

## Social Class and the Sport of Cricket in Philadelphia, 1850-1880\*

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Cricket with its trappings of white flannels, lush green lawns, scheduled tea breaks, and three-day matches has been understandably perceived as an upper-class sport. But in nineteenth-century Philadelphia, especially before the Civil War, workers and middle-class men played beside their upper-class brethren.' After Appomattox, however, white collar workers from the city's middle and upper classes dominated cricket as the number of workingmen participating in the game declined sharply. This transition was most noticeable in the realm of club memberships and to a lesser degree within the ranks of active players.

Early on, serious players joined a cricket club or formed a new one, usually in their own neighborhood, to test their skill and savvy against others. In bringing together individuals of varied social backgrounds for recreational and competitive play, the sport of cricket united them, however temporarily, in a common purpose on the playing field. Close scrutiny of cricket and those who played it reveals, for instance, patterns of social class participation in the sport with implications for examining its role in the formation, maintenance, and differentiation of social classes. Moreover, the propriety and deportment which had become a part of cricket along with its organizational structure built upon club memberships yield useful information regarding the composition, preservation, and distinctiveness of Philadelphia's social classes. Equally important was the widely-held belief that moral, social, and vocational values could be developed through cricket. As a consequence, certain Philadelphians steered their sons

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1. Documentation of working, middle, and upper class involvement in American cricket can be found in J. Thomas Jable, "Latter-Day Cultural Imperialists: The British Influence on the Establishment of Cricket in Philadelphia, 1842-1872," in *Pleasure, Profit, Proselytism; British Culture and Sport at Home and Abroad*, ed. J. A. Mangan (London: Frank Cass, 1988), pp. 175-92; George B. Kirsch, *The Creation of American Team Sports, Baseball and Cricket, 1838-72* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), pp. 143-78; Derrick Benning, "The Emigrant Staffordshire Potters and Their Influence on the Recreative Patterns of Trenton, New Jersey in the Nineteenth Century" (paper presented at the Geographical Perspectives on Sport Conference, University of Birmingham, England, 7 July 1983): 8-12.

toward the game with the intent of socializing them to be productive and successful adults.

Cricket, like other nineteenth-century social institutions, was affected by burgeoning urban growth. The high premium placed upon urban space forced Philadelphia cricketers to find new playing areas in the outlying suburbs. Their move to the suburbs was indicative of America's general response to the thrust of urbanization.

In certain ways the sport of cricket opens a useful window to mid-Victorian Philadelphia. Granted, the view is limited to a small segment of Philadelphia's population that identified with cricket either as active players or more passively through club memberships. Nonetheless, it illuminates one component of mid-nineteenth century urban life not apparent through the traditional channels of political, economic, or social inquiry. With sport as the vehicle of investigation, this essay examines the roles of cricket in: (1) the formation and maintenance of social classes through the influence of the cricket club and the latter's relationship to other urban social clubs, and (2) the inculcation and transmission of social values to youth. Before an analysis of cricket and cricket clubs can be undertaken, a description of the Philadelphia's physical environs and social milieu during the period from 1850 to 1880 is provided to help to place the sport in the historical setting in which it was played.

### *I. Physical and Social Setting of Mid-Victorian Philadelphia*

Philadelphia changed drastically during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Consolidation with Philadelphia County in 1854 increased the city's territory from two to 130 square miles. Accompanying the city's territorial expansion was a two-fold rise in population from 408,000 in 1850 to nearly 841,000 by 1880.<sup>2</sup> European immigrants, chiefly Irish and Germans, blacks from southern and border states, and native whites from the surrounding countryside flocked to the city in hopes of landing one of the new manufacturing jobs spawned by the onset of industrialization. This sudden and precipitous infusion of people strained the city's services (police and fire protection, water, sanitation, and transportation) beyond their capacities and led to unregulated and haphazard growth. In spite of the social and civic problems the newcomers generated, they did provide an abundant labor pool that enabled Philadelphia to become one of America's leading manufacturing centers.

The process of urbanization and industrialization produced a new social class built upon newly-acquired wealth. This *nouveau riche* group of merchants, manufacturers, and company executives formed a business class, but they were not members of the established mercantile elite, even though they had more in common with them than they did with the artisans from whose ranks they emerged. In the broadest context, the newly rich have been identified with

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2. Theodore Hershberg, et al., "A Tale of Three Cities: Blacks, Immigrants, and Opportunity in Philadelphia, 1850-1880, 1930, 1970," in *Philadelphia, Work, Space, Family, and Group Experience in the 19th Century*, ed. Theodore Hershberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 472.

America's middle class, loosely defined as stretching from the "laboring poor" to the "blue-blood aristocracy."<sup>3</sup> Such a broad-based definition of the middle class, though, is ambiguous and confusing.

Just recently, Stuart Blumin attempted to clarify the ambiguity often associated with nineteenth-century America's middle class in his analytical work on social experiences in American cities.<sup>4</sup> Clearly and logically he separates the middle class from the working class along occupational lines. He contends that once individuals made the transition from manual to non-manual work, they became middle class. Blumin is far less precise, however, in differentiating between the middle and the upper class. Unquestionably, the upper boundary of the middle class is difficult, if not impossible, to locate with any degree of proficiency. This blurry class boundary is due, for the most part, to the dynamic nature of the social classes and how they were formed. Blumin deals with it rather effectively by accepting the dynamics involved. In fact, he warns us that class formation "is not a process that continues along one progressive path until all of its constituent elements have been recombined into a perfect . . . form." Instead, he prods us to conceptualize society as forces that bring people together and pull them apart. Class formation, then, is the process "in which those forces that cause . . . classes to take shape are relatively (and perhaps temporarily) more powerful than those contrary or differing forces that cause them to dissolve, or that create alternative experiences or identities."<sup>5</sup>

Blumin's direction is clear. It is more important to examine the forces that shaped society than to compartmentalize the social units within it. The dynamics of class formation implies movement, preferably upward toward an exclusive upper class, though downward and lateral were also possible. As members of the upper echelon of the middle class gained enormous wealth which often outstripped that of their counterparts in the upper class, they gained prestige and power. This combination of wealth, power, and prestige made them "functional elites."<sup>6</sup> They were highly visible, identifiable, and, depending upon the circumstances, influential. But they were not upper class, at least not initially, and yet they did not consider themselves as middle class. Their

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3. Burton J. Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism, the Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1976), pp. 6-7, 18; Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage, Adolescence in America 1790 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), p. 121. See also Peter N. Stearns, "The Middle Class: Toward a Precise Definition," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21 (1979): 377-96; Stuart M. Blumin, "The Hypothesis of Middle Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century America: A Critique and Some Proposals," *American Historical Review* 90 (April 1985): 299-338.

4. Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class, Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989). This is the most ambitious and lucid work to date on the formation of the middle class in nineteenth-century America.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 258.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 234-35. Frederic Cople Jaher refers to them as "urban elites" in *The Urban Establishment, Upper Strata in Boston, New York, Charleston, Chicago, and Los Angeles* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982) pp. 10-12, and Lee Benson calls them "competitive elites" in his work, "Philadelphia Elites and Economic Development: Quasi-Public Information During the First American Organizational Revolution, 1825-1861," *Working Papers from the Regional Economic History Research Center*, ed. G. Porter and W. H. Mulligan, Jr. (Wilmington: Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, 1978), pp. 25-53.

relationship with the upper class is paramount for understanding Philadelphia society during the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

## II. Elites and the Upper Class

Elites as the name implies are those individuals who rise to the top of any given society. They are the leaders, the trend setters, the ones people look to for advice and direction.<sup>7</sup> Nineteenth-century Philadelphia had its share of functional elites. Some were prominent in business, others in politics, and still others in the legal, medical, artistic, or literary professions. In some cases functional elites operated in more than one sphere. For instance, an elite manufacturer might also hold a high political or civic position in the city. Although the term elite generally implies wealth of some sort, that was not always the case. A number of elite artists and literateurs were comfortable but hardly affluent. But for most elite businessmen and manufacturers, the reverse was true. Their wealth often exceeded that of many who comprised Philadelphia's upper class.

Like the functional elites, the upper class represented a small percentage of Philadelphia's population. Whereas functional elites were *individuals*, the upper class was a group of *families*. Philadelphia's upper class, popularly known as "Proper Philadelphians," was thus a coterie of consanguine families built upon a tradition of "old wealth," extending back to the Revolutionary era and, in some cases, predating it. They cherished privacy and attempted to guard their wealth and status through intermarriage, residing in fashionable neighborhoods, joining prestigious clubs, and patronizing exclusive social functions. Philadelphia's upper class, then, was a group of families with traditional bloodlines and similar socioeconomic and ideological characteristics.<sup>8</sup>

Proper Philadelphians, because of their superior station in society, were justifiably a social elite. Moreover, some of its members were also functional elites in business and the professions. Though Proper Philadelphians were a bonafide elite, not all elites were members of the upper class, even though many elites considered themselves as such.<sup>9</sup> This was particularly troubling to nouveau riche manufacturers and businessmen who possessed greater wealth than did most members of the city's upper class. In this regard, the case of Peter A. B. Widener is illuminating. Widener, a clever businessman, gained control of all the street rail lines in Philadelphia in the early 1880s and then expanded his

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7. For a superb explanation and historical analysis of elite theory, see Robert Wayne Simpson, "The Elite and Sport Club Membership in Toronto, 1827-1881" (Ph.D. Diss. The University of Alberta, 1987).

8. E. Digby Baltzell, interview with author, 16 June 1988, Philadelphia, Pa. Baltzell's suggestions were instrumental in developing the definitions of and distinction between "upper class" and "elites." See also his *Philadelphia Gentlemen, The Making of a National Upper Class* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1979), pp. 6-7.

9. Baltzell in *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, pp. 6-14 makes clear distinctions between "Proper Philadelphians" and elites. While Baltzell makes a distinction between new elites and Proper Philadelphians, he does recognize that Proper Philadelphia did assimilate a number of elites, albeit small, into its ranks. Jaher, on the other hand, contends that new elites replaced older ones as society's upper class. While that may have been the case in nineteenth-century New York, it was hardly so in less open and less fluid Philadelphia. For his view, see his *Urban Establishment*, pp. 10-12 and "Old and New Elites and Entrepreneurial Activity in New York City from 1780 to 1850," *Working Papers from the Regional Economic History Research Center*, pp. 55-78.

traction operations to other cities. His general interests in commerce soon extended to steel, tobacco, and gas. Clearly, he was an entrepreneurial elite, but he was not a Proper Philadelphian. Upper class Philadelphia did not accept this former butcher who amassed a great fortune in his own lifetime. Consequently, it deliberately excluded him from two Philadelphia hallmarks of upper class standing—the Dancing Assembly Balls and the Philadelphia Club. Widener's stigma as a social inferior has been captured by his grandson, P. A. B. Widener, who wrote in *Without Drums* that the elder Widener “was a self-made man” who had been poor, but “now, he was rich, fabulously wealthy, and society called him and his sons *nouveau riche*.”<sup>10</sup> His enormous wealth did not compensate for his absence of aristocratic bloodlines and lack of genteel manners.<sup>11</sup>

The upper class looked askance at the *nouveau riche*. In its eyes, these proprietors of newly-found wealth were social climbers whose behavior was vulgar, common, and boorish. Proper Philadelphia's distaste for these wealthy newcomers was a common theme woven through the diary of Sidney George Fisher, the novels of S. Weir Mitchell, and the social commentary of Nathaniel Burt.<sup>12</sup> Yet in spite of such denunciation, Proper Philadelphia assimilated some of the newly rich, though it was usually the second or third generation that reached its ranks, as was the case of Widener's grandson who earned that badge of distinction in the 1920s when he entered the Philadelphia Club, the city's most prestigious organization. Proper Philadelphians, fearful that functional elites might form their own competing “social network,” accommodated some first-generation parvenu. By absorbing certain arrivistes, Proper Philadelphians infused themselves with new stock and ideas, while fortifying their position of social dominance.<sup>13</sup> One mechanism they used for selecting these newcomers was the restrictive admission policies of their social clubs.

### III. Social Clubs and Class Solidarity

Exclusive social organizations, such as the Philadelphia Club, preserved status and maintained solidarity among Proper Philadelphians. Through its highly selective admission policies, the Philadelphia Club could easily control whom and how many it admitted. By purposely keeping its numbers small and

10. P. A. B. Widener, *Without Dreams* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1940), pp. 9-12, quoted in Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, p. 165.

11. According to the grandson, Widener, at least on the surface, did not care about Proper Philadelphia and its feelings of antipathy toward him. But Widener was not the only business elite to be shunned by Proper Philadelphia. His partners, William Elkins and Thomas Dolan, experienced a similar fate in their lifetimes. Status, though, seemed to matter to the grandson, for he was assimilated into Proper Philadelphia after World War I as were the grandchildren of the others. See Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, pp. 123-26. For a comparison of the relationship between business elites and controlling social and political forces in another environment, see Herbert G. Gutman, “Class, Status, and Community Power in Nineteenth-Century American Industrial Cities: Paterson, New Jersey, A Case Study,” in *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), pp. 234-60.

12. Nicholas B. Wainwright, ed., *A Philadelphia Perspective: The Diary of Sidney George Fisher* (Philadelphia: Historical Society of Philadelphia, 1967) p. 18; Nathaniel Burt, *The Perennial Philadelphians: The Anatomy of an American Aristocracy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963) pp. 39-40. For S. Weir Mitchell's portrayal of upper class propriety clashing with *nouveau riche* behavior, see his *In War Time* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1885), pp. 95-96, 205, 311; and *Circumstance* (New York: The Century, 1915) pp. 33, 43-44, 91. For accounts of social climbing in other cities, see Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, pp. 234-35.

13. Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, p. 231; Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, pp. 59-68.

opening its ranks to just a few preeminent elites, it could preserve the upper class and maintain cohesion among its members through its exclusionary and insular nature. Behind the protective shield of the Philadelphia Club, merchants, bankers, brokers, corporate executives, lawyers, and physicians gathered for lunch or dinner, discussed national or local politics over a glass of Madeira, challenged one another to a game of whist or chess, or just relaxed with the latest newspaper in the reading room. Whatever the circumstances, the club provided the atmosphere for Proper Philadelphians to congregate and exchange ideas which ultimately, if not immediately, led to business transactions. While this arrangement insured financial stability among the city's upper class, the broad base of free enterprise supported the emergence of a new economic elite which sought admission to Philadelphia's exclusive social institutions.<sup>14</sup>

The social club, on the one hand, insulated and solidified the upper class through its policies of exclusion, while on the other, it served as a screening mechanism for assimilating the most distinguished parvenu as well as those who have shown the most promise. The stature of social clubs for Philadelphia's upper class and elites is perhaps best illustrated through Digby Baltzell's three-tiered model of urban social clubs. Resting at the apex were the metropolitan men's social clubs, notably the Philadelphia Club in the Quaker City. The Union League and the University Club occupied the second level. Holding up the bottom were the athletic, racquet, and cricket clubs.<sup>15</sup> If Baltzell's classification is correct, the lower order clubs should be more accessible than those on the higher levels, and they might possibly serve as stepping stones to the more exclusive clubs at the top. Baltzell's model was tested with a group of 1,025 Philadelphians. All belonged to cricket clubs in 1860, 1870, or 1880, and some held memberships in the Union League and the Philadelphia Club. Table I depicts the relative exclusivity of Philadelphia's social clubs on the basis of the

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14. Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, pp. 135-36; Cleveland Amory, *Who Killed Society?* (Cardinal edition; New York: Pocket Books, 1962), pp. 190, 198.

15. Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, p. 339. The Rittenhouse Club, founded in 1874, was on the same level as the Philadelphia Club during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, though it was never equal in stature to the Philadelphia Club. Because the Rittenhouse Club was organized so close to the end of the period under investigation in this study, an analysis of its membership more appropriately appears in a subsequent study, J. Thomas Jable, "Philadelphia Cricket Comes of Age: The Movement for Consolidation and Centralization, 1874-1895" (unpublished manuscript). The literature on sporting clubs in nineteenth-century American cities has increased considerably during the past two decades. Though the clubs's primary aims were the promotion of a particular sport, healthful exercise, and recreation, they served their constituents and society in a variety of other ways. For insight and interpretations of the sporting clubs' multidimensional functions, see Benjamin G. Rader, "The Quest for Subcommunities and the Rise of American Sport," *American Quarterly* 29 (Fall 1977): 355-69; Stephen Hardy, *How Boston Played: Sport Recreation and Community, 1865-1915* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1982), pp. 127-46; Dale A. Somers, *The Rise of Sports in New Orleans, 1850-1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), pp. 237-73; and Sam Bass Warner, Jr. in *The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of Growth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), pp. 61-62. These works deal with responses to the stresses of urban living, reinforcement of class consciousness, and the desire for exclusivity. See Kirsch, *The Creation of American Team Sports*, pp. 143-78 and Francis G. Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh, Class and Culture in an Industrializing City, 1877-1919* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984) pp. 99-104 for the sociability function. Hardy covers well the issue of clubs contributing to the formation of "community." Somers links the clubs to the development of college athletics, and Melvin L. Adelman, *A Sporting Time, New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics, 1820-70* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), pp. 116-18, discusses New York cricket clubs as unifying agents within the financial and commercial community.

club affiliations of cricket club members. Twenty-eight percent (293) of the cricket club members belonged to the Union League and 18 percent (185) were members of the Philadelphia Club. This finding supports Baltzell's ranking of social clubs, for fewer members of cricket clubs gained access to the Philadelphia Club than to the Union League.<sup>16</sup>

Additional insight into the social club affiliations of Philadelphia cricketers was gained from an examination of the ages when members were admitted to the cricket and social clubs. Tables II and III present a comparison of ages at which cricket club members joined the Union League and the Philadelphia Club. The tabular data reveal two trends: (1) cricketers tended to join cricket clubs during their teens and twenties and social clubs during their twenties and thirties, and (2) individuals who entered cricket clubs in their thirties and forties

**TABLE I**  
**Cricket Club Members in 1860, 1870, and 1880**  
**Who were in the Union League and the Philadelphia Club**

	CRICKETERS UNION LEAGUE		PHILA CLUB		BOTH CLUBS	
	N*	N %	N %	N %	N**	%
1860	201	29 14.4	19 09.5	14 07.0		
1870	267	60 22.5	54 20.2	33 12.4		
1880	557	141 25.3	49 08.8	16 02.9		
Total	1025	230 22.4	122 11.9	63 06.1		

\*All cricketers were counted only once. If a name appeared in more than one census, it was counted only in the first census in which it appeared.

\* \*Cricketers with memberships in both the Philadelphia Club and the Union League were counted only in the "both clubs" column. The grand total of cricketers in each of the clubs was calculated by adding the number in the "both clubs" column to each club; thus, the Union League had a grand total of 293 cricketers and the Philadelphia Club had 185.

Sources: *Chronicle of the Union League 1862-1902* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1902), pp. 8-12; *The Philadelphia Club, 1834-1934* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1934); Cricketers were identified from the following sources: Minutes of Meetings of the Philadelphia Cricket Club, 1854-1882; Germantown Cricket Club, Roll of Members and Constitution; Young American Cricket Club, Charter and By-laws; Chronicle of Merion Cricket Club; Belmont Cricket Club, Roll of Members; *New York Clipper; American Cricketer*.

16. *Chronicles of the Union League of Philadelphia, 1862-1902* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1902), pp. 8-12; *The Philadelphia Club, 1834-1934* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1934), pp. 47-126; *Minutes of Meetings of the Philadelphia Cricket Club, 1854-1882*, MSS, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; *Germantown Cricket Club, Roll of Members and Constitution* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1867); *Young America Cricket Club of Germantown, Philadelphia, The Charter, By-Laws, and Standing Resolutions of the Young America Cricket Club* (Philadelphia: T. S. Dando, 1879).

