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Association Football

A study in figurational sociology

Graham Curry and Eric Dunning

Association Football

This book presents a synthesis of the work on early football undertaken by the authors over the past two decades. It explores aspects of a figurational approach to sociology to examine the early development of football rules in the middle part of the nineteenth century. The book tests Eric Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis' to contest what has become known as the revisionist view of football's development, which stresses an influential sub-culture outside the public schools. Status rivalry restates the primacy of these latter institutions in the growth of football, without which the sport's story would remain skewed and unbalanced for future generations.

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From Graham. For Judy, Dad and Mum.
From Eric. For Norbert and all other figurational sociologists.

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Introduction

In *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, which was published in 1979, Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard open their introduction by suggesting that the subject of their book is 'the development of Rugby football' (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 1; 2005: 1). The present study is, to an extent, intended as a supplement to that text, and can, accordingly, be described as a study of the development of Association Football – or 'soccer', to refer to it by its popular name. We shall explain the meaning and history of that term later. It is enough, for present purposes, to say that the current text is based largely on Graham Curry's PhD thesis, which was supervised by Eric Dunning and successfully submitted to the University of Leicester in 2001 (Curry, 2001). The central aim of that thesis and, accordingly, of the present book, was, and remains, to trace the history and development of the Association form of football in the Middle Ages and early modern periods but, above all, in mid-Victorian Britain. More particularly, it is a study of the game between 1823 – the year of the 'Webb Ellis myth' in which a Rugby School pupil of that name is said to have picked up the ball against the then-existing rules of the game and run with it, thus supposedly 'inventing' the distinctive Rugby game – and 1885, the year in which professionalism was legalised in English football. We shall use Norbert Elias's 'figurational approach' to sociology in this connection on account of its equally theoretical and empirical character which facilitates access to all aspects of the game. Additionally, this approach enables us to treat the subject as a long-term social process which illustrates that the modern form of football can be traced directly to the 'folk' or 'mob' forms of medieval England, through the public schools and universities and ultimately into the wider society.

Within that context, we aim to test Eric Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis', first put forward in his 1961 MA thesis and which revolves around the timing of the issue of written football rules for the first time at the public schools of Rugby and Eton. We realise, of course, that this runs counter to the recent work of John Goulstone (2001) and Adrian Harvey (2005) and their supporters, who have sought to stress the influence of participants in a public house-related form of the game based around gambling, whilst at the same

time minimising that of the boys in the major public schools on the game's early development. They are certainly right to have placed a limited amount of stress on the influence of the former in this connection. However, we dispute the degree to which the people involved seriously influenced the early development of football. Our contention is that a considerably greater influence was exerted on football's early development by Etonians, undergraduates at Trinity College, Cambridge – many of whom were Old Etonians – together with the sporting journalist John Dyer Cartwright, the Old Harrovian Charles W. Alcock, and important individuals such as Nathaniel Creswick, one of the founders of the Sheffield Football Club. As Norbert Elias would have put it, counter to the Webb Ellis myth – for that is what it was, a myth – the game was 'men-made' rather than 'man-made' and, whilst, as Goulstone and Harvey have rightly stressed, football based around public houses played a part of some importance in the early development of the game, the pupils and undergraduates at the leading public schools and universities were arguably of considerably greater significance in this respect.

We have attempted to remain positive in our rebuttals of the revisionists and have tried to offer a new hypothesis to the debate. Our championing of sporting elites in various places in England is, we think, original, and may help future researchers in their understanding of why football began in certain social locations rather than others. However, we also unashamedly present what we believe to be a robust critique of the revisionist case and leave the reader in no doubt that pupils from the major public schools remain central to football's development. The key sociological concept of power – exhibited in this case by a mid-Victorian, English upper middle class – is surely fundamental in this context. We hope that our apparent negativity towards the theories of the likes of Goulstone and Harvey has not inhibited our detachment. However, we feel strongly that such arguments are presented to the 'football history community' and others in the wider society, so that the balance of the 'origins debate' is redressed and the primacy of the public schools is reaffirmed. This reaffirmation was not Graham Curry's motivation when he began his research in the early 1990s, though the basic structure and aims of the first six chapters in this book have, remarkably, remained relatively constant. As a result of the publication of revisionist football texts, and strong – though we believe misguided – support for their cause, we have felt the increasing need to reply to the views they have expressed. We have done so largely in Chapter 7. After all, if we are right, had their opinions not been challenged, future academics would have been presented with a distorted picture of the game's early years.

