

The Scribbles & Scrawls Of “Shoeless” Joe: A Tale Of Two Jackson-Signed Photos & Their Disputed Authenticity (Pt. 2) (UPDATE)

By Peter J. Nash

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Rare Shoeless Joe Jackson Autographed Photo May Bring \$100,000

Feb 9, 2015, 10:52 AM ET
By JOHN SEEWER Associated Press



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“Shoeless” Joe seemed to be everywhere last week blowing up [Twitter](#) and making the rounds on the nightly news. As reported by the likes of [ABC News](#), [CBS News](#) and [FoxSports](#), [Heritage](#)

Auction Galleries in Dallas, Texas, is [selling](#) what Sports Auction Director **Chris Ivy** claims is “now known as the only “Shoeless” Joe Jackson signed photograph in existence.” Reporter **John Seewer** first [interviewed](#) Ivy for the *Associated Press* and [his story](#) subsequently hit the wire and was later carried by hundreds of news outlets without mentioning that another alleged Jackson-signed photograph was sold by **Sotheby’s** for \$43,000 in 1999 and was authenticated by Heritage’s current consignment director, **Mike Gutierrez**. Heritage and Ivy did not disclose any of this information to the *Associated Press* reporter and despite **PSA/DNA** President **Joe Orlando** telling the *AP* his company’s job is “to be the skeptic, especially if it is too good to be true,” other experts in the field believe that the Jackson signature is not genuine.

Ron Keurajian, the author of *Baseball Hall of Fame Autographs: A Reference Guide* has a very different opinion about the Heritage offering and told us, “I have maintained that there are no Joe Jackson signed photographs in existence. After viewing the 1911 Jackson photograph I see no reason to change my opinion. The Dallas Police Department should be made aware of the pending sale.” Keurajian’s opinion that Jackson signed photos do not exist was published in his book which was released by McFarland in 2012.

In January, Chris Ivy appeared on the TV-show [A Piece of the Game](#) and in direct opposition to Keurajian’s published opinion described the Jackson photo as “the only signed Joe Jackson photo in existence” and the work of a photographer named **Frank W. Smith**. But the other Jackson photograph that was sold at Sotheby’s in 1999 was also taken by the same photographer who was working for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* and *Leader* and had utilized similar images of the Cleveland Naps players to create a composite photograph depicting all of their signatures—including Joe Jackson. When Heritage Auctions revealed their autographed [photo collection](#) to attendees of last year’s National Convention in Cleveland, they sourced the “find” of signed 1911 Cleveland photographs to the family of Frank W. Smith. However, as revealed in the *AP* report, the consignor is actually a woman named **Sharon Bowen** who claims her [late husband](#), **William Bowen**, purchased the photos from a family that was allegedly friends with Smith. Heritage’s current catalog describes the [collection](#) as “Named for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* photographer who assembled the remarkable collection, The Frank W. Smith Collection is a truly peerless amalgamation of one-of-a-kind vintage photography and the flawless autographs of the subjects captured.” Heritage’s of the collection adds:

“Among the targets of Smith’s lens and autograph requests appear some of the true immortals of the game, most notably the legendary “Shoeless Joe” Jackson, the illiterate superstar whose path to Hall of Fame immortality was derailed by the scandal of the 1919 World Series fix. His labored pencil signature on Smith’s skilled portrait establishes the pristine relic as the only known Joe Jackson signed photo in existence.”

Rare Shoeless Joe Jackson Autograph Photo May Bring \$100,000

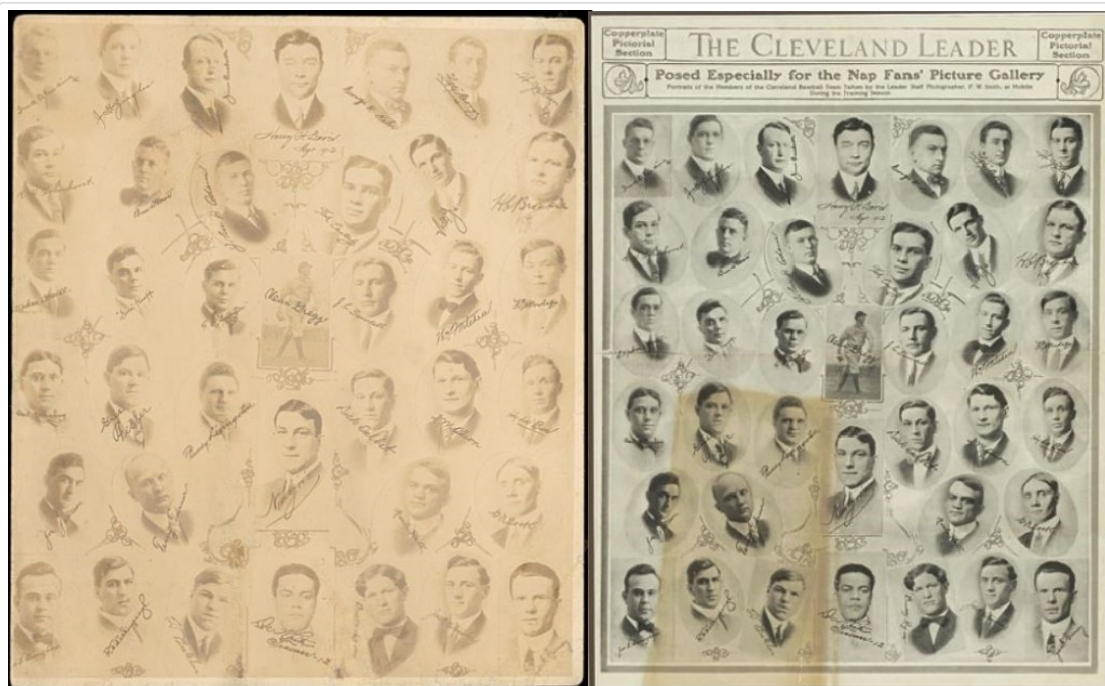
Feb 9, 2015, 1:16 AM ET

By JOHN SEEWER Associated Press



Heritage is offering what they call "The Frank W. Smith Collection" featuring an alleged pencil-signature of Shoeless Joe Jackson on one of his 1911 photographs. The Jackson photo was one of dozens found in a photo album allegedly discovered in a barn outside Cleveland.

Although it's not specifically noted in the actual lot description, Heritage reveals that its alleged Jackson signature is signed in pencil and, as reported in the past week, several experts have questioned the autograph's authenticity. The pencil signature is uncharacteristically over-sized and takes up a good portion of the 8×10 silver gelatin photograph—all red flags that any handwriting expert would take into account before rendering an opinion. The AP report also states that PSA examined the pen pressure to render its opinion when the actual photograph was signed in pencil and would leave a much different impression than a steel-tipped pen. In addition, the Heritage signature starkly contrasts the Jackson signatures executed on the Sotheby's photo shot by Smith and on the 1912 team composite photograph which was also featured as a supplement to the *Cleveland Leader* newspaper in 1912. The signatures included on Smith's 1912 composite resemble the actual handwriting of the players depicted including many of the same players appearing in Heritage's photo album.



Photographer Frank W. Smith created a composite cabinet photo of the 1912 Cleveland team featuring the signatures of each player. The composite was published as a supplement to the "Cleveland Leader" and credited to Smith (right). The composites show facsimile signatures of Joe Jackson, Nap Lajoie and other Cleveland players.

The fact that Heritage did not acknowledge or inform its bidders of a very public sale of another alleged signed Jackson photograph at Sotheby's is troubling considering its consignment director, Mike Gutierrez, authenticated all of the autographed items for the 1999 Sotheby's sale of the **Barry Halper Collection**. That same Jackson photograph was also known by Gutierrez and other authenticators five years earlier when it was sold at **Robert Edward Auctions** in 1994 a year after this writer purchased it at **Lelands** as a photograph "signed by his wife." It was purchased for \$1,200 (which Lelands says was once owned by sportswriter **Gene Schoor**) with no expectation it had been signed by Jackson, but when world renowned handwriting expert **Charles Hamilton** examined the photo in person he claimed it was a genuine Jackson signature.

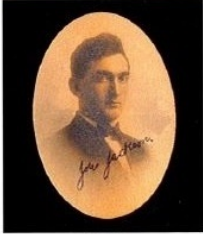


The Jackson signature which appears on Frank W. Smith's 1912 Cleveland team composite (top left) is similar to another ink-signed portrait also taken by Smith and sold at Sotheby's in 1999 (top right). Heritage's alleged Jackson pencil-signature on a 1911 Smith photograph starkly contrasts the signatures on the Smith composites.