**TABLE II**  
**Ages in Ten-Year Intervals of Cricket Club Members**  
**in 1860, 1870, and 1880 Who Joined the Union League**

AGE UPON ENTRY OF CRICKET CLUB	AGE UPON ENTRY OF THE UNION LEAGUE									
	YEARS	21-29		30-39		40-49		50+		
	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	
11-19	42	28	66.7	11	26.5	2	04.8	1	02.3	
20-29	61	39	63.9	13	21.3	7	11.4	2	03.3	
30-39	35	18	51.4	10	28.5	5	14.3	2	05.7	
40+	28	-	-	10	35.7	11	39.2	7	25.0	
Total	166	85	51.2	44	26.5	25	15.1	12	07.2	

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, *Census of Population, Philadelphia, 1860, 1870, 1880*.

tended to join the Philadelphia Club also in their thirties and forties. These data, of course, do not include all the cricketers who were members of the social clubs. They apply only to those cricketers whose ages could be obtained in the decennial census manuscripts (i.e., 166 of 293 in the Union League and 114 of 185 in the Philadelphia Club).

Although both trends indicate a likelihood of individuals joining cricket clubs prior to entering the social clubs, the evidence does not confirm unequivocally that admission to the social clubs was predicated on membership in the cricket club. Age was a limiting factor itself for entering the social clubs because the minimum ages for admission to the Union League and the Philadelphia Club were twenty-one and twenty-three, respectively. Nearly two-thirds of those who joined cricket clubs during their teens entered the Philadelphia Club in their twenties. Most, if not all, of them came in via ascription; that is automatic admission upon reaching the minimum age based on membership already held by their father or a relative. Admission by ascription, then, presupposes that the young cricketers were members of socially prominent families prior to entering the Philadelphia Club. It also challenges Baltzell's ranking of social clubs and deflates the notion of membership in a cricket club leading to admission in the more prestigious social clubs.

In spite of this practice of admission by ascription, Baltzell's ranking of social clubs has validity and is helpful for analyzing the relationships of social clubs to each other. Counterpoints can be made for the thirty-four individuals who joined cricket clubs in their teens and twenties and entered the Philadelphia Club after their thirtieth birthdays. It is conceivable that their later admission to the Philadelphia Club was due to the eminence they gained from successful

**TABLE III**  
**Ages in Ten-Year Intervals of Cricket Club Members**  
**in 1860, 1870, and 1880 Who Joined the Philadelphia Club**

AGE UPON ENTRY OF CRICKET CLUB	AGE UPON ENTRY OF PHILADELPHIA CLUB								
	YEARS	23-29		30-39		40-49		50+	
	N	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
11-19	34	22	64.7	7	20.6	-	-	5	14.7
20-29	43	16	37.2	13	30.2	5	11.6	9	20.9
30-39	17	4	23.5	10	58.8	-	-	3	17.6
40+	20	1	05.0	6	30.0	9	45.0	4	20.0
Total	114	43	37.8	36	31.5	14	12.2	21	18.4

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, *Census of Population, Philadelphia, 1860, 1870, 1880*.

careers. Similarly, arguments could be made for those who first held cricket club memberships in their thirties and forties and then gained entry into the Philadelphia Club in subsequent years. The Baltzell model is far from perfect and the data on Philadelphia cricketers, at best, form a rather loose fit. Nevertheless, they do reveal certain patterns which lead us closer to determining interrelationships of social clubs and the contribution the sport of cricket has made in this process.

The social club and age affiliation patterns of Philadelphia's cricket club members bear a slight resemblance to Melvin Adelman's findings of American Jockey Club members in New York City. While both groups began to affiliate with social clubs during their twenties, nearly 60 percent of the New York sportsmen joined social clubs during their thirties and forties in comparison with the bulk of the cricketers who by their fortieth birthday held memberships in the social clubs. Other socioeconomic measures revealed closer similarities between the two groups in that most of their members were native born and newly rich, worked in commercial or professional occupations, and lived in fashionable neighborhoods. Of the four social clubs the turfmen joined, the most meaningful affiliation was their membership in New York City's Union Club which was comparable to the Philadelphia Club in prestige and exclusivity. Since the American Jockey Club's inception in 1866, nearly 15 percent of its members held memberships in the Union Club in comparison with 18 percent of the cricket clubs' members who belonged to the Philadelphia Club. More than one in five jockey club members affiliated with two or more prestigious clubs, whereas slightly more than one in twenty Philadelphia cricketers held memberships in two social clubs. The disparity between jockey

club members and Philadelphia cricketers stems, in part, from the greater number of potential club affiliations available to the New Yorkers (four vs. two in Philadelphia). Not only did Philadelphians have fewer clubs from which to choose, but more importantly, their population was more homogeneous than New York City's which thereby created more individuals with similar credentials vying for a limited number of club openings. Homogeneity, thus, made access to social clubs more difficult for cricket club members. Paradoxically, though, there was a higher percentage of cricket club members in the Philadelphia Club than there were jockey club members in the Union Club. In admitting new members from a homogeneous society, the Philadelphia Club naturally had high percentages of individuals with similar backgrounds, such as cricket club participants, in the pool of applicants. As a result, there was a greater percentage of cricketers in the Philadelphia Club than there were Jockey Club members in New York City's Union Club.<sup>17</sup>

The inherent exclusivity of the Philadelphia Club contained a built-in filter for admitting the off-spring of its current members and for skimming off the cream from the class below who sprouted upward through the ranks of second and third level clubs.<sup>15</sup> This was not the only way, however, that the Philadelphia Club recruited members outside of Proper Philadelphia. When it was advantageous to do so, it admitted newcomers to its ranks who had not been members of lower order clubs. Possibly as many, if not more blossoming elites, were admitted in this manner than by rising through the ranks of lower order clubs. But those who rose through the club ranks generally started at the bottom in the clubs that were organized to play cricket.

#### *IV. The Changing Nature of Philadelphia Cricket*

Within a decade after English immigrants brought cricket to Philadelphia in the early 1830s, cricket clubs began to take shape. In keeping with the early practice of workmen and gentlemen playing together, several gentlemen-both native-born and English-organized the Union Cricket Club and "tried to make the game popular with all classes."<sup>19</sup> About the same time, two officers of that club, Robert Waller, an English importing merchant, and Dr. John K. Mitchell, professor at the University of Pennsylvania, inspired William Retch Wister to organize a student club at the university. Though there were no restrictions regarding ancestry or place of birth, Wister later wrote, "all the members were to the manor born." Shortly thereafter, John Wister, taking a cue from his older brother, formed a cricket club in Germantown among the boys at his school and the sons of English weavers who lived nearby.<sup>20</sup> In mid-Victorian Philadelphia, university players were largely middle and upper class, whereas in the neighborhoods, cricketers came from all classes and virtually all sectors of the

17. Melvin L. Adelman, "The Development of Modern Athletics: Sport in New York City, 1829-1870" (Ph.D. Diss. University of Illinois, 1980), pp. 221-34.