We do feel, however, that it is important for the reader at least to be somewhat acquainted with a modicum of sociological theory, and, more particularly, a very basic working knowledge of figurational sociology and of Norbert Elias. Certainly, especially without the latter, it may prove difficult to grasp some of our hypotheses or arguments and our reasons for presenting them. Let us begin with an insight into the life of Norbert Elias and the key

features of the figurational approach to sociology. We will then explain the organisation of the text and end this introduction by registering our aims, objectives and lines of inquiry.

Norbert Elias and figurational sociology

The following aspects of Elias's life help to explain some of the most characteristic features of his approach to sociology:

(1) His experience of the First World War sensitised Elias to the part played by violence and war in human life. He served in the German Kaiser's army on both the Eastern and Western fronts, and, during the 1920s and 1930s, directly witnessed the rise of the Nazis and their street battles with the Communists. Such experiences also intensified his awareness and understanding of 'decivilising' as well as 'civilising' processes. He described the rise of the Nazis, for example, as a 'breakdown of civilisation' – which reinforced his view that 'civilising controls' rarely, if ever, amount to more than a relatively thin veneer or shell. His work was in no way moralistic, but hard-headed, realistic and scientific in the strictest sense of that term. We have attempted to follow in Elias's footsteps in this book.
(2) The repeated interruption of his career by wider events – the First World War, the German hyperinflation of 1923, the Nazi takeover ten years later, exile to France and then to Britain, internment in Britain as an 'enemy alien' at the start of the Second World War in camps at Huyton, Lancashire, and on the Isle of Man – all helped to sensitise Elias to the interplay of 'the individual' and 'the social', 'the private' and 'the public', 'the micro' and 'the macro', all of which he understood as continual and only rarely as simple dichotomies *à la* Talcott Parsons.
(3) Elias's study of medicine as well as philosophy up to the doctoral level helped to problematise for him key aspects of Western philosophy, contributing to his switching to sociology and making original contributions to what have come to be known as 'the sociology of the body' and 'the sociology of emotions'. That Elias was a pioneer of 'the sociology of sport' is perhaps best understood in that context, too, but also relevant is the fact that he had been a keen amateur boxer in his youth. It was in a boxing match that he lost an eye, for example. Above all he was opposed to the idea of a 'mind–body' dichotomy, holding that our 'minds' are material, bodily functions of our complex brains. Nor did he share the common prejudice, perhaps particularly pronounced in 'intellectual' circles, that sport is a 'physical' phenomenon of lower value than phenomena connected with the realm of the 'mind'. The theory and empirical demonstration of 'civilising processes' are generally regarded as Elias's major contributions to sociology; but he made other contributions, too, perhaps particularly the theory and demonstration of 'established–outsider' group relations (Elias and Scotson, 1965; 1994).

The key features of the 'figurational' approach to sociology pioneered by Elias, together with their application to our text, can be summarised as follows. They are:

(1) There is the shared conviction that, like the universe at large, human individuals and the societies they form are processes. To understand football's complex history, its story should be treated as a long-term process, over several generations, beginning with a study of its 'mob' or 'folk' form, pausing briefly to examine types existing outside the public school setting, noting its journey through the public schools and universities and, eventually, into the wider society.
(2) That the processes undergone by societies have tended up to now, especially in the longer term, to be mainly 'blind' in the sense of being the largely unintended consequences of aggregates of individual acts. Elias sometimes used the metaphor of history as a runaway express train in order to illustrate this point. It was his hope that sociological knowledge would help us to bring the 'train' of history under greater conscious control. He was fully aware, of course, that his stress on reliable control runs counter to the self-belief of people who like to believe that they are always in control. No one could have imagined, in the middle years of the nineteenth century, that the game of football in all its subsequent forms would have been the subject of such global acclaim. The developments in the game, of which the early footballers were merely a part, were being conducted as 'blind' processes with unintended outcomes rather than purposeful acts with fixed aims and objectives.
(3) Human societies consist of individuals who are radically interdependent with others. That is, we are born as a result of our interdependent parents into a structured collectivity or social world – a world of interdependencies or figurations – which we ourselves played no part in forming prior to our birth and which occupies a particular historical-geographical position in time and space. Tensions between aristocratic and bourgeois/middle class sections of English society appear to have become more intense in the nineteenth century as England became a more stable nation state and pacification increased. These middle class groups exhibited a strong desire to establish themselves at least alongside the aristocrats and, consequently, these groups maintain an almost constant pressure from below – a pressure which often compels the upper stratum to modify its behaviour (Elias, 2000: 421–35). It is possible, therefore, to postulate that in nineteenth century England there existed what one might term a 'football figuration' – an increasingly vibrant subculture in which various groups of participants were locked in a struggle to become the most influential faction in that conflict. The pupils of Rugby School represented the bourgeois/middle class, whilst those at Eton symbolised the aristocracy. We have referred to this struggle as 'status rivalry'.

(4) That power is a universal property of human relations at all levels of social integration, ranging from two-person baby groups to humanity as an aging and ultimately dying whole. Power, according to Elias, is: (a) a function of interdependency ties. Your power over me is fundamentally a consequence of my depending on you; (b) a question of labile, shifting balances or ratios, and; (c) not explainable solely by reference to single factors such as Karl Marx's ideas of the ownership of production or Max Weber's ideas of the control of the means of violence. Elias also took account of such bodily power resources of individuals as physical and intellectual strength, and such structural power resources of collectivities, as degrees of group unity and cohesion. Therefore, we strongly believe that in mid-nineteenth century England, a struggle was taking place between elements of the established social order, the aristocracy and upper classes, and the bourgeoisie. This struggle, we contend, manifested itself in the various sections of society – most notably, for our purposes, in the creation of football rules and the administration of the newly created administrative bodies which were formed to organise the game. The 'battle' was ultimately won by high status Old Etonians and was one reason why Association and not Rugby became the dominant football form. Furthermore, as we hope to show, the intellectual power of men such as C. W. Alcock at the Football Association (FA), and Nathaniel Creswick in Sheffield, ensured that their preferred forms of the game were adopted by their sporting sub-groups. Subsequently, in Alcock's case, his power and that of his companions in London football proved too strong even for relatively important provincial elites such as that of Sheffield.

(5) That there is a need in sociology to undertake a constant two-way traffic between theory and research. Theory without research, Elias used to argue, is liable to be abstract and meaningless; research without theory to be arid and descriptive. In this book we would like to believe that we have followed Eliasian ideas in this respect and produced a synthesis of diligent primary research together with theoretical rigour which has generated a text of the highest academic standard. To establish and maintain this two-way traffic we have entered wholeheartedly into debate with revisionists who have challenged the accepted view of football's story.

(6) That sociologists should see as their primary concern the building up of, and adding to, bodies of reliable knowledge. Elias himself was firmly against the intrusion of political, religious and other ideologies into sociological research, and suggested that, in a piece of research into football hooliganism, for example – we chose that example because we have both spent a long time researching it empirically and theoretically – we should aim, first of all by means of what Elias called 'a detour *via* detachment', to build up as 'reality-congruent' a picture of what football hooliganism actually involves and of how and why it is socially, psychologically and historically generated. Then, through a process of what Elias called 'secondary involvement', we should use our more reality-congruent knowledge

to devise more realistic and effective policies for dealing with the problem than were previously applied. We believe the history of football's revisionists have largely failed to take a 'detour' and have subsequently found it difficult to demonstrate detachment when seeking to unravel the game's past. This may seem somewhat arrogant on our part, but we feel it necessary to make this point in order to explain why the revisionists have, for instance, consistently misrepresented the amount and significance of data available to support their case.