Hamilton stated that the signature had been enhanced with what he called "photographer's ink" used by newspapers to darken signatures for publication. At the time in 1993 I was working with Hamilton and co-writing a reference book on baseball autographs and we had both just examined copies of the first authentic Jackson signatures found on promissory notes sourced back to Jackson relatives and friends. Hamilton told me he believed that underneath the black photographers ink he might find Jackson's genuine signature and asked if he could use an eraser to lightly remove the covering. When he was finished the original purple-tinted ink that had been applied to the photo in 1912 was revealed.

After examining the signature closely and comparing it to the signatures on the mortgage notes Hamilton stated his opinion that the signature was executed in Jackson's hand. Hamilton also noted the fact that the signature was clearly much more uniform and neat than the other signatures he had compared it to but he still identified the scrawl as the product of Jackson's hand.

Hamilton was also aware that the Jackson portrait was part of a larger composite that was likely published due to the presence of the photographer's ink that was most likely applied by the photographer Frank W. Smith or someone in his employ.




(683B)

683B. Shoeless Joe Jackson Rookie Photograph
(5x3.25). Oval studio photo is magnificent quality. Taken in his "rookie" year in 1912. It is even signed by his wife "Joe Jackson" in an early vintage signature. Wonderful! *† (\$1,500-2,000)


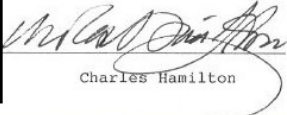
C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I certify that I have examined the signed photograph of "Shoeless Joe" Jackson, a copy of which is attached hereunto, and find that it bears an authentic, original signature of Jackson. The signature is entirely different from the signatures signed for Jackson by his wife. In fact, every single letter is different, and matches very closely the signatures known to be genuine on his orders to pay dated from Savannah, Ga., one of which is attached herewith.

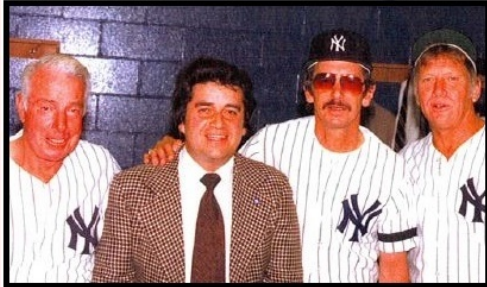
LOT 1



JOE JACKSON AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO.
We are extremely pleased to offer what may be the only unquestionably authentic Joe Jackson autographed photo in existence. This photo also represents one of the most fascinating collecting stories we have ever encountered: A photographer produced a composite of the 1912 Cleveland American League team which features (among others) Joe Jackson. The composite, like all photographer's composites, was produced by pasting numerous small photos (in this case individual shots of the 1912 Indians) onto a larger board and then taking a shot of the montage created. On the 1912 Cleveland composite each player appears to have autographed his picture with the exception of Joe Jackson who, it has always seemed, had someone else neatly write his name in script. This theory has always seemed consistent with Jackson's reputation for being illiterate or at least only semi-literate. It is easy to imagine the photographer in the Cleveland clubhouse asking everyone to sign their pictures and Joe Jackson, then in his first full season with Cleveland, sneaking away or saying "Sure, I'll be right back to take care of it" and never actually returning to complete with the request (thus necessitating a "ghost" signature). When one of the original individual photos of Jackson that the photographer created for the composite appeared in a major auction in 1993, it was presented as a 1912 Joe Jackson photograph and it was suggested that the photo was signed by Jackson's wife. This was a very reasonable thought, especially as the signature did not appear to be Joe Jackson's and the owner apparently knew nothing of the composite. Purchased at auction as a significant and extremely desirable Joe Jackson photo, the new owner had occasion to show the photograph to world renowned autograph expert Charles Hamilton. Hamilton immediately suggested that the "Jackson signature" on the photo had been gone over with what some refer to as "photographer's ink". This was a tool commonly used in early photography to enhance the reproduction of writing in photographs—especially composite photographs. The owner of the Jackson photo and Mr. Hamilton proceeded to very carefully remove the thick paste-like substance which spelled out "Joe Jackson" in script on the photograph—REVEALING A PERFECT JOE JACKSON SIGNATURE UNDERNEATH. The substance covering the signature had smoothed out the contours of Jackson's pained and jaggedy scrawl, helping to keep the signature camouflaged. This is truly the most astounding of all autographed baseball photographs and one of the most incredible "find" stories in all of collecting. Description: Original 1912 oval vintage print photograph—3.12" x 5"—magnificently signed "Joe Jackson" in purple ink. The signature is very strong and graded.

Charles Hamilton



The 1912 Jackson photo by Smith was sold at Lelands in 1993 as Mrs. Jackson's signature (top left). Charles Hamilton authenticated the signature as Jackson's own in a certification signed in March of 1994 (top right). The photo was then sold to collector Barry Halper (bottom right) in a REA sale in Sept. of 1994 (bottom left).

In March of 1994, Hamilton wrote a certification stating that the Jackson signature was "an authentic, original signature of Jackson" and "entirely different from the signatures signed for Jackson by his wife." Hamilton added, "Every single letter is different, and matches very closely the signatures known to be genuine on his orders to pay dated from Savannah, Ga." Later, in September of 1994, I consigned the photograph to **Rob Lifson** and **Robert Edward Auctions** where it was described as "the only unquestionably authentic Joe Jackson autograph in existence" and was sold to Lifson's top client and New York Yankee minority partner **Barry Halper**. Lifson further described the Jackson portrait as "the most astounding of all autographed baseball photographs and one of the most incredible "find" stories of all time."

The surviving 1912 team composite created by Smith featured all of the signatures of the Cleveland team and it is interesting to note that the surviving cabinet photo he created in 1912 has a very similar (almost identical) portrait of Jackson with a similar signature that has clearly been enhanced with the same type of photographer's ink. It is important to note that the photo Halper purchased in 1994 and the Heritage Jackson photo being sold in 2014 are both sourced to Frank W. Smith and although they were allegedly executed within one year of each other, they look totally different.



The REA-Sotheby's Jackson signature (left) and the current Heritage offering (right) contrast some of the earliest genuine signatures executed by Jackson from 1914 to 1917.

Ron Keurajian, however, disagrees with Hamilton's opinion and stated such in his 2012 book where he says he has never seen an authentic photograph signed by Jackson. In our interview with Keurajian last week he confirmed his opinion and extended it to the current photograph of Jackson being offered by Heritage. In offering his dissenting opinion of both photographs he is disputing the authentications of the deceased Hamilton, one of the most prominent handwriting experts of all time, and **Steve Grad**, the lead authenticator for PSA/DNA a subsidiary of the public company **Collectors Universe** and the current on-air expert used by the **History Channel's** hit Cable-TV show **Pawn Stars**.

Grad and PSA/DNA, along with Heritage, also appear to be disputing Hamilton's opinion in that they claim the current auction lot is the only signed Jackson photo in existence. Although former PSA/DNA authenticator and current Heritage consignment director Mike Gutierrez rubber-stamped Hamilton's opinion for Sotheby's in 1999 to facilitate a \$43,000 sale for Barry Halper—PSA and Grad have made public statements dismissing the existence of the well-documented artifact.

Comparing Grad's skills as an authenticator to Charles Hamilton, however, is almost impossible to do. In his 1996 *New York Times* obituary Hamilton was credited with "inventing the term philography" and was said to have authored 17 books on handwriting analysis and autographs. In the early 1990s several baseball collectors had Hamilton examine their collections and he uncovered scores of forgeries that had been [authenticated](#) by current Heritage employees Mike Gutierrez and **Mark Jordan**.



The late handwriting expert Charles Hamilton (left) advertised in *Sports Collectors Digest* in 1996. Steve Grad (center) is the lead authenticator at PSA/DNA. In his book "Baseball Hall of Fame Autographs" (right) Ron Keurajian says that Joe Jackson signed photos are non-existent.

Although Hamilton's experience with baseball material was limited, he was recognized throughout the world as the leading [handwriting expert](#) who had uncovered frauds including the "Hitler Diaries" and worked with law enforcement on the "Zodiac Killer" and "Son of Sam" cases. Steve Grad's claim to fame is his experience chasing celebrities and athletes down for

in-person autographs and for being mentored by former hobby kingpin **Bill Mastro** who recently plead guilty to [auction fraud](#) and is awaiting sentencing in March. In a 2011 deposition Grad admitted he had no formal training in handwriting analysis and credited Mastro with training him as an authenticator and teaching him how to spot fakes and forgeries. In the same deposition Grad confirmed that he had fabricated his professional resume as he [lied under oath](#) about his educational background claiming to be a college graduate when, in fact, he is not.

