles sometimes mentioned that he’d visited these places and interviewed specific people.

Yet there is nothing in the articles about Klein the person. Collyer’s routinely published photos of their “name” columnists such as Ed Bang, the well-known sports editor of the Cleveland News. Yet no photo of Klein was ever published.

By Bruce Allardice
bsa1861@att.net

One of the many welcome aspects of recent Black Sox scholarship gives Collyer’s Eye, a somewhat disreputable Chicago-based horse racing publication, and its reporter, “Frank O. Klein,” credit for being the first to report the Black Sox scandal.

In a remarkable series of articles starting October 18 (a week after the World Series ended) and extending through the end of 1919, Klein and Collyer’s named the names that the rest of the publishing world did not dare to. They named seven of the “Eight Men Out” — everyone except Buck Weaver.

They named Abe Attell as one of the gamblers involved in the fix. They gave details of the ballplayers’ goings-on during the offseason. They offered to furnish their findings to baseball authorities. And they did it months before any of the more reputable publications in Chicago or around the country.

The late Gene Carney wrote of publisher Bert Collyer and Klein, the special investigator: In another era, they “might have gone down in history as famously as Woodward and Bernstein.”

Yet the primary reporter credited for uncovering this mess, Klein, remains a mystery. Lengthy articles have been penned about other journalists who helped expose the fix, especially Hugh Fullerton. Yet no scholar ever seems to have explored who this “Frank O. Klein” was, or how he obtained his inside information. In this article I’ll share the results of my investigation, which shows that “Frank O. Klein” was, in all probability, a “man who never was,” a pseudonym for other reporters.

What do we know about “Frank O. Klein?” Articles under this man’s name were published in Collyer’s Eye in 1918 and for the next two decades.

He was usually billed as Collyer’s “special investigator,” and reported more on horse racing scandals — Collyer’s bread-and-butter topic — than on baseball. He also uncovered alleged scandals in wrestling, boxing and other sports, along with betting lines on these sports. Later, his name was attached to horse racing predictions and odds-making. His articles were datelined Louisville, New Orleans, New York City, and the articles sometimes mentioned that he’d visited these places and interviewed specific people.

Yet there is nothing in the articles about Klein the person. Collyer’s routinely published photos of their “name” columnists such as Ed Bang, the well-known sports editor of the Cleveland News. Yet no photo of Klein was ever published.

The byline appearing on Collyer’s Eye’s articles uncovering the Black Sox Scandal in 1919-20 was Frank O. Klein. But no reporter by that name has ever been found. It wasn’t unusual for publisher Bert Collyer, below, or his staff to use pseudonyms — and he may have been the source of the Klein stories himself. (Photo by Guelph Public Library; illustration by Jacob Pomrenke. Photo of Detective Frank Kline on page 4 courtesy of his great-grandson Al Switzer. Other photos provided by Bruce Allardice.)
Most of the articles in Collyer’s were in fact written under anonymous names or under pseudonyms. For example, the April 7, 1923 issue contains articles by “an analyst,” “a staff correspondent,” “Bourse” (their regular financial market columnist), and “Aurelius.” Other named columnists such as “Reid J. Murdock,” who wrote a key article a week after the 1919 Series predicting the Sox would let Chick Gandil go, don’t appear on any census or in any Chicago city directory.3

Tellingly, “Frank Klein,” “Reid J. Murdock,” and other Collyer’s columnists never seem to be mentioned in other newspapers, which is extremely unusual given that sportswriters of the time often mentioned their colleagues in their columns.

This author’s exhaustive search of the US Census, Chicago (and other) city directories, birth/death/marriage records, Social Security records, online newspaper databases, and other sources shows no one by the name of “Frank Klein,” “Frank Kline,” “Frank O. Kline” or other variation4 that would correspond to a columnist by this name.5

The closest match this author could find was a Frank Kline with no middle name, a veteran Chicago policeman who briefly headed one of the city’s gambling squads.6 At first this Kline (1869-1940) appeared to be a likely suspect for the columnist. Further research, including correspondence with Kline’s descendants, rule this policeman out as the Collyer’s columnist. The policeman was too busy with his duties to traipse around the country uncovering scandals, as the columnist did — though it is not impossible that Collyer’s borrowed Kline’s name for their own columnist’s name.

In sum, the lack of any independent record of any “Frank O. Klein,” Klein’s seeming expertise in the many varied locales and sports Collyer’s wrote about, plus Collyer’s penchant for using pseudonyms for its writers, all suggest that “Frank O. Klein” was a pen name used by Collyer’s staff of writers. Perhaps Bert Collyer did this to make it more difficult for others to sue him.

So who wrote the “Frank O. Klein” Black Sox articles? Collyer’s first Black Sox-related article on October 18, 1919, gives a clue, for in it “Klein” specifically praises two well-known Chicago sportswriters, Charles Dryden of the Examiner and Irving (Sy) Sanborn of the Tribune, for their keeping the scandal talk alive.

Another clue is that “Klein” had an intimate, first-name-basis knowledge of the city’s top gamblers as well as White Sox ballplayers. Yet another clue is that in a later article, “Klein” mentions that he’s a friend of Sox second baseman Eddie Collins, whom “Klein” describes as “one of the most intelligent men in the game.”7 In sum, it appears the source(s) was a sportswriter who covered the White Sox on a regular basis.