18. Simpson, "The Elite and Sport Club Membership," p. 415.

19. William Retch Wister, *Some Reminiscences of Cricket in Philadelphia Before 1861* (Philadelphia: Allen, Lane & Scott, 1904), p. 9.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

population including African Americans who organized no less than three cricket clubs in the mid-1860s. The sport, however, did not transcend racial barriers as there are no records of black cricketers playing for or against white clubs.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, cricket thrived in Philadelphia until Waller moved his importing business to New York during the late forties. At that point, interest in cricket declined, but English residents and former members of the university club kept the game afloat until Retch Wister rescued it in 1854 when he founded the Philadelphia Cricket Club.

The initial membership, consisting largely of former university club players, gave the Philadelphia Cricket Club (PCC) an aristocratic flavor, but even here, there was some mixture of classes. Socioeconomic data collected on fourteen of the club's twenty charter members reveals that ten were from the upper class, three from the middling ranks, and one from the lower class (See Table IV).

One half of the charter members listed in Table IV were attorneys with six of the seven identified as upper class. This determination was based not only upon occupation and residence but also upon family heritage. If a member came from a Proper Philadelphia family (bearing such renown surnames as Biddle, Cadwalader, Fisher, Harrison, Lewis, Morris, Norris, Pepper and Wharton) or

TABLE IV

**Social Class of Fourteen Charter Members of the Philadelphia Cricket Club on the Basis of Occupation, Residence, and Family History**

NAME	OCCUPATION	WARD/RESIDENCE	SOCIAL CLASS
Attwood, John H.	merchant	8	upper
Barlow, Henry M.	oil paintings	21	middle
Blight, Wm S.	secretary	7	middle
Bradshaw, Wm M.	wood turner	-	lower
Facon, Thomas M.	gentleman	24	upper
Harding, George	attorney	5	upper
Henry, Morton P.	attorney	8	upper
Kuhn, Hartman 3rd	gentleman	8	upper
McMurtrie, Rich C.	attorney	8	upper
Morris, George C.	attorney	8	upper
Samuel, John	attorney	7	middle
Sergeant, J. D.	attorney	7	upper
Wickersham, Cadw.	gentleman	7	upper
Wister, Wm. Retch	attorney	22	upper

Sources: *McElroy's Philadelphia City Directory*, 1860; U.S. Bureau of Census, *Census of Population, Philadelphia, 1860, 1870*; Minutes of Meetings of the Philadelphia Cricket Club, 1854-1882.

21. *Philadelphia Tribune*, 3 May 1913. "The issue of African American cricket is discussed more fully in J. Thomas Jable, "Sport in Philadelphia's African-American Community, 1865-1900" in *Black and Ethnic Involvement in North American Sport*, ed. D. Wiggins and G. Eisen, forthcoming.

married into one, he was designated as upper class. For instance, Retch Wister, an attorney, earned that distinction because his father married Sarah Fisher who came from the Proper Philadelphia Fisher clan. The question of family heritage was further circumscribed in the cases of John Samuel and J. D. Sergeant, two attorneys who lived in the seventh ward. Samuel was ranked as middle class because he did not have a Proper Philadelphia background. Facon and Wick-ersham were listed as attorneys in the city directory, but as “gentlemen” in the census manuscripts. William Bradshaw, the lone member of the working class in this group, was an English immigrant who taught the club members how to play the game.<sup>22</sup>

Even though PCC charter membership tilted toward the upper class, members from different social classes played cricket together in antebellum Philadelphia. Prior research has documented the participation of both blue collar and white collar workers. The latter, consisting largely of professionals and businessmen, tended to join the larger or major cricket clubs (thirty or more members), such as the PCC or the Germantown Cricket Club (GCC). In fact, 80 percent of the members in the major clubs held white collar positions. Blue collar workers gravitated toward the city’s thirty minor clubs, where they comprised 46 percent of the memberships. But here, too, white collar workers were strongly represented as they held 43 percent of the minor clubs’ memberships.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to composition and size of club memberships, the nature and level of competition distinguished major clubs from minor ones. Major cricket clubs generally played out-of-town teams from New York City, Newark, Trenton, and other cities, whereas the minor clubs, for the most part, limited their competition to teams within the city.

The distinction between the major and minor cricket clubs and their relationship to the various socioeconomic groups was perhaps best exemplified in the PCC’s attitude toward winning. Eager to improve upon the mediocre won-lost record it compiled since it had begun inter-club play in 1855, the PCC summoned at least five members from the recently revived Union Cricket Club,

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22. The social class determinations of the PCC charter members were based on each member’s occupation and residence gleaned from the Philadelphia city directories and other demographic information from the 1860 federal census manuscripts available on six of the charter members. The use of residence in conjunction with occupation was helpful for identifying members of the upper class because it linked merchants, professionals, and other high white collar workers to fashionable neighborhoods, such as Rittenhouse Square located in the seventh and eighth wards. Rittenhouse Square was the city’s most desired address from 1850 to 1880. Additional information for determining class came from the works of Digby Baltzell and Edward Pessen who identified wealthy individuals during the antebellum period. If a charter member could be linked to an “old wealth” family identified by Baltzell or Pessen, he was counted as upper class. Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, pp. 70-77, 175-79; Edward Pessen, *Riches, Class and Power Before the Civil War* (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1973), pp. 329-31. Blumin checked both original and proposed members of the PCC against the Philadelphia City Directory. For the 28 cricketers he identified, there were 7 attorneys, 2 physicians, one gentleman, 4 merchants, an auctioneer, an accountant, a brass molder, and a painter and glazer, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, p. 208.

23. See Jable, “Latter-Day Cultural Imperialists” for a more comprehensive analysis of white collar and blue collar cricketers in Philadelphia. In our collaborative work on Philadelphia cricketers, George Kirsch and I identified approximately thirty minor cricket clubs in antebellum Philadelphia. John A. Lester, *A Century of Philadelphia Cricket* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951) believed there were more than 100 clubs at that time.

composed mostly of British immigrants, to play in its matches beginning in 1858. These players were not listed on the PCC's official roster, nor did they become club members, but they played the game better than most PCC members. In fact, four of the five were bowlers, the dominant position in cricket, and so especially attracted the PCC. The PCC also plucked cricketers from two other minor clubs, the Delphian and Keystone, to bolster its forces against its local archrival, the Germantown Cricket Club (GCC), and against formidable intercity opponents.<sup>24</sup> In this manner, major clubs induced the best players on the minor clubs to join them for key contests. After the match, the borrowed players (called "revolvers" because they literally "revolved" or rotated from team to team) returned to their parent club unless they could hook on temporarily with another cricket club about to face a strong rival. The use of revolving players was a common practice inherited from the British, one that Americans hoped to abolish. But until that happened, the PCC and other cricket clubs, both major and minor, used revolvers to increase their chances of winning. Major clubs also had a second need for these surrogates. Because barely one in three of their own club members actually took part in the matches, they were sometimes caught shorthanded. Revolvers filled in adequately, enabling the clubs to place a full complement of players on the field.<sup>25</sup> Philadelphia's major cricket clubs not only brought in working class cricketers to play for their own teams, but they also played against clubs with large contingents of working class players.<sup>26</sup>