In further contrast to Grad's background, **Ron Keurajian** is a well-respected portfolio manager and attorney who does not work professionally as an authenticator but has dedicated several decades of his life to the study and analysis of baseball and historical autographs and handwriting. In addition to publishing the most comprehensive work dedicated to the handwriting and autographs of Baseball Hall of Famers Keurajian is currently working on his second book dedicated to historical autographs in every major field of interest. Keurajian is also credited with uncovering several major frauds including the exposing a forged **Ty Cobb** diary that was purchased by MLB and displayed at the **Baseball Hall of Fame** as well as many other bogus autographs that had been certified genuine by PSA/DNA including laser copy and auto-pen signatures. The most egregious errors and instances of authentication malpractice committed by Grad and PSA have been documented in **Hauls of Shame's** 2013 **Worst 100** authentication blunders report. In light of these very public blunders by Grad and PSA many collectors of high-end materials seek out Keurajian's opinion and put little faith in the LOA's issued by PSA/DNA. One of the top autograph collectors in the country told **Hauls of Shame** yesterday that he would not be bidding on the Jackson photo based on Keurajian's opinion.



The authenticity of the Christy Mathewson signature in the Frank Smith Collection has also been challenged by experts. Above the Heritage Matty signature is displayed next to authentic Mathewson signatures ranging from 1908 through the teens.

Keurajian isn't the only autograph aficionado who has questioned the authenticity of the Jackson photos and the balance of photographs in Heritage's Frank W. Smith Collection. Several veteran dealers and collectors told us they questioned the authenticity of the photos signed by Hall of Famers **Christy Mathewson**, **John McGraw**, **Nap Lajoie** and **Rube Marquard**. In particular, the alleged signatures of Mathewson and McGraw exhibit troubling warning signs in relation to spacing and letter formation and contrast genuine examples of their signatures executed during the same time period.



Authentic signatures of John J. McGraw executed between 1900 and 1927 (in red) contrast the alleged McGraw signature being sold by Heritage.

In addition, the signatures of other Cleveland players have also been questioned and have created even more doubt about the veracity of the Heritage and PSA/DNA claims. Questions have been raised regarding the use of pencil on some photos and the pen notations on others do not appear to have faded the way vintage c.1911 ink should have. Others have noted that while most all of the Cleveland player signatures resemble authentic examples, they fall short and in many cases appear to have been signed slowly and deliberately.



Alleged signatures of Cleveland players from Heritage's Smith Collection appear above facsimile signatures that Smith actually used in a team composite he created in 1912.

One prominent dealer we spoke with said he was instructing clients to stay away from the Heritage lots and told us, "Look at the salutations on the lot of non-Hall of Famers and compare those. It becomes very obvious that something is amiss without even looking at the Jackson, Mathewson or Nap (Lajoie), especially the number of "Yours Truly" and (the) lack of inscriptions." It is interesting to note that Heritage pictures three other photographs from Smith featuring non-baseball subjects from Cleveland and all three of those photos feature personalized inscriptions by the subjects to Smith. Not one of the "Smith Collection" baseball player photographs are personalized and it appears that none of the photos removed from the album feature Smith's stamp on the reverse. In addition, PSA/DNA and Heritage make an assumption, supported by no evidence, about the additional pencil writing on the Jackson photo stating, "Jackson's writing abilities began and ended at his signature, and thus it was photographer Frank Smith himself who added the inscription, "Alexandria, Mar. 1911" below." As far as we know, neither PSA or Heritage have any exemplars of Smith's actual handwriting.



In its catalog Heritage pictures three photos personally inscribed to Frank Smith with his stamp on the reverse (right). None of the baseball photos are inscribed to Smith and the Jackson photo does not have Smith's stamp on its reverse. .

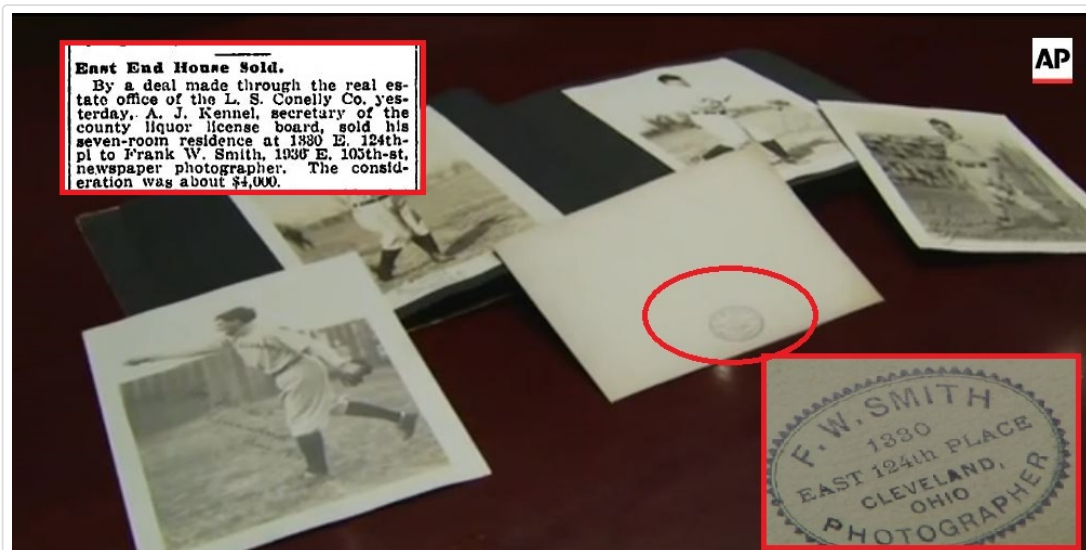
One fascinating aspect of the Heritage photographs is that they are attributed to Frank W. Smith who was credited as the creator of the team composite photograph published in the *Cleveland Leader* in 1912. Any authenticator examining the 1911 Smith photographs at Heritage would have to compare all of the signatures to the facsimiles on the 1912 Smith composite. After comparing them, any authenticator would come to the conclusion that the alleged 1911 and 1912 Joe Jackson signatures contrast each other significantly. Why?



Frank Smith created this composite cabinet photo of the 1912 Cleveland team which incorporated facsimile signatures of each player including Joe Jackson. It is believed that Smith enhanced each of the signatures for publication.

If all of the other Cleveland player facsimiles were actual signatures that had been enhanced or “gone over” with darker ink is it possible that Jackson did not sign his portrait photo and that Smith (or someone else) executed a signature for him in his absence. If that was the case, why would Smith have executed a signature that did not look like other signatures signed by Jackson on mortgage documents and his draft card? And if Jackson had actually signed the 1911 photo for Smith (one year earlier) why wouldn’t Smith have copied that signature example for his 1912 team composite? Lastly, if Smith (or someone working for him) actually signed Joe Jackson’s name, what’s to say that Smith didn’t sign (or copy) all of the Cleveland player signatures himself?

Another clue that could shed some more light on the authenticity of the Cleveland and New York player autographs is the “F. W. Smith Photographer” stamp that Heritage displayed in its video clip via the *Associated Press*. That stamp lists Smith’s business address as “1330 East 124th Place, Cleveland, Ohio” and it appears the stamp is featured on the back of one of the three non-baseball photos pictured in the Heritage catalog (but not included for sale). An item published in the *Cleveland Leader*, however, shows that Smith purchased that same property on October 24, 1913, thus suggesting that any photos bearing this stamp were created in 1913 or later. If any of the baseball photos Heritage is selling have this stamp, it is likely they were prints created two years after spring training and it would be highly unlikely that they were actually signed in 1911.



Heritage shows an "F.W. Smith" photographer's stamp (inset) in an AP video clip, but that stamp shows an address of a location that Smith didn't buy until 1913 as evidenced by a report in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* in October of 1913 (inset).

Students of handwriting analysis and recognized experts rarely rely on the provenance or the “story” that accompanies a signed item that is submitted for an opinion. Experts like Charles Hamilton or Ron Keurajian rarely need to hear a story to render an opinion and focus on the actual handwriting. The same can not be said for PSA/DNA and Steve Grad who have regularly been exposed authenticating fakes because they relied on the source of a signed item rather than the handwriting itself. Grad’s most stunning authentication of a forgery based upon provenance was found in the LOA he wrote for an 1899 letter said to be written by HOFer **Ed Delahanty** which sold for \$35,000 at **Hunt Auctions**. Although the signature was misspelled “D-e-l-e-h-a-n-t-y” and written in a different hand, Grad authenticated it because it originated from the archives of the H&B Bat Company in Louisville, KY. The vintage letter had actually been written on behalf of Delahanty by his manager, **Billy Shettsline**.