(7) That Elias's theory of 'civilising processes' constitutes what he called a 'central theory', i.e. a theory through which a variety of apparently diverse and separate social and psychological phenomena can be meaningfully studied. Let us briefly provide a flavour of what the theory of 'civilising processes' more elaborately and factually entails.

Contrary to a fairly widespread misconception, Elias did not use the concept or theory of 'civilising processes' in a moral or evaluative way. In order to signal this he usually enclosed the word 'civilisation' – and its derivatives, such as 'civilised' and civilising' – in inverted commas. 'Civilising process' was, for him, a technical term. He did not intend to suggest by it that people who can be shown to stand at a more advanced level in a 'civilising process' than some others – for example ourselves relative to the people of feudal Britain or eighteenth century Canada or America – are in any meaningful sense 'better than' or 'morally superior' to those medieval and early modern people. That, of course, is almost invariably how the people who call themselves 'civilised' view themselves. But how, Elias used to ask, can people congratulate themselves when they are the chance beneficiaries of a blind or unintended process to the cause of which they have usually not personally contributed to any great or significant extent? To say this, of course, is not to deny – as tends to be the case with social processes more generally – that there are victims as well as beneficiaries of 'civilising processes'. For example, the abolition of the death penalty in Britain in the 1950s for all crimes except treason is generally regarded as having been a 'civilising' development – but hangmen/executioners were deprived of their jobs, and the families and friends of murder victims were deprived of what many people in that situation feel is the only appropriate way of dealing with their understandable feelings of anger and desire for revenge.

As we suggested earlier, the theory of 'civilising processes' is in equal measure theoretical and empirical. Empirically, it is based on a substantial body of evidence, principally on the changing manners of the secular upper classes – the knights, kings, queens, court aristocrats, politicians and business leaders (but not, for the most part, the higher clergy) – between the Middle Ages and modern times up to the Second World War. Since that period, especially since the 1960s, Elias notes that 'decivilising processes' have begun to take place. Elias identified a long-term, 'blind', unplanned social process which involved five main interrelated strands, namely:

(1) a refinement of social standards
(2) an increase in social pressure to exercise stricter control over feelings, behaviour and bodily functions
(3) a shift in the balance to self-constraint over external constraint
(4) an increase at the levels of personality and *habitus* in the importance of conscience as a regulator of behaviour
(5) and finally, an increase over violence and aggression within societies. As societies became more internally pacified, so the personality and *habitus* structures of the majority of their peoples became more peaceful. This was reflected, among other ways, in what began around the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to be called their 'sports'. The evidence suggests that this particular development in terminology began to take place in England. In football terms we can see evidence of a 'civilising spurt', an advance in people's 'threshold of repugnance' – that is an increasing unwillingness to engage in and/or witness violent acts. This process manifested itself most clearly in the regular issuing of codes of rules or laws designed not only to facilitate play between groups preferring their own particular code, but also to reduce the chance of injury.

Summing up, and at the risk of oversimplification, one could express Elias's theory to be basically a consequence of five interdependent part-processes. These were and are:

(1) state-formation
(2) pacification under state control
(3) lengthening of interdependency chains
(4) growing equality of power-chances between social classes, genders and age groups
(5) increasing wealth.

Elias showed how, in the course of a civilising process, overtly violent conflicts tend to be transformed into relatively peaceful struggles for status, wealth and power in which, in the most frequent course of events and for the majority of people, destructive urges come to be kept for the most part beneath the threshold of consciousness and not translated into overt action. Status struggles of this kind appear to have played an important part in the divergent development of the Association and Rugby forms of football (Dunning and Sheard, 1979; 2005). Let us now begin by examining our overall text and its organisation.

The organisation of the text

Chapter 1 The folk antecedents of modern football

The opening chapter involves an examination of several of the 'folk' and 'mob' games played in pre-industrial Britain, noting prohibitions and the structural

properties of various similar folk games such as Cornish 'hurling', 'bottle-kicking', 'knappan' and 'camp-ball'. There is also a detailed discussion of the cultural marginalisation of folk football, more particularly the extent to which such a process actually took place. Finally, we briefly consider the influence of the Florentine game of *calcio* on the development of modern football.