By the end of the Civil War, a combination of forces, however, made cricket more homogeneous and exclusive. The growing popularity of baseball siphoned off prospective cricketers from the working and middle classes, while

24. *Minutes of Meetings of the Philadelphia Cricket Club, 1854-1882*; W. R. Wister, *Reminiscences of Cricket*, pp. 79-80. In 1855 and 1856 PCC won two of eight matches and apparently fared no better in 1857 as Rotch Wister, chair of the Grounds Committee, constantly excoriated the club members for their lack of practice to which he attributed their dismal showing in the matches. In 1858 the PCC defeated the Germantown Cricket Club, but the latter charged PCC with "electing" three new members just prior to the match in order to win. PCC also played its professional, Englishman Tom Senior, in the match. Wister says the PCC "elected" the three members, but I could find no corroboration of that in the PCC minutes. The use of surrogate players was somewhat helpful, for the PCC improved its records in 1859 and 1860 to 3-6-1 and 3-3-2, respectively. Cricket clubs pursued bowlers because they could dominate the sport just as pitchers dominate baseball today. In their quest for victory, major cricket clubs sought the best bowlers regardless of their social status. This practice was quite common in England, too, where the "players" (i.e. professionals from the working class) were primarily bowlers who were associated with performing manual labor, such as learning a trade, in comparison with the "gentleman" batsman who consider batting a "graceful art form." Lincoln Allison has developed this theme in "Batsman and Bowler: The Key Relation of Victorian England," *Journal of Sport History* 7 (Summer 1980): 5-20. Bringing in outside "players" (athletes) was not peculiar to cricket. Later in the nineteenth century, the New York Athletic Club, in an effort to dominate track and field, offered prominent athletes "special memberships" (i.e. use of facilities, but no voting privilege) so they could compete for the club. About the same time, athletic clubs in Pittsburgh used financial inducements to attract the best football players. See J. Willis and R. Wettan, "Social Stratification in New York City Athletic Clubs, 1865-1915," *Journal of Sport History* 3 (Spring 1976): 45-63 and J. Thomas Jable, "The Birth of Professional Football: Pittsburgh Athletic Clubs Ring in Professionals in 1892," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 62 (April 1979): 131-47.

25. W. R. Wister, *Reminiscences of Cricket*, p. 80. Certain cricket clubs, such as the Young America, which did not use revolvers, clamored for the abolition of the practice. In the late seventies, the issue was taken up by the Cricket Association of the United States and aired in its newsletter. See *The American Cricketer* 1 (2, 9, 16 May 1878): 103-04, 107, 111.

26. Clubs from Newark and Trenton were composed of blue collar workers. See Kirsch, *Creation of American Team Sports*, pp. 154-55 and Benning, "Emigrant Staffordshire Potters," pp. 8-12.

the call of battle drew young men away from the cricket clubs, forcing them to suspend operations or fold.<sup>27</sup> Then, too, Proper Philadelphians, caught up in Anglophilia, moved cricket closer to their British traditions with stately club-houses, proper attire and deportment, and strict adherence to British rules.<sup>28</sup> These trends made it difficult for those without sufficient wealth or leisure to play the game.

Previous socioeconomic analyses of Philadelphia cricketers for the decennial years of 1860, 1870, and 1880 have substantiated the transformation of cricket into a white collar sport. Barely one percent (3 of 279) of the cricketers in the 1870 sample and less than 3 percent (17 of 587) in 1880 held blue collar positions. There was also a shift within the white collar bracket itself from a game dominated by professionals (lawyers and physicians) in 1860 to one dominated by businessmen in 1870.<sup>29</sup> This change was a sign that men of new wealth from the business sector had begun to climb Philadelphia's social ladder, beginning usually on the first rung at the cricket club.

Accompanying cricket's transition to white-collar domination was a move by the larger or major clubs to meet the social and recreational needs of the entire family. They broadened their scope of activities to include picnics, dances, banquets, and other social gatherings in order to accommodate women and children as well as the male members of the household.<sup>30</sup> In moving from a singular to a multidimensional focus, the clubs began to attract a clientele whose interests lay beyond the game of cricket itself. The net result was an increased membership in which inactive cricketers outnumbered the active players by as much as ten to one at some clubs.

Four major cricket clubs surfaced in Philadelphia after Appomattox. The PCC, GCC, and the Young America Cricket Club survived the war, but limited resources and diminished playing space forced the consolidation of the PCC with the Chestnut Hill Cricket Club in 1882 and the GCC with the Young America seven years later. Both clubs were located on the Germantown and Chestnut Hill Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad which traversed the city in a northwesterly direction. The PCC's move to Chestnut Hill added lustre to the community and coincided perfectly with railroad executive and real estate tycoon Henry Howard Houston's grand design to develop the area. The GCC remained in the older, well-established community of Germantown where its stature continued to contribute to community pride. Joining the PCC and GCC were two new cricket clubs, the Merion and Belmont, located on rail lines west and southwest, respectively, of the city's business district. This movement of cricket clubs to the suburbs reflects the increasing premium placed on urban

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27. The triumph of baseball over cricket is beyond the scope of this essay. Among the works that treat this issue, two of the best are Kirsch, *Creation of American Team Sports*, pp. 91-108 and Adelman, *Sporting Time*, 97-119.

28. Anglophilia was also apparent through Philadelphians' proclivity for English art, literature, and educational practices. Baltzell, *Philadelphia Gentlemen*, p. 181; Rowland T. Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America (1790-1950)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 131.