What this author believes is that Bert Collyer did the actual writing of at least the initial “Klein” Black Sox articles. In 1946, in a series of four hitherto unremarked articles that appeared in the Charleston (South Carolina) News and Courier, a “veteran writer” using the pseudonym “Aurelius” detailed how Collyer’s broke the scandal story. Written just after Hugh Fullerton’s death — a fact mentioned in the articles — “Aurelius” claimed that Collyer, after receiving information on the fix, asked him to write up the story and then, after “Aurelius” declined, Collyer wrote the stories himself.8

While Bert Collyer may have written the “Klein” articles, the author believes that many of the details were furnished by Dryden, Sanborn, and/or Hugh Fullerton of the Examiner. Fullerton is the likely candidate for the primary “Klein” source. Fullerton had already charged that seven of the Sox

> Continued on Page 5
would not be returning in 1920, and he, more than any other reporter, pressed on with his public exposés of the scandal.

Fullerton was also a close friend of Eddie Collins, as "Klein" claims to be. In 1925 Fullerton wrote an article on Collins titled “The Smartest Second Baseman,” which sounds very much like what “Klein” wrote five years earlier.

Fullerton and the other sportswriters couldn’t get their own articles on the Black Sox Scandal published because their editors feared libel suits. So they may have used Collyer’s as a conduit to air what they really knew about the scandal. This collaboration made a lot of sense. The sportswriters could pool their baseball expertise with Collyer’s intimate knowledge of gamblers, and Collyer’s, which often published sensationalist and thinly sourced articles, didn’t demand the standard of proof that more mainstream publications demanded.

The late Gene Carney wondered if Hugh Fullerton wrote the “Klein” Black Sox articles, “because it looked sometimes like the Eye was printing what Fullerton WANTED to get in print.” While Carney ultimately rejected the idea that Fullerton wrote as “Klein,” a later Collyer’s article proves that on other occasions Bert Collyer relied on Fullerton as a source. In a 1921 Collyer’s article with the headline “New Baseball Expose Near,” Bert Collyer turned his column over to “an article contributed by baseball’s most famous critic — Hugh Fullerton” so that Fullerton could criticize Organized Baseball’s lack of response to various game-fixing charges. It seems probable this 1921 article wasn’t the first time that Collyer’s served as Fullerton’s conduit.

The last known “Frank O. Klein” article appeared in June 1938. Bert Collyer died one month later. This may be a coincidence, or it may be further proof that “Klein” and Collyer were one and the same.

Notes


2. See, for example, Klein’s articles in Collyer’s Eye, September 6, 1919 (horse racing); January 2, 1926 (phony horserace tipsters); April 25, 1925 (wrestling) and October 2, 1926 (boxing). “Klein” had articles on Chicago baseball as late as 1938 (see New Orleans Times Picayune, June 18, 1938). The numerous “Klein” horse racing articles were probably written by Bert Collyer (a racing expert) or his staff expert on horse racing, Walter H. Pearce (1883-1940).

3. The name “Reid J. Murdock” appears to be a takeoff on the name of the Chicago-based mercantile firm of Reid, Murdock & Co.


5. The author also viewed the records of the 1923 lawsuit filed by two Cincinnati Reds ballplayers against Klein and Collyer’s Eye, for an article alleging that the players had consorted with gamblers. Klein was never served with the subpoena, and his signature appears in none of the court papers. See Northern District of Illinois, court records, cause nos. 34634 and 34.

6. See, for example, the Chicago Tribune, January 15, 1917.


8. Charleston News and Courier, January 15, 19-21, 1946. These articles are a bit hazy on some details, but they contain new insight into Collyer’s Eye and the fix.


11. Collyer’s Eye, November 8, 1919, where “Klein” passes along a rumor that Eddie Collins will replace Kid Gleason as White Sox manager in 1920.


13. Collyer’s Eye, August 20, 1921.
Eye staffer reveals new details in 1946 series

Pseudonymous writer ‘Aurelius’ from Collyer’s Eye tells of scandal coverage, Rothstein meeting with Bert Collyer

By Jacob Pomrenke and Bruce Allardice
buckweaver@gmail.com, bsa1861@att.net

Collyer’s Eye is notable for being the first paper to report the names of the White Sox players accused of throwing the 1919 World Series. The Chicago-based gambling trade publication helped shine a light on the widespread rumors of game-fixing in its coverage during the offseason of 1919-20.

In the aftermath of the Series, most of Collyer’s articles about the White Sox used the byline “Frank O. Klein,” although no reporter by that name has ever been identified. Elsewhere in this newsletter, Bruce Allardice digs into Klein’s story for the first time and reveals evidence that Klein was actually a pseudonym used by the Eye’s publisher and namesake, Bert Collyer (1876-1938). Collyer was the only editor courageous enough to report on the World Series rumors.

Allardice’s research also led him to discover a previously unknown series of Black Sox-related columns that appeared in the Charleston (South Carolina) News and Courier between January 15 and 21, 1946. The series was written by another pseudonymous Collyer’s Eye reporter named “Aurelius.”

Download and read the four columns from the 1946 Aurelius series at this PDF link:

In 1946, a former Collyer’s Eye reporter using the alias “Aurelius” published a four-part series related to the Black Sox Scandal in the Charleston (South Carolina) News and Courier. These previously unknown columns include details of an alleged meeting between Bert Collyer and gambler Arnold Rothstein, as well as a new theory about Rothstein’s involvement in the World Series fix and his 1928 murder.

The reporter known as “Aurelius” was Paul Smart Warden (1873-1955), a Chicago newspaperman and later a grain broker, who worked on the side for Collyer’s Eye. Warden spent more than 50 years in journalism, including stints at the New York Evening Journal, the Chicago Herald, the Chicago American, and other publications, rising to assistant night editor of the American around 1910. His main beat was the Chicago Board of Trade.