Heritage has also fallen victim to similar authentication mishaps with several baseballs they’ve sold as having been “game-used” in famous contests. In 2013, they claimed to have the last out ball of the 1917 World Series sourced to White Sox pitcher **Red Faber** with an affidavit from Faber’s family, but that ball was manufactured in 1926 as evidenced by the Spalding manufacturing stamps. In Heritage’s current auction they have another fraudulent offering with great provenance from the family of **Roger Bresnahan** which they claim is the “last out ball” from the 1905 World Series. The ball is accompanied by a 1905 news article quoting Bresnahan as saying he put the ball in his pocket after the game’s last strikeout, but the baseball being sold is a Reach American League ball and the last game of that World Series was played in New York at a National League Park. It would be impossible, under Major League rules at the time, for an AL ball to have been used in a championship game at the New York grounds. In addition, the inscription on the ball is not in Bresnahan’s hand and the last out of that game was a ground out by Lave Cross to short, not a strikeout.

While the provenance of the photo collection cannot turn forged signatures into genuine examples, we were still interested to verify the information Heritage has made public about their “find” in a Cleveland barn. We called the consignor, **Sharon Bowen**, at her home in Cleveland, Ohio, and spoke to her daughter who scheduled an interview for Monday morning. Bowen, however, was not available when we called and did not return our call. Bowen’s late husband was a former executive director of the Salvation Army in Cleveland and also the development director at the Cleveland Natural History Museum and it’s likely her acquisition story is legitimate. Many questions have been raised, however, about the original seller who sold the cache of photos to her husband for only \$15,000 just five years ago.



We called **Chris Ivy** of Heritage to ask him why he described the Jackson photo as the only one in existence and why he failed to disclose to the *AP* reporter the existence of the other Jackson photo previously authenticated by his own employee, but he failed to respond to our inquiry. We also wanted to ask Ivy if the photos of the Cleveland and New York players had any "F.W. Smith" stamps on the backs of the photos and why the three non-baseball photos inscribed to Frank W. Smith and pictured in the catalog were not being sold and who owns them?

We also contacted the *Associated Press* and reporter John Seewer and informed the news organization of Heritage's failure to disclose knowledge of the Sotheby's sale and the controversy regarding the authenticity of the Heritage offering. *AP* writer **Marilynn Marichione** responded to our inquiry and informed us that *AP* news managers were "looking into it."

While the *AP* and other news organizations flooded the news cycle and social media with inaccurate stories giving more credibility to the questioned Jackson photo and creating a platform for an unpaid PSA/DNA advertisement, veteran collectors we spoke with were almost unanimous in their opinions that the Heritage photos are not genuine. Despite the fact that PSA President Joe Orlando told the *AP* that "the stars aligned" for Steve Grad's authentication of the photo, one collector who owns a genuine Jackson signature on a legal document told us, "I think the PSA folks messed up certing these photos, but that would not be something new." Most all collectors and dealers we spoke with did not want their names published because of Heritage's practice of banning individuals from bidding in auctions who are critical of items for sale or the company's business practices.

One prominent dealer told us that if the current owner of the Sotheby's Jackson signed photo wanted to consign his item to Heritage it would "Be accepted with open arms by Chris Ivy who would then secure a PSA/DNA LOA from Grad and Orlando; advertise it nationally as "the only known ink autograph of Joe Jackson" and then set the auction estimate at \$200,000. Meanwhile, the 1911 Jackson photo in Heritage's current "Platinum Night Auction" currently has an alleged online bid of \$90,000 before live bidding starts Saturday night in New York City.



Clarification: Shoeless Joe Autograph Story

Feb 19, 2015, 4:44 PM ET
By The Associated Press



In a story Feb. 9, The Associated Press reported that a century-old image was the first photo signed by Shoeless Joe Jackson to be authenticated by autograph experts, according to Heritage Auctions. The story should have made clear that a Jackson-signed photo, authenticated by a handwriting expert, was sold by Sotheby's in 1999 and that memorabilia experts have since disputed the validity of the signature on that photo.

(UPDATE: Feb. 20, 2015) AP Issues Clarification On "Shoeless" Joe Story But Makes No Mention Of Dispute Over Authenticity Of Heritage Lot; Source Says FBI Is Investigating Jackson Photo & Balance Of Questioned Frank W. Smith Collection

Late yesterday the *Associated Press* issued a clarification in regard to their original report about the alleged "**Shoeless" Joe Jackson** photo being offered for sale tomorrow in New York City at **Heritage Auctions**" "Platinum Night Auction." In the

clarification published by [ABC News](#) and several other news outlets the AP stated:

“In a story Feb. 9, The Associated Press reported that a century-old image was the first photo signed by Shoeless Joe Jackson to be authenticated by autograph experts, according to Heritage Auctions. The story should have made clear that a Jackson-signed photo, authenticated by a handwriting expert, was sold by Sotheby’s in 1999 and that memorabilia experts have since disputed the validity of the signature on that photo.”

Although the AP addressed the inaccuracy of its original report regarding the existence of another alleged Jackson signed photo at Sotheby’s in 1999, it made no mention of the controversy over its authenticity and the stated opinion that it is not genuine by expert and SABB award-winning author, **Ron Keurajian**. Keurajian confirmed that AP reporter **John Seewer** did not contact him for comment but *BlackBetsy.com* operator and Joe Jackson historian **Mike Nola** confirmed that Seewer did contact him seeking information about the 1999 Sotheby’s sale. Seewer and Heritage Auctions have still not responded to inquiries made by **Hauls of Shame**.

A source familiar with the controversy over the much-hyped Heritage auction lot confirmed for **Hauls of Shame** that the **Federal Bureau of Investigation** is investigating the authenticity of the Jackson photo and other photographs in the **Frank Smith** Collection. The source said he spoke directly with an **FBI** agent about the auction offerings including many other single-signed baseballs also identified as possible forgeries.

Comments (21)

The Scribbles & Scrawls Of “Shoeless” Joe: The Real Jackson Sigs vs. Forgeries Certified By Darvick, JSA & PSA/DNA (Pt.1)

By Peter J. Nash
February 9, 2015 ShareThis

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Legend had it that “**Shoeless**” **Joe Jackson** was an illiterate incapable of signing his own name and filmmaker **John**

Sayles contributed to this perception in his film *Eight Men Out* when he portrayed Jackson signing a fictional 1920 confession with a shaky and tremulous “X.”

Sayles’ portrayal of the disgraced slugger, however, was based more on folklore than fact, for the real **Joseph Jefferson Jackson** was capable of signing his own name as evidenced by a wide array of surviving legal documents executed during his lifetime. Mortgage documents, promissory notes, contracts, real estate agreements, court transcripts and identification documents issued by the state of South Carolina have survived and are the best tangible proof that Jackson could actually sign his name. These genuine documents serve as proof that authentic signatures do exist of the legendary player who was banned from the game and has been denied entry into the **Baseball Hall of Fame**.

Fueled by the legend and the folklore, the value of Jackson-signed items has skyrocketed over the past few decades as evidenced by the sale of a signed 1916 promissory note that recently fetched close to \$130,000. But with sales prices of Jackson signatures are setting records, acquiring a Jackson signature still remains a [very dangerous proposition](#) for any collector hoping to secure an authentic scrawl of the Greenville native.

It all started back in the late 1980’s when real Jackson signatures were virtually non-existent and highly sought after by major collectors like **Barry Halper**. Halper believed he had a genuine Jackson signature but it was actually a ghost-signed version penned by his wife. It wasn’t until 1989 that **Katie Jackson’s** signatures were dismissed as secretarial and a year later autograph

auctioneer **Herman Darvick** offered what he claimed was an authentic signature of Jackson allegedly cut from a legal document. The signature looked entirely different than any of the signatures that Mrs. Jackson had sent back to collectors who had written to her husband at their home in Greenville, South Carolina.

THE COLLECTOR

BILL MADDEN

NEW YORK—Forty years after the death of Shoeless Joe Jackson, the antihero of the 1919 Black Sox scandal still cannot escape controversy.

The latest charges of duplicity leveled against Shoeless Joe—that he had his wife sign autographs for him—probably would leave him as confused as he was about the allegations of a World Series “fix” that led to lifetime suspensions for Jackson and seven other members of the 1919 Chicago White Sox.

It wasn't Jackson's fault that

price of \$23,100.