Chapter 2 Public school status rivalry and the early development of football: the cases of Eton and Rugby

This chapter sets out the crux of the book and involves a detailed examination of Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis', looking at the juxtaposed rules of Rugby School football and the Eton Field Game. The initial codification of the Rugby and Eton football games took place within two years of one another, with the Eton written rules for their Field Game being seen as a direct response to Rugby's legislative action. We attempt to show that this was the first part of a competitive struggle to become the model-making centre for the game on a national level.

In this chapter, there is a lengthy discussion of the elements of public school life in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the importance of sport generally being illustrated; together with an extensive section on the early development of the game in the major public schools. Finally, the sporting origin myth of Webb Ellis's supposed act of 'picking up the ball and running with it' in 1823, thus 'inventing' the game of Rugby, receives what we hope is its final rebuttal.

Chapter 3 The universities and codification

As former public schoolboys progressed to university, they took with them their preferred leisure activities: one of which was football. Their greatest difficulty in terms of football was that each group of pupils from the various schools brought with them their own unique football rules. This meant that they had to gather together and develop compromise rules in order to play the game on a regular basis. The ensuing debates are excellent examples of a continuance of Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis'. The 1863 Cambridge football rules were, as we show, influential in the early meetings of the FA.

Chapter 4 The Sheffield footballing sub-culture and other early clubs

To a large extent, the first organised footballing sub-culture in England – which began in Sheffield in the late 1850s – appeared to develop independently of public school influence. A detailed study of their early rules and the various individuals who framed them enables us to analyse how these sets of laws were agreed upon and whether the influence of Sheffield footballers has been underestimated or even overstated. Sheffield's relationship with

the FA is important in this regard and accorded thorough consideration. Other early clubs, as we shall show, developed in the London area and in Nottingham.

Chapter 5 The emergence of the Football Association

In this chapter, the split between those favouring a kicking and dribbling form of the game (Association) and those who championed a handling and carrying style (Rugby) is investigated. By examining the first laws, but, more particularly in a sociological sense, the people responsible for their framing, we can evaluate the backgrounds of the early members of the FA and postulate why they became the most powerful group in the mid-to-late Victorian football community.

Chapter 6 The advent of professionalism

This chapter deals with the appearance of the first professional footballing subculture in East Lancashire, and in doing so also relates the growing sporting links between that region and Scotland. It also goes on to note the reaction to this phenomenon both by locals and the wider community – especially the southern amateur players and administrators – as well as noting some issues, myths and controversies involved in the early contacts between northern and southern football clubs.

Chapter 7 The origins of football debate

This chapter takes the form of a critique by ourselves of Goulstone and Harvey's evidence. Their data seek to lessen the influence of the public schools on the early development of football. However, it is not simply a negative critique; it offers a new hypothesis in terms of why football was initially popular in certain geographical areas. This part of our book robustly restates the case for the public schools and contends that Goulstone and Harvey's hypothesis has been overstated and had little influence in the more influential strata of the football world. The chapter also examines further revisionist offerings.

Aims, objectives and lines of inquiry

We have already stated that, as time progressed, our objectives began to differ slightly from our original ones in that we felt obliged to offer a counter critique of revisionist claims. However, the vast bulk of the book – that is, the first six chapters – represents our original aim: to trace football's development in Britain from being a winter 'folk' activity to the beginnings of the modern professional game. Within that framework we have posed several hypotheses or questions which we have attempted to test. The reader should not necessarily

expect to find straightforward outcomes for each one, but rather, in some cases, further avenues for research or even new theoretical positions.