In 1946, a year after Collyer’s Eye permanently closed in the wake of the US government’s wartime ban on horse racing, Warden wrote four columns as “Aurelius” detailing the Eye’s groundbreaking reporting of the Black Sox Scandal. The series — which appears to have only run in the Charleston newspaper, for unknown reasons — offers details that haven’t been disclosed before, including a confrontation between World Series fix mastermind Arnold Rothstein and Bert Collyer in the latter’s office.

In the first article, on January 15, 1946, Aurelius claims that Collyer offered him a chance to write about the tainted World Series, but he refused because he “didn’t believe a word of it [and was] still unconvinced … the Chicago players did not do their level best to win.” Collyer responded, “Very well. I’ll write the story myself.”

Aurelius mentions that he’s now telling this story because “two of the principal characters connected with the exposure are now dead.” Allardice notes this clearly refers to Hugh Fullerton, who died three weeks before these articles appeared in the Charleston paper, and Collyer himself. This comment also confirms that Fullerton had been the prime source of information for the 1919 “Frank O. Klein” articles in Collyer’s Eye, as Allardice explains in his Klein article in this newsletter.

Continued on Page 7
Aurelius also refers to 1919 games he attended in New York City where the Cincinnati Reds “slaughtered” the New York Giants — which convinced him that the Reds would beat the White Sox in the World Series. This clearly refers to the August 13-15 series at the Polo Grounds, where the Reds beat the Giants in four out of six games ... in three straight doubleheaders, no less!

In the second article, which appeared on January 19, 1946, Aurelius describes what he believes were the White Sox’s motives for throwing the World Series. He alleges that Sox owner Charles Comiskey promised his players a bonus in 1919 if they won the pennant, and that when the bonus wasn’t paid, the Sox players revolted.

What Warden/Aurelius may have been remembering here was a Collyer’s Eye report from June 22, 1918, in which the Eye reported that some unnamed White Sox players were disgruntled about not receiving a bonus if they won the 1917 World Series. A later story in the Eye named Sox coach Kid Gleason as the man who made that unkept promise.3

The myth of a bonus promised to the White Sox has taken many forms over the years, but there is little evidence or independent corroboration to support it. Plus, Allardice added, the timeline on Aurelius’s claim doesn’t hold up because the Sox players started plotting to fix the World Series prior to clinching the 1919 pennant and before any bonus could have been paid (or not paid.)

Aurelius also claims the White Sox “staged an astonishing rally during the final weeks of the season to become a long shot” pennant winner. However, Allardice notes that while they might have been a long shot at the start of the season, in reality the Sox led the American League standings for most of the year.

In the third and fourth articles, on January 20 and 21, 1946, Aurelius lays out a tenuous case that Arnold Rothstein actually started rumors of a fix in order to influence the World Series odds — which he used to bet on the White Sox, not the Reds, to win. Aurelius speculated that Rothstein may have believed “along with a majority of baseball fans, in the mythical invincibility of Comiskey’s one-time famous team.”

His source for this information is the St. Louis betting commissioner Tom Kearney, who allegedly told him that Rothstein didn’t win any money on the Series and pulled a “fast one” on his fellow gamblers. According to Aurelius, Rothstein’s murder in 1928 was in part a “result of treachery and welshing” during the 1919 Series.4

This claim seems extremely hard to believe. While it is possible that Rothstein put some money down on the White Sox in order to hedge his bets, there is ample evidence to suggest Rothstein was involved in a plot to fix the World Series and not just to change the odds. There were also too many other parties known to be involved for him to get away with such a deception.

Allardice also questions why the normally shrewd Rothstein would have disclosed the fix to Bert Collyer in a meeting at his Chicago office, as Aurelius vaguely describes in his first column. While the details of that meeting remain unclear, it is one of the juiciest revelations in the entire series. What else was said when Rothstein allegedly confronted Collyer about his knowledge of the fix?

There is a lot to digest in this previously uncovered series written by the veteran newspaperman Paul Warden, a source that no one had ever connected to the Black Sox Scandal before now.

Notes

1. The 1917 Chicago City Directory lists him as “copy-reader” for the Herald. See also: Chicago Tribune, May 20, 1928, and August 8, 1916; Wisconsin State Journal, March 20, 1923; 1918 copyrights; US Census 1900-1940. Jacob Pomrenke found the key piece of evidence connecting Warden to “Aurelius” — Warden’s obituary in the Chicago Herald, Chicago American, and others. (Photo courtesy of Thomas Warden Hayes and Bruce Allardice.)

Paul S. Warden was the author of the 1946 “Aurelius” series of Black Sox-related columns. The veteran newspaperman used the alias in his articles for Collyer’s Eye, where he worked during the 1919 World Series. He spent more than 50 years in journalism, primarily covering the Chicago Board of Trade, for the Chicago Herald, Chicago American, and others. (Photo courtesy of Thomas Warden Hayes and Bruce Allardice.)

➤ Continued on Page 8
In 2014, Chicago filmmaker Bill Morrison sent a jolt through baseball research circles with his discovery of film footage that depicted nearly five minutes of game action from the 1919 World Series.

The World Series newsreel, which can be viewed online at youtu.be/0mPHqbJXDQI, was one of more than 500 lost films that were discovered in the Canadian gold-rush town of Dawson City in the Yukon Territory, having been preserved for decades in an old swimming pool-turned-ice rink. The fragile nitrate reels were excavated in the 1970s and eventually sent to the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, where they were digitized and posted online.

This fall, Morrison completed a documentary on the remarkable film collection from Dawson City. His new film, Dawson City: Frozen Time, premiered at the Venice Film Festival in Italy, where it was nominated for the Horizons Award.

