



### **Louis Sockalexis: The First Cleveland Indian**

David L. Fleitz

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This is a complete biography of Louis Sockalexis, known during his playing days as "Chief of Sockem" and "Deerfoot on the Diamond." For three seasons, Sockalexis batted well over.300, hit home runs, and made amazing throws from the outfield, but he found it difficult to adjust to playing in the major leagues. He often found himself the object of ridicule and hatred from sportswriters and fans in other cities. Sockalexis began drinking heavily and was suspended by the Cleveland team for playing while intoxicated. His alcoholism brought his career to an unfortunate and premature end in 1899, and he died in 1913 at the age of 42. Shortly after his death, Cleveland's American League team was named the Indians and Chief Wahoo was adopted as its mascot, something that has sparked controversy in recent years and brought attention to Sockalexis once again.



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