29. Jable, "Latter-Day Cultural Imperialists," p. 185; Jable, "Cricket Comes of Age," p. 7.

30. By the 1880s, the major cricket clubs in Philadelphia adopted tennis as the primary recreational activity for the entire family. This trend is covered in Jable, "Cricket Comes of Age."

space and fits the second stage of urban expansion, recently enunciated by Steven Riess, in which the industrial radial city (1870-1960) developed along rail lines emanating from the city's core. Figure 1 shows the location of Philadelphia's four major cricket clubs.<sup>31</sup>

Suburban cricket clubs with their stately clubhouses also served another purpose. They enabled Proper Philadelphians to satisfy in part their yearning to imitate the country lifestyles of the British gentry. Also, those of new wealth had similar aspirations, and their newly-found wealth brought (or bought) them admission to the cricket clubs. This was especially apparent in the growing

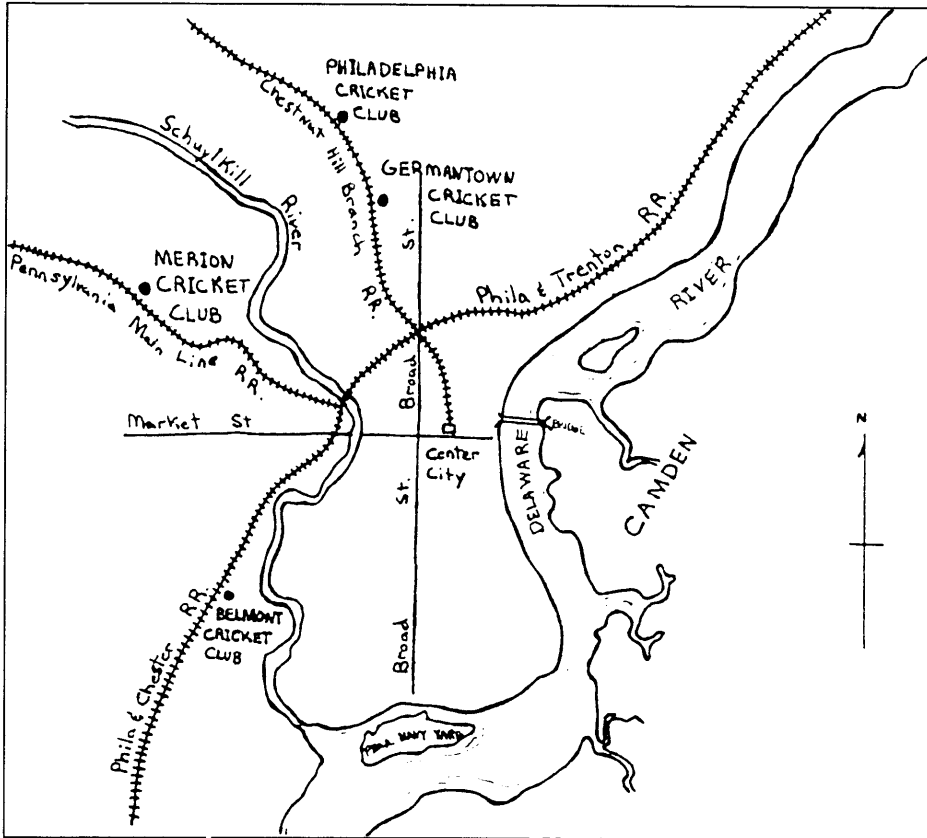


Figure 1  
Map of Philadelphia Rail Lines  
With Location of Cricket Clubs

31. The first and third stages of Riess's model of urban expansion are the walking city (1820-70) and the suburbanized metropolis (1945-80), respectively. This conception is developed fully in Steven A. Riess, *City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1989). The development of Philadelphia's suburbs along the rail lines is treated comprehensively in Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias, The Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), pp. 134-54. See also Couvares, *Remaking of Pittsburgh*, pp. 96-119, for the development of suburban Pittsburgh and the formation of athletic and other clubs there.

middle-class suburb of West Philadelphia where a large number joined the newly-organized Belmont Cricket Club. Of the 148 club members whose occupations were identified, more than one-third (51) held low white collar and petty proprietor positions in 1880, an indicator that the Belmont Club was accessible to the city's middle class.<sup>32</sup> The cricket club, however, was more than just a status symbol or a badge of class standing for mid-Victorian Philadelphians. It was an effective modality for germinating desirable social and moral values in youth.

#### V. Values Nurtured Through Cricket

The cricket club provided the structure and cricket the form for the propagation and cultivation of values. The former, patriarchal in nature with a well-established behavioral code, provided an ideal setting for the game which taught order, obedience, and integrity. In learning the rules of cricket, youths learned the rules of society. They learned discipline and respect for authority. They also learned cooperation, self-control, sacrifice, and propriety, and as a result, they were well-prepared to take their places as contributing citizens to society. In fact, the newly-formed Cricket Association of the United States, founded and based in Philadelphia, reflected this ideology in its motto which read: "No selfish, conceited, lazy, or irritable man can be a first-class cricketer."<sup>33</sup> Jones Wister, a member of the city's first cricket family, nearly stretched that ideology beyond its limit when he wrote "the strength of a nation lies in the correct training of the young" and cricket prepares youth "mentally, physically and morally for whatever battles life may have in store for them."<sup>34</sup>

Jones's older brother, Rotch, took a more prudent and conventional approach in articulating the virtues of cricket. To him, the sport offered young workers opportunities for fresh air, exercise, and a reprieve from the office. Reflecting on the early days of the PCC, the elder Wister wrote, "our primary purpose was exercise and enjoyment in the open air, and we got both." He once described book publisher J. Warner Johnson's motives for taking up cricket as "exercise and recreation from his business."<sup>35</sup>

While Philadelphia's youth may have played cricket chiefly for recreational purposes, two of the game's early proponents, John Mitchell and Robert Waller, also saw it as a means of instilling the virtues of obedience and discipline in the young men. They hired William M. Bradshaw, an English immigrant, to instruct the young lads in the rudiments of the the game. Rotch Wister remembered Bradshaw as a stern disciplinarian who "insisted on the proprieties of the game, including obedience to the Captain and submission to the decisions of the

32. *Gopsill's Philadelphia City Directory*, 1880; U.S. Bureau of Census, *Census of Population, Philadelphia*, 1880. Nearly as many club members (48) worked in high white collar positions and 42 were listed as gentlemen. Nevertheless, the more than one-third of the members in low white collar occupations is testament to the Belmont Cricket Club's relatively open admissions policy. Furthermore, eight of the club's members were listed as skilled artisans. For a comprehensive analysis of the development of West Philadelphia and its attraction to the middle class, see Roger Miller and Joseph Siry, "The Emerging Suburb: West Philadelphia, 1850-1880," *Pennsylvania History* 47 (1980): 99-145.