The 1919 World Series newsreel, filmed by British Canadian Pathé News, includes never-before-seen footage from the first and fourth innings of Game One of the World Series, plus an aerial flyover of Redland Field in Cincinnati and a panorama of the ballplayers in makeshift dugouts, and a shot of fans gathered in New York City to “watch” the game on a mechanical scoreboard.

Future screenings of Bill Morrison’s Dawson City have yet to be announced and the film is not yet available to the public. But you can view the trailer online at vimeo.com/180648695.

In October, Vanity Fair interviewed Morrison about his film, which features clips from dozens of the preserved reels found in Dawson City. You can read it here: vanityfair.com/hollywood/2016/09/the-discovery-and-recovery-of-the-kingtuts-tomb-of-silent-era-cinema

No one quite knows what happened to the old Hall of Fame, or the artifacts that were once displayed there. Most of the plaques and artwork and memorabilia disappeared ages ago, although some items have occasionally resurfaced (like the Chapman plaque) at the new ballpark downtown or in the hands of private collectors. Even the Indians’ front office only has a handful of grainy photos and articles to prove the place really existed. But if you read the plaques at Heritage Park closely, you can find faint remnants of the first Cleveland Indians Hall of Fame. The years of the inductees take you back in time and provide the only clues of what once was:

Early Wynn, inducted 1972 … Larry Doby, 1966 … Bob Feller, 1957 … Tris Speaker, 1951 … Cy Young, 1951 … Shoeless Joe Jackson, 1951 ...

Jackson was part of the original class of 10 inductees, and the most controversial. He spent just six seasons with the Indians from 1910 to 1915 before his trade to the Chicago White Sox and his later involvement in the Black Sox Scandal, which earned him a permanent ban from baseball in the prime of his career. But Indians fans of a certain age could still remember how good he was coming up in Cleveland: his .408 average in 1911, still the highest ever recorded by any rookie; his league-leading 26 triples in 1912, still the franchise record all these years later.

Unlike his former teammates Cy Young and Nap Lajoie, Jackson hadn’t been inducted in the National Baseball Hall of Fame yet. While the disgraced star was still technically eligible, the baseball writers had shown little inclination to vote for him while he was still banned from the game. But after receiving enormous positive feedback from fans, Cleveland’s sports editors unanimously decided that he should be included on the Indians Hall of Fame ballot.

Jackson was one of the top vote-getters during a summer-long advertising campaign by Cleveland’s three leading daily newspapers, and his selection generated headlines all over the country in 1951. A dormant movement to have Jackson’s name reinstated to the good graces of Organized Baseball was relaunched, and he was invited to New York to appear on Ed Sullivan’s “Toast of the Town” TV program.

But Jackson never made it to New York and he never saw the Indians Hall of Fame. He died at age 64 on December 5, 1951 — eleven days before he was to appear on Ed Sullivan’s show — after suffering a heart attack at his home in South Carolina.

At the time, the Indians Hall of Fame was still a vision in Marshall Samuel’s mind. The team’s public relations director came up with the idea after a visit to the National Baseball Hall of Fame, which had opened just over a decade earlier in Cooperstown, New York.

Baseball teams had done little to recognize their own history before Samuel convinced vice-president Nate Dolin to create a new museum inside Cleveland’s Municipal Stadium. The New York Yankees had placed three monuments — to the late Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and Miller Huggins — out near the flagpole in center field at Yankee Stadium. But that was nothing compared to what the Indians built.

The ballclub spent about $25,000 to design a special S-shaped room on the lower level of the ballpark between Sections 11 and 12. Artist Gerald Waxman sketched portraits of the 10 original inductees — in addition to Jackson, Speaker, and Young, they were Earl Averill, Mel Harder, Ken Keltner, Nap Lajoie, Steve O’Neill, Joe Sewell, and Hal Trosky.
HALL OF FAME

Continued from Page 9

Other exhibits included a large mural of League Park, the team’s former home; mannequins wearing Indians uniforms from the championship years of 1920 and 1948, along with the franchise’s first season of 1901; a wall-size line graph showing where the Indians finished in the AL standings through the years; plus a collection of photos and memorabilia — such as a ball from Feller’s third no-hitter in 1951 and his 300th strikeout in 1946, a bat used by Lajoie when he won the batting title in 1904, and the ball used by Bill Wambsganss to turn his unassisted triple play in the 1920 World Series.

In the center of the room was a large, plastic, illuminated baseball that displayed the signatures of the 10 original inductees. Shoeless Joe Jackson’s autograph was clearly not his own; the illiterate ballplayer’s name had been signed with a flourish by his old teammate Jack Graney. At the entrance was an 18-foot-high relief wood sculpture depicting a turn-of-the-century batter preparing to swing. The Hall of Fame was open during every home game, with free admission to all.

It was a terrific sight for fans at the ballpark, like no other attraction in the major leagues. Ed McAuley of the Cleveland News wrote at the grand opening on August 15, 1952, “Club officials have made this monument to the past as colorful, as tasteful, as interesting — and as expensive — as their own research and their decorators’ skill could make it. I predict it will become a showplace to which Clevelanders proudly will bring their visitors.”

And it was for a while. As the powerhouse Indians battled the Yankees for the AL pennant throughout the 1950s, the team invited former legends back to town for a Hall of Fame induction ceremony every couple of years. Former shortstop/manager Lou Boudreau was elected in 1954, receiving a gold watch and an oil painting of himself that hung inside the Hall of Fame. Bob Feller retired in 1956 and was honored the following year along with infielder Bill Bradley. Pitcher Bob Lemon got the nod in 1960.