“Before that,” Darvick said, “the highest price ever paid for a single autograph, to my knowledge, was \$56,000 for a Bulton Gwinnett, one of the original

dem in Gwinnett's hometown in Georgia was spread through contact with paper. As a result, all the legal documents he had ever signed were destroyed.”

Jackson's autograph suddenly became valuable with the revelation that so few of his signatures

At the Darvick auction, two of baseball collecting's acknowledged high rollers, collector Barry Halper and dealer Joshua Evans, got wind of the Jackson autograph and engaged in a spirited bidding war. Once the stakes reached \$20,000, Halper dropped out. However, that did not stop him from adding the Jackson autograph to what is the most fabulous collection of baseball memorabilia anywhere.

“I already have numerous Joe Jackson autographs in my collection—autographs that I thought were authentic,” Halper said. “One is a personal letter, neatly written, but with misspellings and so forth that gave every indication Jackson had written it. But when I saw the copy of the signature in the Dar-

A likeness of Jackson's South Carolina driver's license with his distinct signature at bottom.

In 1991 Bill Madden reported on Barry Halper's alleged acquisition of a genuine Joe Jackson signature in a Herman Darvick auction. Halper previously thought a signature executed by Jackson's wife (Katie) was authentic (inset in red). Madden published an image of Jackson's real signature on his drivers license.

Halper's quest to acquire Jackson's signature in Darvick's auction was covered on the pages of *The Sporting News* by his close friend and personal PR-man, **Bill Madden**. Halper had already boasted to Madden about owning Jackson's Black Sox jersey from 1919 and his famous “Black Betsy” bat, both of which he said he acquired from Jackson relatives in the mid 1980's. But Halper had come to the realization he didn't own an authentic Jackson signature and when Darvick's appeared he was prepared to pursue it aggressively to fill the hole in his collection.

When it was all said and done, however, Halper lost the signature in a fierce bidding war with New York dealer and auctioneer, **Josh Evans**, of **Lelands**, who ended up winning it for \$23,100. Halper regretted losing out on the signature and after the sale approached Evans with an offer to trade him game-used jerseys of **Yogi Berra**, **Warren Spahn** and **Jim Palmer** for the Jackson signature. Evans took him up on the offer and Halper subsequently told Madden, “I hated parting with those uniforms, I have others of all three players. Who knows if I'll ever have another chance at an authentic “Shoeless” Joe Jackson autograph?”

... day
1915 }
L.S. }
Joe Jackson

Thos Mauldin
Joe Jackson

Joe Jackson

Joe Jackson

Joe Jackson

Joe Jackson

Chas. Amick

By Joe Jackson

George Weaver

Joe Jackson

P. Williams

Joe Jackson

W. Greenville, S.C.

USUAL SIGNATURE Joe Jackson

Joe Jackson

... document, from 1888-1951. Baseball player, one of the "Eight Men Out" who dramatically returned to his "Field of Dreams", .306 lifetime average, member of the 1918 "Black Sox", named from baseball for life for allegedly throwing the 1919 World Series (in 8 games he got 2 hits, scored 5 runs, drove in 6 runs, and hit the only home run of the Series). Called "Shoeless Joe"; of "Say it ain't so, Joe" fame. Said to be illiterate. Bafflingly rare signature "Joe Jackson" on a 4" by 1.5" portion of paper cut from a legal document. The verso of paper, also reproduced here, bears printed, photograph, and typed information indicating the document was signed in April, 1938. (16902060)

Joe Jackson [SEAL]

Joe Jackson [SEAL]

Purchased by Leland's on December 6, 1990 for \$23,100
— THE LARGEST SUM EVER PAID —
for any 19th or 20th Century autograph.

THE MOST VALUABLE SIGNATURE IN THE WORLD

86. BASEBALL: JOE JACKSON (1887-1951). Baseball superstar, called "Shoeless Joe"; 3rd highest lifetime batting average of .306 (only Cobb & Hornsby hit better); named from baseball by Judge Landis for his involvement in 1919 "Black Sox" scandal; portrayed on the covers of "Field of Dreams" and "Eight Men Out." Bafflingly rare ink signature "Joe Jackson" superbly doubled matted with a limited edition 170" by 2.14" color - enhanced photograph from the Charles Cantlon Collection (numbered 104/975) depicting a half-length Joe Jackson in batting pose. A 427-word baseball biography of Jackson is engraved on a 10" by 6" metal plaque affixed beneath the autograph. Equivalently framed under glass, overall size, 22" by 46".

Only the second authentic matted signature of Joe Jackson to be offered at public auction. The first was sold at Herman Darvick Autograph Auctions Sale No. 24, December 6, 1990, for \$23,100. It was not matted or framed.

Accompanied by a letter from Jack Civic. In part, "In 1978, I was the Director of Bowling Operations for the Coliseum Bowl-O-Mat in Akron, Ohio. In the bowling center, I had placed a sign on our community bulletin board stating that I was collecting baseball cards and baseball memorabilia. In the spring of that year, an elderly bowler in the center named George Hudson visited my office. He made me aware that he had saved some early tobacco baseball cards and several autographs...The cards included those of Hank Wagner, Ty Cobb and the caricature included those of Wagner, Cobb and Joe Jackson. I offered Mr. Hudson to buy the memorabilia, and he visited for quite a time. He related to me that he was in need of a new bowling ball and a pair of shoes and of his great enjoyment for the sport of bowling in his retirement years. I was very pleased to present him with a new Brunswick ball and shoes and one hundred free games of bowling in return for his baseball artifacts. We were both very pleased with this arrangement." The "Joe Jackson" signature offered here is the one collected by Mr. Hudson. (20,000-40,000)

BASEBALL SIGNED BY SHOELESS JOE JACKSON

86. BASEBALL: JOE JACKSON (1887-1951). Baseball superstar, called "Shoeless Joe"; 3rd highest lifetime batting average of .306 (only Cobb & Hornsby hit better); named from baseball by Judge Landis for his involvement in 1919 "Black Sox" scandal; portrayed in the motion picture "Field of Dreams" and "Eight Men Out." Bafflingly rare signature "Joe Jackson" is the right of the matted spot. Made by the Worth Company, "6 On 9 in Rubber Cover." In a blank area, a collector has neatly penned, "Ex Major League / Shoeless Joe Jackson." Accompanied by a letter from the collector, a Michigan antique dealer, stating that the signed ball was part of a baseball collection purchased by him in 1977 at an antique and collectibles show in Atlanta.

Joe Jackson [SEAL]

Joe Jackson

March 23, 1994

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that I have personally examined the signature "Joe Jackson" on the first blank flyleaf of the book, "Say It Ain't So, Joe" by Thomas L. Siz, and have determined that the signature is authentic and was signed by baseball player Joe Jackson, the subject of the book. The signature examined by me is reproduced below:

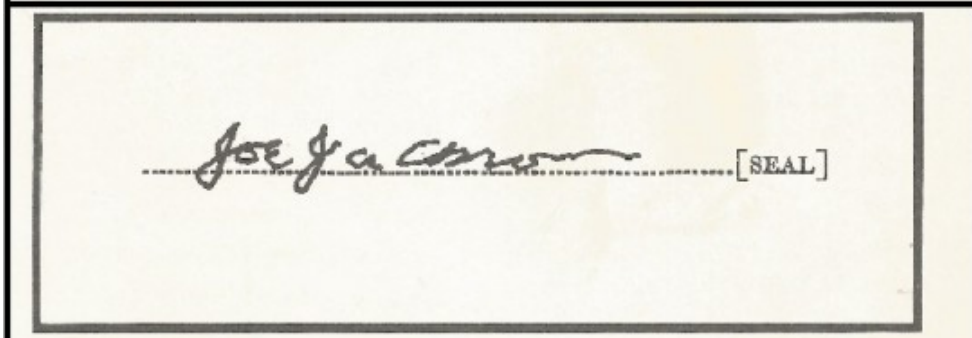
Herman Darvick

On the left are authentic Jackson signatures from legal documents spanning from 1915 to 1951. On the right are four highly questionable offerings by Herman Darvick that several experts have deemed Jackson forgeries.

After Halper's acquisition, Leland's advertised their purchase at Darvick's auction as being the "largest sum ever paid for any 19th or 20th century autograph. Darvick claimed that the Jackson cut signature he sold originated from a Jackson relative, but during that same time period a close Jackson family friend sold an authentic cache of Jackson signed legal documents and financial instruments to **Dan Knoll**, a prominent memorabilia dealer from Chicago. The first of those documents, a 1916 mortgage promisory note signed by Jackson, made its way into a 1993 Lelands sale where the auctioneer described the document as the "first verifiably authentic Joe Jackson autograph offered." When world renowned handwriting expert, **Charles Hamilton**, examined the genuine Lelands document, he deemed the \$23,000 Darvick cut signature a forgery. The genuine Lelands document was purchased at auction by Barry Halper for over \$25,000. Several other authentic Jackson mortgage notes followed the Lelands offering and appeared for sale throughout the 1990's but during that same time period **Herman Darvick** sold several other highly questionable Jackson's including another cut signature, a baseball, a photograph and a signed book.

