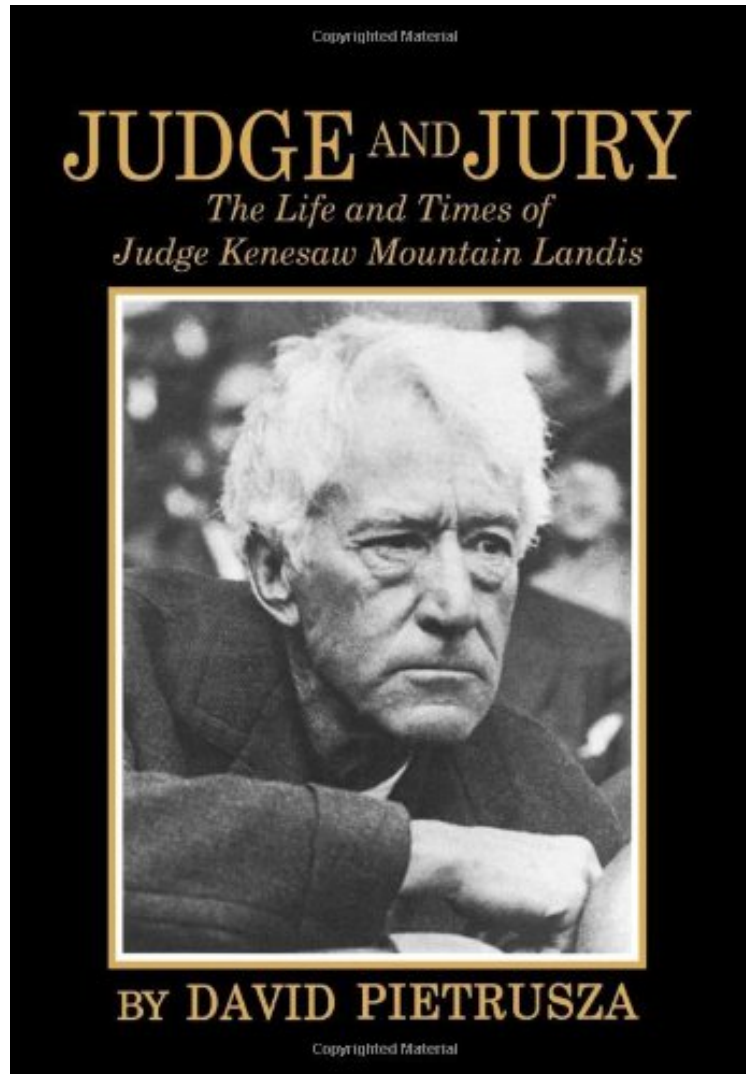


(Download ebook) Judge and Jury: The Life and Times of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis

Judge and Jury: The Life and Times of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis

David Pietrusza

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David Pietrusza : Judge and Jury: The Life and Times of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Judge and Jury: The Life and Times of Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Landis You Never Knew and MoreBy CatManThis is an excellent biography of the first commissioner of baseball, Kenesaw Mountain Landis. The author goes into great detail about Landis entire life and just not just his baseball life. Landis was a highly respected judge before baseball. He was

well known throughout the country and was even considered, briefly, as a presidential candidate. This part of a Landis career is very well explored in this book. This was the part of Landis I knew nothing about before reading. Landis did rule baseball with an iron hand at a time when it was much needed. He may have saved baseball from going into oblivion by being very strict on the gambling issue. Mr. Pietrusza has done excellent research in finding the real person behind Landis and discredited some long believed notions about Landis personality and beliefs. Especially on the race issue. This is the most thorough biography of Landis available and is well worth your time to read if you want to know more about the man and his times. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. author would fail 8th-grade English By Steve Munden Pietrusza needed a competent editor and didn't get one. The acknowledgements show us what we're going to get; he mentions someone for stepping into the "breech" and then expresses gratitude to someone who graciously assisted in the editing. I guess the gracious assistant editor didn't get paid, and if he did, Pietrusza should ask for his money back. Misspellings, incorrect words (e.g. breech for breach), bizarre comma placement, are a constant source of irritation. That said, the content is interesting enough. It would be a four- or even five-star book if it had been written by a person who passed 8th grade English, or had an editor who had done so. 11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A Thorough Biography By Bill Emblom Someone once described Branch Rickey as a man of many facets, and they are all turned on. Much the same could describe baseball's first commissioner. Landis, being a baseball fan, appeared to make decisions which would benefit the game. An example would be delaying the Federal League court decision which could have changed the game radically. Rather than make a decision he didn't want to make, he delayed until a settlement could be made with the major leagues. He banned Shufflin' Phil Douglas when Douglas said he would go fishing rather than pitch a game for the Giants he would probably win. This was to get back at his manager, John McGraw, who gave him a vicious tongue lashing and had him given a so-called harsh drying out from alcohol abuse without his wife's knowledge as to his whereabouts. When asked by Landis his side of the story, Douglas didn't defend himself against McGraw's actions and just hung his head. Gambling wasn't a banishable offense prior to the Cobb/Speaker incident in 1927, and Landis seemed to let these two superstars off easy, whereas he was especially hard on Rogers Hornsby. The Rajah, who enjoyed attending the racetrack, stood up to Landis and said his wagering money at the racetrack was no different than Landis losing money in the stockmarket. An unfortunate character in the story is Jimmy O'Connell of the Giants. O'Connell, naively approached Heinie Sand of the Phillies about making it worth his while to lose a game against the Giants during the last week of the season. Sand, knowing what happened to Buck Weaver of the White Sox, reported the incident, and this led to O'Connell's banishment from the game. The sad part of this story is that O'Connell's teammates, Frank Frisch and Ross Youngs played a prank on O'Connell and Jimmy took it seriously. Frisch and Youngs, both Hall of Famers, were never punished. Landis's treatment of the eight Black Sox players would never be upheld today. His beginning statement, "Regardless of the verdict of juries..." tells it all. Landis would do what he wanted. He would never get away with that with either the ACLU or the players' union if they had one at that time. The author appears to defend Landis for his lack of action towards allowing blacks to play in the major leagues. Landis said he feared riots in ball parks if blacks were admitted. Maybe it was true that the time was not right, but he hid behind the tired response stating there was no rule prohibiting blacks from playing in the major leagues. Maybe not, but there was a "gentleman's agreement" that none would be signed. Some gentlemen! Landis was hired by the owners, but he didn't appear to respect them. He claimed to be a player's commissioner, and one way he showed that was in releasing players from the minor leagues that he felt covered up preventing their advancement. You really never knew what Landis' reaction would be to something. He could be very unpredictable with what he would do regarding an issue, and he seemed to play favorites regarding players. He didn't care for Branch Rickey, who he may have felt was hypocritical by playing the part of a preacher while doing things that Landis felt were self-serving. The Judge had his fights with J. G. Taylor Spink, the publisher of The Sporting News because a Saturday Evening Post article referred to Spink as Mr. Baseball and the conscience of baseball. There are some strong willed personalities in this book and the author does an excellent job of bringing this part of baseball and American history to life.

Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis is most famous for his role as the first Commissioner ever to rule organized baseball. But before he came into his legendary position as baseball's final say, Landis already had built a reputation from his Chicago courtroom as the most popular and most controversial federal judge in World War I-era America. Judge and Jury is the first complete biography of the Squire, from the origins of his unusual name through his career as a federal judge and his clean-up after the infamous Black Sox scandal.

Baseball's first commissioner cast such a long and powerful shadow over the game, it's often hard to untangle his contribution from his personality, and his life from his lasting myth. The truth that emerges from this exhaustive and engaging biography of Judge Landis has no problem matching the outsized legend stride for stride. Landis moved into the public spotlight to clean up the national pastime after the disgrace of the 1919 World Series, but there was much more to this complex man and his complex career. Judge and Jury chronicles the entirety. A tough, colorful judge, his rulings could be as unpredictable as he was. Landis could be as severe and stubborn as he could be gentle and

understanding, characteristics that both defined his decision-making and confused his critics. Noted as a trustbuster--he went head to head with John D. Rockefeller, fining Standard Oil \$29 million--he upheld baseball's exemption from antitrust status from the bench. Known for his harsh sentences, he was almost impeached for his leniency to the destitute. As commissioner, he loved the post, the game, and his perceived responsibility as its primary upholder and restorer of virtue: "You have told the world that my powers would be absolute," he warned the owners who hired him. "I wouldn't take this job for all the gold in the world unless I knew my hands were free." In his regime, they pretty much were, and he used them to grab his share of whatever power and glory he could wrap them around. --Jeff Silverman

From Publishers Weekly

This exhaustive study of baseball's first commissioner by the author of *Minor Miracles* includes details about its subject's life before baseball. Named for the Civil War battle in which his father was wounded and nicknamed "Squire," Landis grew up in a large family, two of whose members later served in the House of Representatives, while others became prominent journalists. This scion of a rock-ribbed Midwestern Republican family served in Washington, D.C., in the administration of Democrat Grover Cleveland. But back in his adopted city of Chicago in 1905, Landis was appointed a federal district court judge by Teddy Roosevelt. Deeply involved in the progressive, trust-busting wing of the GOP, he came to national attention when he took on Standard Oil and its powerful head, John D. Rockefeller Sr. Though the multimillionaire tried to avoid a subpoena, Landis made him testify and assessed Standard Oil a \$29-million fine--the largest in U.S. history (though it was later reduced). During WWI he was an unabashed jingoist, convinced that all socialists and labor leaders who opposed the war were traitors; unfortunately for them, many were tried in Landis's court and drew inordinately long sentences. The so-called Black Sox scandal in the World Series of 1919, fixed by gamblers, led the owners to hire Landis as an almost omnipotent commissioner, a job he held until his death 24 years later. He did indeed restore the reputation for honesty of the national pastime, though he opposed night games and the farm system in vain. In this fascinating, diligently researched work, Pietrusza tackles a complex, important man and makes him his own. Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

Long-renowned as baseball's first real commissioner, Landis had earlier been the strong-minded judge who fined John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Co. \$29 million. Pietrusza, past president of the Society for American Baseball Research, portrays a harsh if occasionally lenient baseball czar who banned the 1919 Black Sox, among others, for gambling but spared some players. Unlike Jerome Holtzman, who recently labeled Landis "a bigoted curmudgeon" in his *The Commissioners* (Total Sports, 1998), Pietrusza says that owners, not Landis, blocked the game's integration. This warm but fair biography belongs on most sports shelves. --Morey Berger, St. Joseph's Hosp. Medical Lib., Tucson, AZ

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