But over time, as the Indians’ fortunes continued to sink on the field, fans stopped caring as much about the team’s illustrious history. Between 1961 and 1972, the Indians only finished in the top half of the standings once and attendance dwindled at the cavernous Municipal Stadium. As Pete Jedick wrote for the Plain Dealer in a 1988 retrospective of the Hall, “Few of the Indians’ players from that era seemed destined for either Cooperstown or Section 11. The graph on the Hall of Fame’s wall tracking the team’s progress began to resemble the stock market of the 1930s.”

When Cleveland businessman Nick Mileti bought the franchise in 1972, the team had been in the dumps for so long it was on the verge of leaving town. Mileti scrapped a proposed plan to play 30 home games in New Orleans, but knew he had to cut expenses elsewhere. Because the team Hall of Fame cost money to maintain and brought in no additional revenue, he replaced it with a souvenir concession stand. The space was later converted to a private club for season-ticket holders.

Samuel, the PR man who came up with the idea for the Hall of Fame, later reminisced, “After 20 years in existence and with attendance down, maybe it wasn’t drawing too well. Only the diehards went to the Stadium, and most of them had already seen it.” The final inductee was Early Wynn in 1972; it had been six years since the previous ceremony.

When the Indians Hall of Fame closed down, there was no plan to preserve or store all the memorabilia that had been housed there. Team historian Jeremy Feador said a few jerseys and other items were shipped to Cooperstown in 1973. Others were moved to a room above the team clubhouse at Municipal Stadium, according to groundskeeper Harold Bossard, who had been responsible for maintaining the collection. “Then, things began to disappear,” Bossard told the Plain Dealer in 1988. When the team left in 1994 for its shiny new downtown home at Jacobs Field (now called Progressive Field), very little from the old Hall of Fame seemed to remain in the team’s possession.

In 2006, the Indians decided to bring back the major leagues’ first team Hall of Fame, announcing the selection of six new players to join the 20 who had been inducted from 1951-72. Only a brief mention was given to the Hall of Fame’s original iteration. Even the discovery of the Ray Chapman plaque that offseason and its placement at Heritage Park failed to bring back memories of the long-lost museum that attracted an entire generation of fans to Municipal Stadium.

Over the past decade, the Indians have continued to lead the way in recognizing their storied tradition, honoring older players like Rocky Colavito and Herb Score along with more recent heroes like Sandy Alomar Jr. and Kenny Lofton in the team Hall of Fame. Heritage Park is a highlight of any visit to the ballpark in Cleveland.

Now, if only someone could find that big, plastic baseball full of signatures …
By Bruce Allardice
bsa1861@att.net

To the lay person, if not perhaps the tax law expert, it would appear that the Black Sox players could easily have been convicted of tax evasion for failure to report their bribes as income. Gangster Al Capone and ballplayer Pete Rose were later convicted on similar charges. Yet no Black Sox historian has explored this aspect of the fix.

This notion was discussed some, at the time and for years after. As soon as the scandal broke, the Chicago Tribune quoted the deputy commissioner of the Treasury Department as vowing the player’s tax returns would be audited. One newspaper article had the Treasury Department going after Joe Jackson, for not declaring the $5,000 bribe on his 1919 tax return. Jackson’s lawyer was quoted as saying it was an honest mistake(!) on Jackson’s part, that he considered the bribe a “gift,” not payment for services rendered.

The IRS allegedly notified Eddie Cicotte that he owed $2,200 in taxes and penalties on the unreported $10,000 bribe. Years later, acerbic columnist Westbrook Pegler groused that the government should have gone after all of the Black Sox under the income tax law. The federal income tax might have been new in 1919, having been established five years earlier, but it’s not as if the US government wasn’t prosecuting tax evaders. In 1921 the government issued 1,000 arrest warrants for income tax evasion. Admittedly, only a fraction of those cases went to trial, those accused usually pleading guilty or negotiating a deal.

A federal tax prosecution would have avoided some of the many problems, legal and practical, that the Cook County prosecution faced in charging the Black Sox:

- A federal prosecution for tax evasion would possibly avoid a prejudiced local judge and jury;
- They would deal with a straightforward tax case, rather than a doubtful, complicated “conspiracy” charge, in an uncharted area of the law;
- They would not have the legal problems that the “conspiracy” prosecutors faced in extraditing out-of-state defendants;
- The large financial resources of the federal government could have been brought to bear in the prosecution. As seen in the criminal trial, the more limited financial resources of the county prosecutors hampered their case.

In a tax case, the government wouldn’t have to prove that the bribes were illegal, or delve into the reasons the players took the money, but merely prove that the players had received the money but not reported it as income. As to proving the acceptance of bribe money, at least three players — Cicotte, Jackson, and Williams — confessed they had received bribes. Testimony at the criminal trial linked four others — Felsch, Risberg, Gandil, and McMullin — to taking bribes. However, a tax evasion charge faced numerous practical difficulties. For one thing, they could (at best) prosecute only the players, not the more notorious gamblers, a move that the Black Sox defense had strenuously, and successfully, criticized at trial. If the tax charges were brought subsequent to the conspiracy charges, the trial would have come after the players had been acquitted in the Cook County criminal trial.

Prosecutors — especially federal prosecutors — generally don’t want to waste time on doubtful cases, particularly in a case where they would have to depend on the testimony of witnesses such as Bill Burns, whose testimony had already been rejected by the Cook County jury.

As former prosecutor and Black Sox historian Bill Lamb writes, “Rare is the prosecutor who will prosecute a derivative case based on testimony that has already been presented to, but rejected by, a previous jury. ... They never handle sloppy seconds.”