33. John A. Lester, *Century of Philadelphia Cricket*, pp. 136-38; *The American Cricketer* 5 (1882): 128.

34. Jones Wister, *A "Bawl" for American Cricket* (Philadelphia: n.p., 1893), p. 5.

35. W. R. Wister, *Reminiscences of Cricket*, pp. 19, 143.

Umpire.” These qualities, “so necessary to the good order of the game,” Wister fondly recalled in his later years, filtered down to succeeding generations of cricketers and preserved “the good order that has uniformly prevailed in our Philadelphia matches” throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup>

Along with order and discipline, Mitchell and Waller also viewed cricket as an instrument for implanting other Christian values so necessary for moral development. Mitchell, while studying at Oxford, developed an interest in cricket. He was impressed with English educators who had begun to use athletics, cricket among them, to mold adolescents into Christian gentlemen. In addition to discipline and obedience, athletics taught young men to be courageous, confident, and cooperative. This alliance of athletics and Christianity produced a movement known as muscular Christianity which swept the English boarding schools and universities during the Victorian era. The movement’s arrival in America was confirmed during the early 1860s in one eulogy to the young nation’s best home-grown cricketer of the antebellum period, Philadelphia’s Walter S. Newhall. While on leave from the Army of the Potomac, Captain Newhall drowned tragically when his horse reared and fell on him as he attempted to cross the swollen Rappahannock on his trek homeward. Mourners canonized their young hero with this epitaph: “The crowning grace of his perfect manhood was his Christian purity.”<sup>37</sup>

In conjunction with the development of moral and ethical values, muscular Christianity prepared youth for vocational success through the lessons of sport at the cricket pitch. The sport reinforced the principles of industriousness, dedication, and competitiveness, so instrumental for success in the business and professional world. In recognizing the value of cricket, Proper Philadelphians and functional elites subscribed to Jones Wister’s dictum that “the morals of youth as well as success in after life, depend upon the good health engendered by competitive pastimes.”<sup>38</sup>

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36. *Ibid.*, p. 13. The conception of order and obedience is a recurring theme in nineteenth-century literature on cricket. It was perhaps captured best by Henry Chadwick in *Beadle’s Dime Book of Cricket; A Desirable Cricketer’s Companion* (New York: Beadle and Company, 1860), p. 7.

37. *Walter S. Newhall—A Memoir* (Philadelphia: Published for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission, 1864), p. 22. The primary carrier of muscular Christianity to America was Thomas Hughes’s *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, which crossed the Atlantic in 1859. In his book, Hughes idealized the role of athletics in the molding of Christian gentlemen. For more information on this movement, refer to William E. Winn, “Tom Brown’s Schooldays and the Development of ‘Muscular Christianity,’” *Church History* 21 (1960): 64-71; Guy M. Lewis, “The Muscular Christianity Movement,” *Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation* 27 (May 1966): 27-28. The conception of manliness molded through cricket in mid-Victorian America is discussed briefly in Robert M. Lewis, “Cricket and the Beginning of Organized Baseball in New York City,” *International Journal of Sport History* 4 (December 1987): 319-20. Adelman argues that cricketers used the manhood theme as a building block of “character value” to justify playing the game. See his *Sporting Time*, pp. 105-07.

38. J. Wister, *A “Bawl” for American Cricket*, p. 5. Daniel T. Rodgers, in a stimulating essay on the socialization of middle-class youth for adulthood, mentioned sport and athletics as one ingredient of the cooperative ventures of the Progressive era that helped bring about this transformation. Actually, cricket with its code of ethics and stern discipline was just as effective a socializing agent much earlier during the time where Rodgers says the schools, through disciplinary measures, instilled middle-class work habits in youth. See his “Socializing Middle-Class Children: Institutions, Fables and Work Values in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Journal of Social History* 13 (Spring 1980): 354-67. Peter Stearns has also examined the value of athletics as an effective socializing agent for adult life and work. He concluded that athletic prowess was good preparation for the “stressful work” and “demands of rational thought” that young men would face as adults. See his *Be A Man! Males in Modern Society* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), p. 202.

## VI. *The Significance of Cricket in Mid-Victorian Philadelphia*

A progenitor of vocational, social, and moral values in youth, cricket served certain upper and middle class Philadelphians well during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>39</sup> In inculcating and reinforcing the kind of values the middle and upper classes wanted to see in their children, it socialized the younger generation for an adult world that honored achievement in commerce and the professions.

The role of cricket, however, must not be overstated in this process of value development, for it was but one venue Proper Philadelphians had at their disposal. They also relied on traditional institutions, namely religion and education, to mold behavior, and they established new ones, which took the form of social and business clubs, to instill values. Leaving no stone unturned, they modified such existing institutions as sport-in this case, cricket-to mold youth into well-mannered and productive adults.

In socializing youth for adult roles, cricket contributed to class stability and, to a lesser degree, class formation in Philadelphia during the mid-Victorian era. It indoctrinated upper class youth in a code of behavior and standards of propriety that strengthened the bond among Proper Philadelphians. In rewarding achievement and success, it reinforced the doctrine of work. Emphasizing the work ethic not only helped the sons of the aristocracy, but it also benefitted the sons of self-made men who sought admission to the upper class. Over time, a few would be admitted, chiefly on the basis of their reputations built upon successful careers.

Cricket also functioned as a class mediator in that Philadelphia's middle and upper classes participated together, especially in the years before the Civil War. This finding is by no means a new revelation, for sport historians have long suspected as much, yet it documents unequivocally the participation of both social classes together in cricket.

Although members of both social classes played cricket together, there is little evidence that these interclass functions extended beyond the cricket grounds. Philadelphia's aristocracy, through exclusionary tactics common among aristocrats, kept class boundaries intact. This group of families was interconnected through well-designed marriages. As we have already seen, it controlled its own destiny by deciding to whom it would open its ranks, and it perpetuated itself as members of its families groomed their offspring to take their places in the city's upper stratum. But the aristocracy also realized that it had to bring in "new blood" and "new leadership" in order to strengthen its position and insure its survival. To accomplish this, it had to admit outsiders, and it did, but those selected were few in number. They were individuals from families with distinguished records of occupational success established over

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39. Peter Stearns argues convincingly that middle-class values emanated from the middle class and "came to influence the total society most completely," including the upper class which has "often manipulated them, but in many cases has not initiated them." See his "Middle Class: Toward a Precise Definition," pp. 393-95. John S. Gilkenson, Jr. discusses how the middle class promulgated values through voluntary organizations in *Middle-Class Providence, 1820-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

one or more generations. It is quite possible that some of those outsiders first caught the attention of Proper Philadelphians through acquaintances at the cricket club.

The intermingling of Proper Philadelphians and functional elites at the cricket club had another benefit for the self-made men. In this social climate, elites enlarged their circle of friends and made new contacts which brought them fresh opportunities to expand their businesses or law or medical practices. Socializing and doing business with Proper Philadelphians did not mean automatic acceptance into their ranks, for assimilation was an arduous process that just a few distinguished, or fortunate, functional elites could attain. Nevertheless, this association with aristocrats in the informal setting of the cricket club enhanced their chances for assimilation.

If cricket did not give self-made men and others of the middling ranks direct access to upper class status, it did provide them with a instrument for sowing and germinating the seeds of morality and industry in their young. By implanting this ideology and value structure in their youth, newly rich and middle-class parents helped the younger generation make the difficult transition to adulthood. By the same token, the upper class used cricket to inculcate the protocol of gentlemanly behavior in its youth. Cricket, therefore, was more than an athletic endeavor or recreational pursuit in mid-Victorian Philadelphia. It was a means of preparing youth to assume important and proper roles as adults.