In summary, in this book we attempt to follow the lines of inquiry set out below:

(1) the testing of Eric Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis', which proposes the link between the issuing of football rules at Eton College for the Field Game in 1847 as a direct response to the football rules framed at Rugby School in 1845
(2) a final attempt to deny the action of William Webb Ellis in 'picking up the ball and running with it' at Rugby School as the act which 'invented' the Rugby form of football
(3) the promotion of Cambridge University, principally Trinity College with its direct educational links to Eton, as the institutional locus of the next stage, following the public school setting, of the process of status rivalry and the development of the modern form of football
(4) an in-depth study of the Sheffield football sub-culture, which, as well as being the first one of its kind (arguably in the world), was a centre of innovation particularly during the game's early days
(5) the reasons for the bifurcation of football at the fifth meeting of the Football Association and the deliberate loading of men who favoured the embryonic Association form of the game for the crucial vote at that gathering
(6) the assessment of the social backgrounds of the initial members of the FA and the impact that their attitudes had on the eventual adoption by that body of professionalism in English football
(7) a robust critique of the leading revisionist texts on football's origins.

Central to this book is Eric Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis', which provides a working template for a study of the forms of football in this period. We reject wholeheartedly Adrian Harvey's recent suggestion that this hypothesis is 'an irrelevant issue' (2013: 2156), and would commend the status rivalry model as a research tool to anyone engaged in sociological aspects of work in this area. We firmly believe that, starting somewhere in the 1830s and 1840s, two games began to develop out of a common matrix in what were, in many ways, diametrically opposed directions: the Rugby game which stressed handling, carrying, throwing and 'hacking', and the Eton Field Game which allowed handling only to stop the ball, and outlawed carrying, throwing and 'hacking' altogether. We are still searching for the 'smoking gun' in terms of overt status rivalry, but the strong inferential evidence makes it more than possible to support Dunning's theoretical position.

Let us move on in Chapter 1 to a brief analysis of the main structural characteristics of medieval and early modern football, noting in this connection that some such games continue to be played today.

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1 The folk antecedents of modern football

It will, we think, help the reader if we begin this discussion of the development of Association Football as a world game by tracing the origins and meanings of the terms 'football' and 'soccer'. That is because they are sometimes used as synonyms and sometimes not.

It is usual in almost every country to refer to what is arguably the world's most popular ball game as 'football', or by the translation of that English word into the native tongue. Examples of the latter are: *Fussball* in German; *voetbal* in Dutch; *futebol* in Portuguese; *futbol* in Spanish and *fotboll* in Swedish. The only exception that we know of, at least in Europe, is in Italy, where the term *calcio* ('kicking game') is used to reflect the claim of aficionados of football there that Italy was the birthplace of the modern game. Such a claim is almost certainly false, as we shall endeavour to show. The word 'soccer' is derived from an abbreviation of the English term, 'association' – and it refers to the highly specific modern Association way of playing. It is said to have arisen first at Oxford University in the late nineteenth century when the university Association captain met his Rugby counterpart at breakfast one morning and the latter is reputed to have said: 'Morning, Charles, how about a spot of "rugger" after "brekker"?' 'No thanks,' replied the football captain, 'I'm going to play "soccer".' The specific individual usually credited with this action is Charles Wreford-Brown, who attended Charterhouse School (1880–5) and Oriel College, Oxford (1886–90). He captained Oxford University in the 1888–9 'varsity' match against Cambridge and went on to represent England four times at full international level.[1] It was, apparently, customary among the British upper classes at that time to abbreviate words and re-lengthen them by adding '-er'. 'Footer', meaning football, was another example. The story may, indeed, be apocryphal. However, there seems little doubt that the term 'soccer' is derived from an abbreviation of the word 'association'.

Although not so widely used as 'football', in Britain the term 'soccer' is widely understood. It is not so widely understood, though, in continental Europe, Africa, Asia or Central and South America. In fact, the principal countries where the term 'soccer' is used are the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – where its use is made necessary by the fact that Americans,

Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders use 'football' to refer to their own game-forms, i.e. forms that were produced in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by their ancestors of European descent. This discussion may seem to readers to be needlessly pedantic. It is, however, essential, if only because it is commonly believed outside the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand that 'football' implies a primarily non-handling, mainly kicking, heading and chesting game, in which, during the course of play, only the goalkeepers (if there are any) are allowed to use their hands and arms – apart from at throw-ins. Such a belief is erroneous. The term 'football' dates in England from at least 1314 – when it was used to refer to a class of loosely regulated folk games in which handling and throwing, as well as kicking, was allowed. Some of these games were called by names other than 'football'. Examples are 'bottle-kicking', 'hurling' and 'camp-ball'. The class of games from which football developed shared the following properties:

(1) the earliest balls were stuffed or air-filled pigs' (or other animals') bladders
(2) the ball was propelled and controlled by a moving player who used his/her hands, feet, chest and/or head or some kind of implement – such as a stick – to effect his/her control of the ball
(3) points were scored by throwing, kicking or hitting the ball into a 'goal', i.e. an object chosen beforehand as the 'aim' or 'objective' of the game. Such 'goals' were either natural objects such as trees, or specially painted, e.g. on a wall
(4) these were essentially team games in which co-operation among the players on either side was different in character from that in the class of striking and fielding games such as cricket, baseball and rounders. In the former class of games, one group of individuals collectively faced another group, who also played as a collectivity or 'team' (Dunning, 1961: 6). The latter class involved an individual player with a bat or implement facing the whole opposing team.

More recently, 'football' has come to be used as a generic term which refers to a class of what can be called 'sportised'[2] ball games, central among them Association Football and Rugby Football – of which there are two types, 15-a-side Rugby Union and 13-a-side Rugby League. There are also American Football, Canadian Football, Australian Football and Gaelic Football – the latter played mainly in Ireland. There are relatively strong extant data about the history and development of the Association form of football and, if properly interpreted, these data allow researchers to form testable hypotheses about the development of this form of the game. However, before we examine and test such opinions, it will be useful to return to 1314 and substantiate our observations about the earliest stages in the development of football.

Folk football in medieval and early modern Britain

Table 1.1 gives a selected list of state and local authority prohibitions of the folk antecedents of modern football. Local rather than state authorities were responsible for those prohibitions where the name of a particular individual or group does not appear. A single asterisk indicates prohibition because of a danger to public order. A double asterisk indicates prohibition because the game was said to have interfered with archery practice, thus weakening English soldiers in battles, in particular against the French.

In Britain, reasonably reliable evidence for the regular and often illegal playing of a game called 'football' does not begin to accumulate until the fourteenth century. However, between 1314–1667, orders prohibiting 'football' and other comparably popular games were issued by the central and local authorities on numerous occasions. Table 1.1 gives an idea of the frequency with which it was felt necessary to reassert such prohibitions. It also gives an indication of how widely, in a geographical sense, the folk antecedents of modern football came to be played.

It is interesting to note that the 1496 statute of Henry VII was re-enacted several times during the reign of Henry VIII (1509–47), the last English monarch to pass such legislation. However, it remained on the statute book until 1845 under the title 'The bill for maintaining artillery and the debarring of unlawful games' (Marples, 1954: 43). There is also reason to believe that Henry VIII himself actually played in a number of football matches during his youth (Hayward, 2007).

The prohibition of 1314 and that issued by Edward III in 1365 show the main reasons why the authorities wished to ban football and similar games as they were then played. The order of 1314 was issued in the name of Edward II by the Lord Mayor of London and referred to 'great uproar in the City, through certain tumult arising from great footballs in the fields of the public, from which many evils perchance may arise'. It aimed 'on the King's behalf' to forbid the game 'upon pain of imprisonment' (Marples, 1954: 439–41). Edward III's prohibition was connected with the belief that playing games like football was having adverse effects on military preparedness. It is significant that this was the time of the 'Hundred Years War', which broke out in 1337 and in which the English and French monarchs were battling over the possessions in France of the former. This struggle was decisive in the early stages of the formation of England and France as nation states. The prohibition of 1365 reads as follows:

> To the Sherriffes of London. Order to cause proclamation to be made that every able bodied man of the said city on feast days when he has leisure shall in his sports use bows and arrows or pellets and bolts…forbidding them under pain of imprisonment to meddle in the hurling of stones, loggats and quoits, handball, football…or other vain games of no value; as the people of the realme…used heretofore to practise the said art in their sports when