In a tax case the players could, if they wished, avoid any court actions by paying their back taxes, plus interest/penalties. In short, the costs, in time and in money, of prosecuting such a case seemed high, while the possible profit to the Treasury seemed low.

In 1911 Wisconsin imposed a state income tax, a tax that exists to this day. Happy Felsch, a Milwaukee resident, would have been liable for the tax owed on the 1919 bribes he took. If (as is probable) Felsch didn’t report his bribe on this tax return, the state had a similar power to
Charles Comiskey personal papers up for sale

The great-great-grandson of Charles Comiskey, who “ended up on the right side of a family split” as the holder of two scrapbooks from the Old Roman’s personal collection, told the Chicago Baseball Museum’s George Castle this summer he hopes to sell the items to a historian or institution “so research can be done on it.”

“I’m looking to see it go to someone to use it for the benefit of baseball,” said Billy Kellens, a pharmaceutical sales manager from Naperville, Illinois. “The research is so great. It doesn’t see the light of day very often.”

The scrapbooks include many personal letters between 1908 and 1910, the year the Chicago White Sox began play at Comiskey Park.

“There’s a lot of stuff with the league, [stadium] builders, the city. There are interesting interactions with other owners about players,” Kellens said.

For more information, or to contact Kellens for details, visit ChicagoBaseballMuseum.org.

IRS

Continued from Page 11

initiate a state tax evasion prosecution. Lefty Williams, whose home was in Springfield, Missouri, also would have had to report his bribe income to the state. Illinois, Michigan, California, and South Carolina, where the other implicated players lived, had no state income tax at this time.

IRS officials mooted using a second, more obscure, section of the tax laws to go after the fixers. Section 231 mandated that any cash payments of $1,000 or more be reported to the IRS on a “return of information at source” (Form 1099). The state of New York had a similar provision in its income tax laws, which arguably would apply to payments made by New York gamblers such as Abe Attell and Nat Evans.

In other words, “every bribe given should have been reported twice, both by the giver and the receiver.” Thus, the gamblers’ $10,000 payment to Cicotte should have been reported by both the gamblers and Cicotte. The penalty for such non-reporting was steep, and similar to that for tax evasion. If a willful violation, the offender could be liable to prison time and a fine of up to $10,000. This provision seems to have been rarely (if at all) enforced and — probably for the same practical reasons given above — the IRS and the state of New York never pursued this.

The IRS had (and has) no inherent interest in cleaning up baseball and discouraging game-fixing, only in enforcing tax policy. On the one hand, a tax prosecution of famous ballplayers and gamblers would have made national headlines, and publicized the IRS’s determination to enforce tax laws.

On the other hand, the public may not have approved of the players’ prosecution on such a legal technicality. If they were acquitted, it would have embarrassed the IRS even further. All told, it was probably wise that the IRS focused on other, more clear-cut cases involving much larger sums.

Notes

3. See Charles C. Alexander, Spoke: A Biography of Tris Speaker (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 2007), 177. Philadelphia Inquirer, November 23, 1920. Unintentional evasion of taxes was punishable by payment of the owed tax, plus interest and penalties. Intentional evasion of income taxes was and is a criminal offence, punishable at the time by a fine of $10,000, imprisonment for one year, or both. Lexington Leader, September 29, 1920.
4. Richmond Times-Dispatch, December 25, 1933.
6. Bill Lamb e-mail to author, July 17, 2014. Mr. Lamb contributed several valuable insights to this article.
9. Comstock, 86.
10. See the Rock Island Argus, February 5, 1920; Standard Tax Manual, 1920: Covering the Income Tax and Excess Profits Tax, Section 231, for the text of the law. It applied to payments such as salaries, commissions, royalties, remuneration, emoluments or other fixed gains by any individual, corporation, etc. to another individual, corporation, etc. The filing mandated giving the name and address of those receiving the payment.
12. See the Saginaw News, October 3, 1920, where the laws are set forth in some detail.
You might be surprised to learn that Shea Stadium, the longtime home park of the New York Mets, has a direct connection to the Black Sox Scandal.

The story starts with *Collyer’s Eye*, the racing scandal-sheet that was the first newspaper to break the story of the scandal. In its October 25, 1919 issue, ace investigator Frank O. Klein revealed how a “well known layer of odds — name purposely suppressed” confirmed a $2,000 attempted bet on the Cincinnati Reds by “a striking blonde” known by the bookie to be a friend of the wife of Chicago White Sox hurler Claude “Lefty” Williams.

The “striking blonde” admitted that the money was “Claude’s money,” whereupon the bookie declined the bet. The bookie deduced from this that the World Series was fixed, and wagered accordingly. He told Klein “from what I have seen and heard, I feel sure that Charles Dryden — the baseball writer1 — is about right in his deduction — seven members of the Sox team (of 1919) will be missing in 1920.”

In the next issue on November 1, 1919, Klein elaborates on this subject, with this hitherto unnoticed gem: “Relative to the bookmaker mentioned in my article last week who profited by the outcome of the world series, my investigations show that Thomas Shaw, leviathan bookmaker, visited Chicago and made substantial deposits [bets]. In justice to Shaw, however, it must be said that it was not he who engineered the betting coup. The name of the party [engineering the fix] like the specific details surrounding the accomplishment” will be withheld “pending the outcome of Owner [Charles] Comiskey’s investigation.”

The grand jury never called Shaw to testify — testimony that would at least explore where Shaw got his betting “tip” from. Nor was the “striking blonde,” sometimes identified as Florence Brown, friend of Marie Purcell, girlfriend of the (married) Swede Risberg2, called.