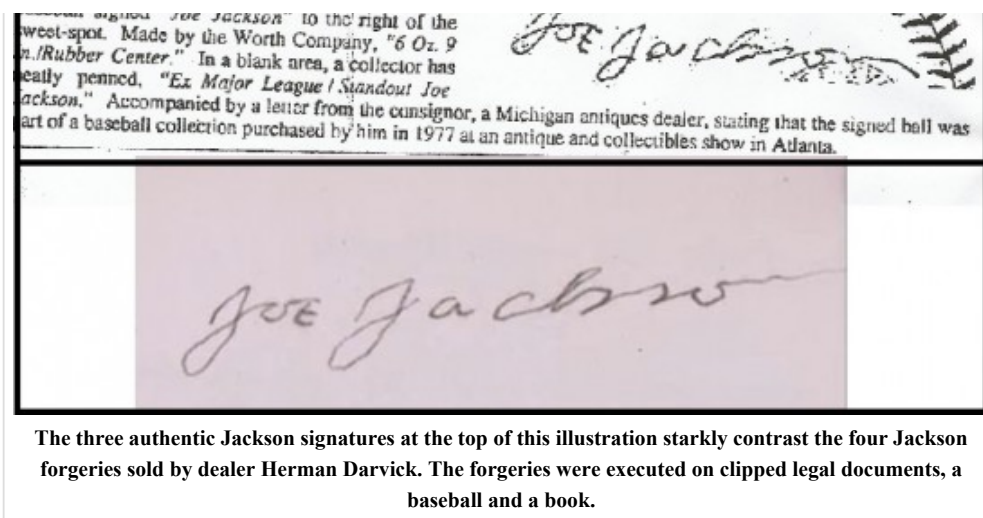


mark 95
THE MOST VALUABLE SIGNATURE IN THE WORLD
86. BASEBALL: JOE JACKSON (1887-1951). Baseball superstar, called "Shoeless Joe"; 3rd highest lifetime batting average of .356 (only Cobb & Hornsby hit better); banned from baseball by Judge Landis for his involvement in 1919 "Black" Sox scandal; portrayed on the screen in "Field of Dreams" and "Eight Men Out." Exceedingly rare ink signature "Joe Jackson" superbly doubled matted with a limited edition 17 1/2" by 21 1/2" color - enhanced photograph from the Charles Conlon Collection (numbered 104/975) depicting a half-length Joe Jackson in batting pose. A 427-word baseball biography of Jackson is engraved on a 10" by 6" metal plaque affixed beneath the signature. Exquisitely framed under glass, overall size, 29" by 46".
 Only the second authentic unattached signature of Joe Jackson to be offered at public auction. The first was sold at Herman Darvick Autograph Auctions Sale No. 24, December 6, 1990, for \$23,100. It was not matted or framed.



Purchased by Leland's on December 6, 1990 for **\$23,100**
 — THE LARGEST SUM EVER PAID —
 for any 19th or 20th Century autograph.

BASEBALL SIGNED BY SHOELESS JOE JACKSON
86. BASEBALL: JOE JACKSON (1887-1951). Baseball superstar, called "Shoeless Joe"; 3rd highest lifetime batting average of .356 (only Cobb & Hornsby hit better); banned from baseball by Judge Landis for his involvement in 1919 "Black" Sox scandal; portrayed in the motion pictures "Field of Dreams" and "Eight Men Out." "Special League/Genuine Horseshoe Cover"
 Baseball signed "Joe Jackson"



When examined and compared closely to the unimpeachable examples of Jackson's genuine signature on legal documents, all of the alleged Jackson signatures sold by Darvick exhibit tell-tale signs of forgery. The Darvick examples appear to be slowly executed, almost drawn, with laborious heavy strokes that lack the spontaneity and flow of genuine Jackson signatures. One of the most telling characteristics of the forgeries is found in the last end stroke of Jackson's "n" which tapers to a needle-like point in most all of Jackson's authentic signatures, but stops abruptly with a thick ink build-up in the forged examples. Although Jackson appears to be very deliberate in what some say is his "drawing" of his own signature, the authentic examples all share a common flow and spontaneity.

We asked several experts to examine the alleged Jackson autographs sold by Darvick and give us their opinions:

-Ron Keurajian, author of *Baseball Hall of Fame Autographs: A Reference Guide*, said: "Joe Jackson's autograph is an extreme rarity and limited to signed legal documents or signatures removed therefrom. The Jackson signed book, featured on the **History Channel's Pawn Stars**, is, in my opinion, a forgery, and a poorly executed one at that." As for Darvick's signed photo and ball, Keurajian does not believe there are any genuine signatures of Jackson that exist on either baseballs or photographs.

-Josh Evans recalled his purchase of the first Jackson cut from Darvick's auction in 1990 and told us, "I always regretted that one. I never actually saw it before I bought it if you can believe that (the good old days). I heard about it the day before and bid based on Darvick's rep. I sold it to Halper and we spoke about it being questionable but he never agreed." HOS has been unable to determine when Halper disposed of the Jackson forgery and who subsequently acquired it.

-Mike Nola, is not a handwriting or autograph expert but he is a Jackson historian who curates the website BlackBetsy.com, and he told us: "He (Jackson) could not really sign his name. He was simply following a pattern taught to him by (his wife) Katie. If you look closely at each of his known signatures, they all differ in some way because he was drawing the signature and no two would be exactly alike."

-Olan Chiles, was a [well known collector](#) of autographs on checks and lived in Greenville, SC. as a youth. A veteran autograph collector with over thirty years experience knew Chiles who told him first hand accounts of meeting Jackson in person. The collector told us: "Olan told me he used to visit Jackson and his wife often at their liquor store and always asked for an autograph. He would be handed a pre-signed item (signed by the wife). In all the time he knew Jackson he was NEVER able to acquire an authentic autograph, which tells me that the signing process for him must have been so laborious that he only did it when he absolutely had to."

As for Darvick's examples of Jackson he said, "I did not like any of them" and added, "The point I was trying to make initially (regarding Chiles) is that (if) someone who was positioned so close to Jackson and was unable to secure an autograph, this leads me to believe that the group the family cut loose represents probably the only authentic Joe Jackson signatures in the public domain. His signature is just too easy to replicate."



Herman Darvick - Field of Expertise: Historical/Political
 Charter Member (1965) and President of the Universal Autograph Collector: Pen and Quill," and recipient of the UACC's first Lifetime Achievement award Autographs," published in 1981 by Messner Books, a division of Simon and appeared in Volume 1 of every edition of "World Book" encyclopedia since "Study" and is credited in "Reagan: A Life in Letters" (2003) with discovering his fan mail when he was an actor. Herman was an expert witness on autog of America in the case of the Estate of Richard Nixon v. United States (1998

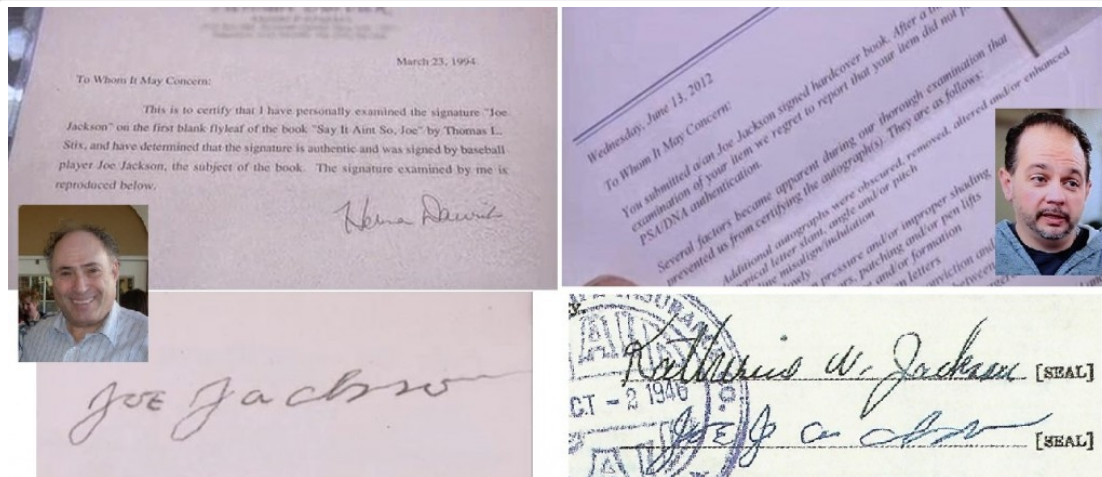


his public auctions held from 1985-1995 include Jack Ruby's gun, Judy Garland's last passport, Oscars awarded to John Lennon and Harold Russell, and the first authentic signature of Shoeless Joe Jackson ever sold. He has been interviewed on the subject of autographs by, among others, Oprah Winfrey, Larry King, Bill O'Reilly, Phil Donahue, and Joe Franklin, as well as by the Associated Press, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, Yomiuri Shimbun, Der Spiegel, ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, CNN, CNBC, and other media. Herman and John Reznikoff are co-authors of Chapter 1 "Authentication" of "The Sanders Autograph Price Guide 7th edition" (2009).

