

As you can see in the header , I am not calling the McC-JD chips "Illegals." There is a chance they were but we could not prove it with confidence.

Westen Charles found 5 colors of the McC-JD "Die Cut" chips.



MCCJD1

Record from the United States Playing Card Company (USPC). USPC records are posted on the Museum Of Gaming History Chip Guide.

[http://www.themogh.org/cg\\_global.php](http://www.themogh.org/cg_global.php)



MCCJD2

As you can see, Westen found a green one but no brown. That makes 6 known colors. The USPC records are really drilled chips tied to back boards and typed info. The boards were at one time displayed at USPC in Cincinnati, OH. Reorders, IMO were not added to the boards as there are many colors of many chips known and not on the boards. Possibly they just did not put all colors on the boards.

Also you can see there is a typo on the info. McM instead of McC. Looks like employees were only human back in 1914 when the chips were made. \*vbg\*

Enter our "Friend Of The Hobby."

I. Samelson & Co. was a Memphis wholesale and retail cigar and tobacco company owned by Isaac "Ike" Samelson (1858-1927). At the time of the chip order Samelson's flagship store was located at 28 S. Main St. and had branches located at the Hotel Gayoso, Peabody Hotel and the lobby of the Tennessee Trust Building.

Here's two pics of Samelson's Main Street store from around the time of the chip order; red arrow pointing to Samelson sign:

looking north:



MCCJD3

looking south:



MCCJD4

Here's an ad from 1911:

# What Shall I Give a Man?

Make it a box of cigars. Nothing answers the purpose so well. It is easy to know what cigars to give. All men know the genuine quality of—

**Samelson's Julia Marlowe  
and Samelson's Tadema  
Clear Havana Cigars**

We particularly recommend the 3 for 25c, 10c straight and 2 for 25c sizes. Reduced prices by the box.

In the 5c straight cigars, there are none as good as Samelson's Jecoe and Samelson's Extra.

**Most Progressive Cigar  
Stores Sell Them.**

**I. Samelson & Co.**

Wholesale Distributors  
Memphis, Tennessee

MCCJD5

Samelson cigar label:



NCCJD6

Cigar stores were often places where gambling occurred but they also often ordered chips for customers. I'm not sure what the case is with these chips, but I'm inclined to think that they were ordered for a customer with the name J-- D-- McC----- . There were several hundred people in Memphis with a last name ending McC---- at the time of the chip order. Several dozen with a first initial J. I've only seen one with the initials J. D. (there may be more). His name was John Drew McClanahan (1867-1946).

McClanahan lived north of Memphis in Covington, TN but he had a business in Memphis which he ran with a guy named Henry Oppenheimer called Oppenheimer & McClanahan. Their business was horse dealing and they operated from around 1912 to 1915 (initially they had a place downtown on Union Ave. but later moved to the Memphis stockyards).

My note: I have chip ID's on illegals used in Covington, TN not to be confused with Covington, KY. Should make a good "Illegal Of The Day," if we ever find the chips. \*vbg\*

Thought this was interesting—suggests both Oppenheimer and McClanahan had an interest in horse racing:

from the Memphis Commercial Appeal--

**100 years ago: 1911**

Dan H., driven by Henry Oppenheimer, became the matinee champion when he romped in ahead of The Outlaw, driven by Julius Goodman, in the first and third heats of the free-for-all horse race at the Fairgrounds last week end. J.D. McClanahan of Covington served as a judge for the events.

MCCJD7

I don't know if the chips were for McClanahan, but I thought it was worth some consideration.

I'm still looking into it and hopefully will find something more definitive on who or what the chips were for.

My note. IMO we have a good chance for a hit on JD McClanahan. We just don't know for sure, and we don't know if they were personal home game chips or actually used for illegal gambling. Research does not always give us a 100% hit on ownership nor use. In 6 months the McC-JD chips will be 100 years old. Our "Friend" did an amazing job on the research! Thank you "Friend."