Who was this Thomas Shaw? In his day, he was a national figure, often labeled “the king of bookmakers,” widely praised for his knowledge of race horses and his reputation of never refusing to take a bet, no matter how big.

Thomas Shaw, a New Orleans gambler who reportedly profited heavily on the 1919 World Series, was related by marriage to William Shea, the man who brought the Mets to New York in 1962. (National Baseball Hall of Fame Library)

Thomas John Shaw (September 3, 1879-May 25, 1978) grew up in New Orleans, the son of an Irish immigrant confectioner who owned trotting horses. An excellent all-around athlete, “Long Tom,” nicknamed for his 6-foot-3 height and commanding presence, first gained fame as an amateur bike rider.

After a stint clerking in a New Orleans billiard hall, he came to New York City, where his knowledge of sports and horses led naturally into bookmaking. He won a fortune betting on horses, often betting (and usually winning) $100,000 or more in a single afternoon. “Noted for his swift and paperless mathematics” asserted one newspaper account, “Long Tom Shaw has an adding machine brain, which made him the best figurer on the racetrack.”3

He morphed into a fixture in the New York City social scene, “always perfectly at home in a drawing room, mixed with the best of society, many of his friends and acquaintances being unaware of his race-track activities.”4

He numbered among his many friends New York Giants manager John McGraw. Shaw, McGraw, and bookie Tim Mara partnered on a Florida land deal that went sour.5 He loaned Mara the $500 (more than $12,000 in today’s money) so that Mara could launch the New York Giants football team.

Another friend was Remy Dorr, the New Orleans high roller who was implicated in the Black Sox Scandal.6 Columnist John Lardner paired Shaw and St. Louis’ Tom Kearney (another figure in the scandal) as the country’s two premier bookies.7

What probably motivated *Collyer’s Eye* to write up Shaw’s baseball betting is that Shaw usually bet on horses,
1918 Winter Meetings: Baseball returns from war

Note: This is an excerpt from SABR’s new book, “Baseball’s Business: The Winter Meetings, 1901-1957,” edited by Steve Weingarden and Bill Nowlin. For ordering information, visit SABR.org/ebooks.

By Jacob Pomrenke
buckweaver@gmail.com

On November 11, 1918, minor-league owners from 40 teams, representing seven leagues, were preparing for a somber discussion about whether baseball would even be played in the 1919 season when word came down that the World War had ended.

The “war to end all wars” had caused an existential crisis throughout the baseball world. The US government’s “work or fight” order had forced every minor league and both major leagues to end their 1918 seasons earlier than usual. The World Series between the Boston Red Sox and Chicago Cubs wrapped up just after Labor Day and all draft-eligible ballplayers were forced to choose between joining the military or taking a job in a war-essential industry. With the war now over, no one was quite sure what Organized Baseball would look like when play resumed … if play resumed.

“Not one minor league, just at this time, is certain of opening next season,” Southern Association President R.H. Baugh said at the start of the 17th annual winter meetings in Peoria, Illinois, on November 12. “The prevailing opinion is to wait and see if conditions by next spring will adjust themselves to warrant baseball.”

Meanwhile, in Chicago, White Sox owner Charles Comiskey spent Armistice Day celebrating the end of the war. “I never was happier in my life than this morning when I knew peace was assured. The good news came sooner than expected,” he said.

Peace in baseball, however, was far from certain. Faced with severe financial difficulties after the premature end to the 1918 season, some minor-league owners were ready to declare war on the major leagues. At issue was the majors’ practice of acquiring players via the Rule 5 draft, and optional agreements that allowed major-league teams to sell players to minor-league teams with the right to repurchase the player at a later date. Most minor-league owners depended on the sale of their players in order to turn a

Continued on Page 15

3. Lexington Leader, June 20, 1944.
4. Ibid. For more on Shaw, see the New York Times, July 19, 1978, May 27, 1978; 1918 passport application (which has an image of how he looked around the time of the scandal); 1880-1940 US and New York state census; World Wars I and II draft registrations; New York Evening World, October 26, 1908; Springfield Republican, April 11, 1937.
8. Though Shaw won $10,000 on the Boston Braves during the 1914 World Series, on a wager with Arnold Rothstein. See the New York Tribune, October 15, 1914.
WINTER MEETINGS

Continued from Page 14

profit. Major-league teams benefited greatly from these arrangements and used them to keep costs down in developing prospects.

As historian Cliff Blau has written, “[T]he truce between the majors and minors was always an uneasy one.”7 In 1918 the gloves came off as minor-league owners adopted a stern resolution at the winter meetings protesting the Rule 5 draft. American Association President Thomas J. Hickey demanded that the minor leagues withdraw from the National Agreement, in place since 1903, if the majors did not agree to abolish the draft.8

American League president Ban Johnson tried to reassure minor-league owners that the majors had their best interests in mind. He intended to meet with Garry Herrmann, chairman of the National Commission, baseball’s governing body, and work out a plan to keep the minor leagues afloat. “The National Association … for years has been incapable of managing its own affairs,” Johnson said. “We are planning to give the minor leagues a sane, just, and forceful government in place of their own weak organization, which has proved so inefficient in the past.”9

As these shots were being fired in the press, the major-league owners had their own differences to work out. No one except Ban Johnson was satisfied with the three-man National Commission, a chair that had been missing a leg since August, when National League President John Tener resigned after a dispute between the Philadelphia A’s and Boston Braves over the rights to pitcher Scott Perry turned ugly.10 It was one of many National Commission rulings that seemed to go the American League’s way, with the dictatorial Johnson pulling the strings behind the scenes.