Herman Darvick appears on JSA's website as one of the company "experts" and notes his sale of the "first authentic signature of "Shoeless" Joe Jackson.

Herman Darvick has worked as an authenticator for PSA/DNA and is currently listed on the [SGC website](#) as a staff member and on the [JSA website](#) as one of **Jimmy Spence's** experts with his "field of expertise" being "historical" and "political" autographs. The Darvick bio on the JSA site also references the Joe Jackson forgery stating that Darvick handled "the first authentic signature of "Shoeless Joe" Jackson ever sold." An embarrassing episode for both Darvick and JSA occurred recently when the **History Channel's** hit cable-TV show **Pawn Stars** featured a Darvick-authenticated Jackson autograph signed on a book (the bottom signature in the above illustration). Pawn shop owner **Rick Harrison** allegedly purchased the book for \$13,000 with an LOA from Darvick and was then told by PSA/DNA it was their opinion that the signature was not genuine.

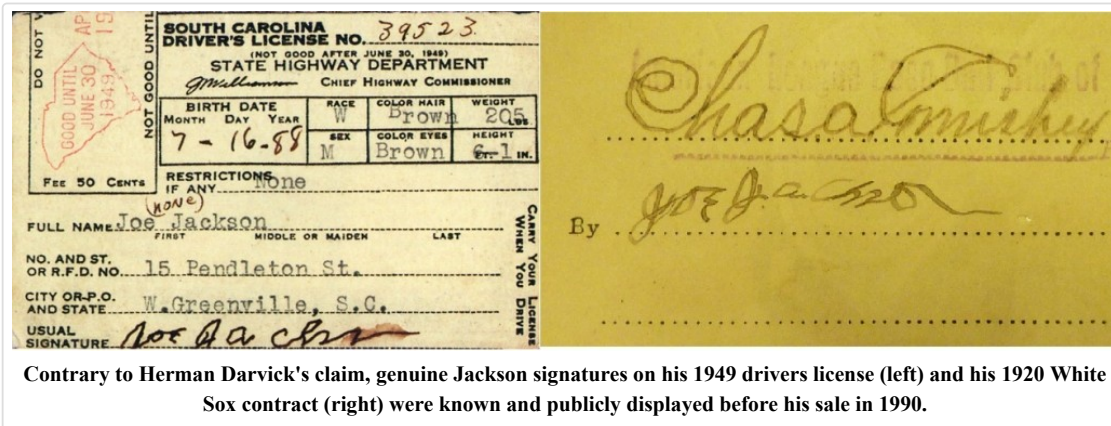
When the **Pawn Stars** episode aired **Mike Nola** added some additional information about Jackson's signing habits when he posted on a collector forum: "I interviewed **Eugene Estes** (and that name means little to history, except that he witnessed Joe signing his will). Mr. Estes told me that Joe struggled to sign his name, that he practiced on the back on an envelope three times before setting pen to paper on the Will. Mr. Estes said Joe stopped several times during the signing, which in my opinion would make it look "traced". Now, I am not saying PSA got it wrong, but there is enough reasonable doubt in my mind that if I were Rick Harrison, I'd have it forensically tested for period ink and that the ink had been on the page for a period of between 1947 (when the book was published) and December 5, 1951 (The date Joe Jackson ceased to be a living entity). The signature on the book looks different than the one that appears on his will, but the one on his will appears different than the one that appears on his 1941 mortgage note and that one appears different than the one on his 1949 drivers license. In other words.....all his signatures differ somewhat, since he was just tracing a pattern taught to him by his wife Katie. I sent **Rick Harrison** an email and told him as much."



Darvick originally authenticated and sold an alleged Jackson-signed book (left) that ended up in the hands of Pawn Stars star Rick Harrison who sent the book to PSA/DNA and Steve Grad who issued a rejection letter (right). Jackson's genuine signature from 1946 appears at the bottom, right.

Since the time **Hauls of Shame** reported and identified the book authenticated by Darvick as a forgery, the JSA authenticator posted several comments on this site defending his certification stating, "If anyone was going to forge Joe Jackson's signature on the book, he/she would have used Mrs. Jackson's Joe Jackson signature to copy. Her signing of her husbands name appeared in many collections as an authentic Joe Jackson autograph. Collectors had never seen a real Joe Jackson signature before I sold this

signature which was cut from as building document with a partial date (of) April 1936 typed on the verso.” Declining to address the signature itself and its rejection by PSA/DNA, Darvick added, “The signed Joe Jackson book was signed by “Shoeless” Joe Jackson as I stated in my April 1994 COA.” As for Darvick’s sale of the \$23,100 Jackson forgery in 1990 he said, “At the time of my 1990 auction, no one, no baseball autograph dealer, no sports auction house, NO ONE questioned the authenticity of the Joe Jackson I sold.”



Contrary to Herman Darvick's claim, genuine Jackson signatures on his 1949 drivers license (left) and his 1920 White Sox contract (right) were known and publicly displayed before his sale in 1990.

But Darvick’s claim that “collectors had never seen a real Joe Jackson signature before (his)” is entirely false. Before Darvick sold his cut to Lelands in December of 1990 there was already an authentic Jackson-signed 1920 contract on public display at the **Chicago Historical Society** in the fall of 1989. Darvick already knew this as evidenced in Bill Madden’s 1991 article about the Darvick sale which quotes autograph aficionado **Clarence Jerabek** as having seen Jackson’s authentic signature on that contract and on several legal documents. Jaribeck told Madden, “Through Shoeless Joe’s relatives, I got to see what an actual signature looked like. It’s on a copy of a drivers licence that is signed by both Joe and his wife.” In addition, Jerabek had already published an article about Jackson’s ability to sign his name in *Pen and Quill*.

By 1990, several hobbyists had also seen genuine signed documents owned by Jackson family members and friends including **Lester Irwin** and **Joe Anders**. Darvick actually contacted Jerabek before he sold his cut in 1990 as documented in *The Sporting News* which quoted Jerebek as saying, “Darvick asked me what I thought it was worth and I told him at least \$1,500 to \$2,000. When he went back to the owner, however, the guy told him to put it up for auction.” Madden said in his article that Darvick’s Jackson cut was “obtained by a collector from a relative of Jackson” but **Hauls of Shame’s** interviews with Jackson family members and **Joe Anders**, a family friend who was given the signed cache of legal and financial documents from the family, show otherwise. No Jackson family member we could locate ever sold a cut signature to a collector. Interestingly enough, Darvick never mentioned anything about the provenance of his alleged Jackson cut in his auction catalog and when we sent Darvick emails asking him to reveal the source of his Jackson cut signature he did not respond.

To the Members of the National Commission,

Mr. Aug. Herrmann

Mr. B.B. Johnson,

Mr. John K. Tener,

Gentlemen,

We the undersigned members of the Chicago American League Baseball Club, do hereby request that you rescind your action in holding out one thousand dollars, or any part of it, of our World Series money, and make full payment of same at once.

We have already bound ourselves by contract not to participate in any post season exhibition games, and fully expect to abide by the same.