But some AL owners weren’t happy with Johnson, either. Just after the Perry decision, three owners – Comiskey, Boston’s Harry Frazee, and Washington’s Clark Griffith – publicly called out their president for his “bungling” of baseball’s response to the War Department’s “work or fight” order.11 Frazee, who was the first AL owner not hand-picked by Johnson12 and believed (not without merit) that the league president was trying to run him out of baseball, made the first dramatic play to turn the tables on Johnson. Shortly after the minor-league meetings ended in November, Frazee and outgoing New York Giants president Harry Hempstead approached former U.S. President William Howard Taft about becoming the “supreme head of baseball,” which would abolish the National Commission entirely.13

The idea of a one-man commission had been tossed around for several years as both leagues grew frustrated with the ineffective National Commission, but America’s entrance into World War I in the spring of 1917 put a damper on any talk of radical realignment of baseball’s power structure. Now that the war was over, the idea regained steam.

Unfortunately for Frazee and Hempstead, they did not have the authority to extend a job offer to Taft or anyone else. For his part, Taft, a keen legal mind who would later serve as chief justice of the US Supreme Court, was only interested in a job in baseball that required him to settle contract disputes between the leagues14 -- not the all-powerful authority figure that the commissioner would become under Kenesaw Mountain Landis. He turned down the job on the last day of November. The National Commission would last another two years before dissolving in the wake of the Black Sox Scandal.

As Taft was still contemplating the offer, a furious Ban Johnson lashed out at Frazee and Hempstead for overstepping their authority. “There are no two individuals in baseball who know less about the national agreement and the rules governing baseball,” Johnson snapped. “These parvenu owners have no idea of the conditions existing in baseball [when the National Commission was formed]. Their perspective in baseball is bounded by the walls of their own parks.”15 Johnson would outlast both of his adversaries: Hempstead sold a controlling interest in the Giants to Charles A. Stoneham in January 1919, while Johnson and Frazee continued to butt heads until financial woes forced the latter to sell the Red Sox in 1923.

In December the focus began shifting to the coming season. Ban Johnson received an encouraging letter from the War Department, which gave the green light for baseball to “resume the usual regular schedule” in 1919.16 So the games could be played … but who would play them? In the confusion surrounding the work-or-fight order, some major- and minor-league owners – assuming the season was about to end and their revenue streams were about to dry up – had released their players before the end of their contracts in order to save money. Some players contacted the National Commission to see if they were now free agents, a fleeting challenge to the hated reserve clause that bound them to their teams in perpetuity. But the commission issued a statement that all teams would retain rights to their former players, quickly nipping that threat in the bud.17

Another point of contention involved the dozens of

Continued on Page 16
Continued from Page 15

major leaguers who had quit their teams in midseason to take a war-essential job instead of joining the military – which usually took the form of playing baseball for a company team in an industry or shipyard league. Shoeless Joe Jackson of the White Sox was the most notable player to join the “paint and putty” circuit, and his team’s owner, Charles Comiskey, was among the most vocal about wanting to ban these “unpatriotic” players from returning to the majors. He even went so far as to support a resolution at the American League’s annual meeting in December to blacklist them.

But the man who had built the 1917 World Series champions did not get much support and soon relaxed his stance at the urging of his new manager, Kid Gleason. Jackson, Lefty Williams, and the other shipyard players were all in uniform on Opening Day.

At the AL meeting in Chicago, the cautious league owners decided to adopt a 140-game schedule and set a roster limit of 21 players instead of the usual 25, keeping expenses down just in case fans chose not to return to the ballparks after the war. The National League followed suit at its own meeting in New York.

In another attempt to cut costs, NL owners in January approved an $11,000-per-month player salary cap, which worked out to a team payroll of less than $58,000, according to historian Bob Hoie. But the AL teams refused to go along with the idea and the plan was mostly ignored by the time the season began. Still, all salaries under a shortened 140-game schedule were lower since most players got paid only while they were playing.

Because of the uncertainty around baseball, there were few major deals at any of the league meetings during the winter of 1918-19. The most significant (and surprising) move at the winter meetings was the Phillies’ release of their manager, Pat Moran, who had led Philadelphia to its first pennant in 1915. The Cincinnati Reds promptly signed him to replace Christy Mathewson, who was still overseas on military duty. The hiring paid immediate dividends, as Moran – dubbed the “Miracle Man” by Reds fans – led Cincinnati to its first pennant and a World Series championship in 1919.

There was one final order of business during the joint major-league meetings in New York that offseason: The National Commission began to prepare a new system to distribute World Series gate receipts to the players of the competing clubs. The 1918 World Series had been disrupted by a threatened player strike before Game Five, when the Red Sox and Cubs players refused to take the field after learning that the rules had been changed governing how much money they were to make for participating – a decision that cut their individual World Series bonuses by more than 70 percent.

The standoff ended after a few hours, but it put a scare into baseball officials and it did not escape notice of the Cubs’ crosstown rivals, the Chicago White Sox, who won the American League pennant the following season … and decided to take matters into their own hands when it came time to get paid for the 1919 World Series.

Notes

2. Chicago Tribune, May 24, 1918.
3. Chicago Tribune, November 13, 1918.
4. Chicago Tribune, November 12, 1918.
5. Hartford Courant, November 15, 1918.
15. Chicago Tribune, November 30, 1918.
21. A player’s share for the victorious Red Sox in the 1916 World Series had been $3,910. In 1918, because of the new system enacted by the National Commission, each Red Sox player received a bonus of just over $1,100. For further reading, see Doug Pappas’ article “The World Championship That Almost Wasn’t,” roadsidephotos.sabr.org/baseball/bb98-7.htm.