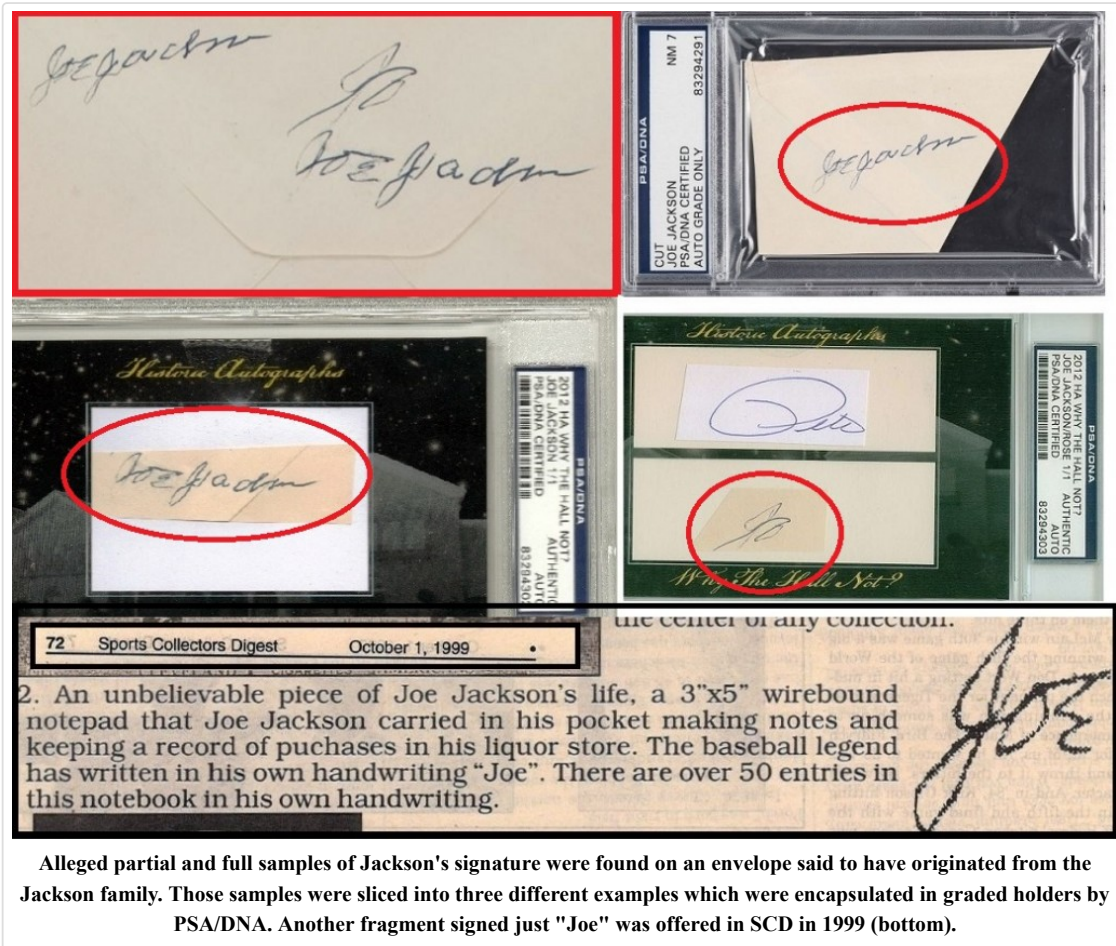
Respectfully yours,

<i>Ch. Rowland</i>	<i>C. A. Pritchard</i>
<i>Edward Collins</i>	<i>Red Russell</i>
<i>Wm. P. Black</i>	<i>H. B. Faber</i>
<i>Er. Cicotte</i>	<i>Byrd Lynn</i>
<i>Ray W. Schalk</i>	<i>W. J. Hubert</i>
<i>Joe Judge</i>	<i>Joe Jackson</i>
<i>Wm. Mullin</i>	<i>Buck Weaver</i>
<i>W. L. ...</i>	<i>Harry Luitold</i>
	<i>John J. Collins</i>

Jackson signed this letter along with the 1917 White Sox requesting their World Series money from August Herrmann and Ban Johnson. The unquestionably authentic document was discovered in the HOF's August Herrmann Papers Collection. Jackson's signature (inset in red) shows less spacing between letters when compared to most of the financial documents he signed during the same era.

“Shoeless” Joe appears to have had difficulty signing his name regularly during his lifetime and its well-documented he avoided putting pen to paper whenever he could, thus delegating signing duties to his wife Katie. The verifiable authentic signatures attributed to Jackson on legal documents and contracts (illustrated in this article) are the only examples we can be confident are authentic. We’ll never be as sure about the other alleged signatures on baseballs and other mediums like photographs, even if they come with a PSA or JSA certificate of authenticity. At best, even with strong provenance, some experts will always consider these Jackson signatures “unauthenticatable.” One signed item, however, that is unquestionably authentic and signed by Jackson in the presence of his White Sox teammates is a 1917 team-signed letter to American League President **Ban Johnson**. The letter was signed by Jackson and every player requesting their share of the World Series receipts for their victory over **John J. McGraw’s** Giants. The document had remained hidden in the files of the National Baseball Library’s **August Herrmann** Papers Collection until **Hauls of Shame** uncovered it a few years ago while researching stolen documents from the

same collection. The document is the most clear and convincing evidence that Jackson could and did sign his name along with his teammates on items that did not required a signature in conjunction with a financial transaction.



Alleged partial and full samples of Jackson's signature were found on an envelope said to have originated from the Jackson family. Those samples were sliced into three different examples which were encapsulated in graded holders by PSA/DNA. Another fragment signed just "Joe" was offered in SCD in 1999 (bottom).

Aside from the iron-clad signatures on the legal and financial documents originating from Jackson's family and friends, other more dubious examples have surfaced for sale in the auction marketplace. When the authentic- signed Jackson documents surfaced in the early 1990s there were several other signatures and fragments of signatures that were alleged to have Jackson family provenance as well. Three such signatures were found on the back of an envelope and another just signed "Joe" was said to have originated from a small note pad that once belonged to Jackson. The three examples of writing included on the envelope were originally sold in 1997 by **Mastro & Steinbach Auctions** as originating "directly from the Joe Jackson estate" and years later the envelope was cut into three pieces which were ultimately encapsulated and authenticated in three separate PSA/DNA holders. The "Jo" example was paired with a partial **Pete Rose** signature ("Pete") in a PSA holder. The "Joe" partial notebook signature was offered in SCD by **Frank Foremny** in 1999.

In addition to the cut signatures manufactured from the one envelope (which are considered by most experts as genuine) both PSA/DNA and JSA authenticated another alleged Jackson cut that was purchased by the **Leaf Trading Card Company** and inserted into a 2010 Joe Jackson relic card. The card ended up selling at **Heritage Auction Galleries** in 2011 for \$26,290 with LOA's from both **JSA** and **PSA/DNA**. In their promotional materials, Leaf estimated that the value of the alleged autograph was between \$70,000 and \$100,000. This alleged Jackson signature has been identified as a forgery by several experts we interviewed.

Another [alleged Jackson signature](#) was sold publicly for \$72,000 at **Legendary Auctions** in August of 2010 with an LOA (and Grade of 9) from **PSA/DNA** and **Steve Grad**. The alleged Jackson pencil signature was signed on a page from an autograph album that **Legendary** stated, "Has changed ownership a couple of times since its origin in the '40's" although it was originally acquired by a young girl from Greenville, SC., in that era. The woman, **Sarah Taft**, allegedly had Jackson sign the album but none of the other pages in the volume are signed except for one by her father **Eddie Taft**.



Alleged cut signatures of Jackson were included in a 2010 Leaf relic card and a 2013 Legendary Auction with LOA's from JSA and PSA/DNA. Experts who examined both of these signatures, however, are of the opinion they are forgeries when compared to genuine examples of Jackson's signature from his 1915 Draft Card (bottom left) and a 1946 mortgage note (bottom right).

All of the experts we spoke with are of the opinion that the alleged Jackson signed page sold at Legendary is a forgery. In fact, one expert believes that the forger used the authentic signature on Jackson's last will and testament as his template. When we asked Ron Keurajian about the signature, he referred us to his book which states that the only authentic Jackson signatures he's seen are found on legal documents. One long-time dealer added, "PSA and JSA have no clue on Jackson's signature outside of the obvious legitimate legal documents."

Rare Shoeless Joe Jackson Autographed Photo May Bring \$100,000

Feb 9, 2015, 1:16 AM ET

By JOHN SEEWER Associated Press



The AP featured an alleged Jackson photo authenticated by PSA/DNA and currently for sale at Heritage. Another Jackson photo sold at Sotheby's in 1999 for \$43,000 (right).

In our next report on Jackson's handwriting we'll examine the photographs alleged to have been signed by Jackson. In particular, we will focus on the PSA/DNA authenticated photo appearing in Heritage's [Platinum Night Auction](#) later this month and compare it with another Jackson signed photograph sold at [Sotheby's](#) in 1999 for \$43,000.

Comments (13)