Table 1.1 Selected list of prohibitions by British state and local authorities of the folk antecedents of modern football (Magoun, 1938; Marples, 1954; Young, 1968; Shearman, 1888, 1889)

Year	*Monarch or other official or group*	*Place*
1314 *	Nicholas de Farndone, Lord Mayor of London in the name of Edward II	London[a]
1331 *	Edward III	London
1349	Edward III	London
1364	Synod of Ely	Ely
1365 **	Edward III	London
1388 **	Richard II	London
1389	Richard II	London
1401	Henry IV	London
1409 *	Henry IV	London
1410 *	Henry IV	London
1414 **	Henry V	London
1424 *	James I of Scotland	Perth
1450 *		Halifax
1454 *		Halifax
1457 *	James II of Scotland	Perth
1467 *		Leicester
1471 *	James III of Scotland	Perth
1474 **	Edward IV	London
1477 **	Edward IV	London
1478 *	Lord Mayor of London	London
1481 *	James III of Scotland	Perth
1488 *		Leicester
1491	James IV of Scotland	Perth
1496	Henry VII	London
1533	Mayor of Chester	Chester
1570		Peebles
1572 *		London
1581 *		London
1594		Shrewsbury
1608		Manchester
1609		Manchester
1615 *		London
1636		Oxford
1655		Manchester
1660		Bristol
1666		Manchester
1667		Manchester

[a] This proclamation was issued in Anglo-French. See Marples, 1954: 24.

> by God's help came forth honour to the kingdom and advantage to the king in his actions of war; and now the said art is almost wholly disused and the people engage in the games aforesaid and in other dishonest, unthrifty or idle games, whereby the realm is likely to be without archers.
>
> (Marples, 1954: 181–2)

It is clear, then, that the state authorities in medieval and early modern Britain tried over some seven or eight centuries to suppress football and other traditional games for one of two reasons: first, because they regarded such games 'as a public nuisance and a danger to life, property and public order'; and second, because football playing 'was felt to lead to a neglect of the practice of archery' (Dunning, 1961: 9). As a result, they tried to direct the energies of the people into what they (the authorities) regarded as more useful channels such as military training with bows and arrows.

Official prohibitions may tell us about how the authorities in medieval and early modern Britain viewed such games, but they usually provide only meagre information about the character of those activities. A detailed discussion of Richard Carew's[3] early seventeenth century account of Cornish 'hurling to the countrie' and 'hurling to goales' (Carew, 1602) will show that these folk antecedents of modern football and related modern sports were forms of intergroup combat games which were closer to 'real' fighting than is usually the case with their twentieth century 'offspring' (Carew, 1602, quoted in Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 27; 2005: 24). That is to say that apart from such 'underground' sports and 'sport-games' as 'total fighting' that have recently been developed and introduced, they were generally rougher and more violent than is the case with their counterparts today. Let us examine Carew's description of the two types of hurling in some detail.

According to Carew, 'hurling to the countrie' matches were mostly organised by 'gentlemen'. The 'goals' were either these gentlemen's houses, or two or three towns or villages some three or four miles apart. In these games, there was, Carew argued, 'neither comparing of numbers nor matching of men' and the game was played with a silver ball and the object was to carry it 'by force or sleight' – that is, strength, skill or trickery – to the goal of one's own side. Carew described the details of the game as follows:

> Whosoever getteth seizure of this ball, findeth himself generally pursued by the adverse party; neither will they leave, till (without all respects) he be laid flat on God's dear earth; which fall once received, disableth him from any longer detaining the ball; he therefore throweth the same (with like hazard of intercepting, as in the other hurling) to some one of his fellows farthest before him, who maketh away withall in like manner. Suchas see where the ball is played, give notice thereof of their mates, crying, Wear east, Wear west, &c. as the same is carried.
>
> The hurlers take their next way over hilles, dales, hedges, ditches; yea, and through bushes, briers, mires, plashes and rivers whatsoever; so as you shall sometimes see twenty or thirty lie tugging together in the water, scrambling and scratching for the ball. A play (verily) both rude and rough, and yet such as is not destitute of policies, in some sort resembling the feats of war: for you shall have companies laid out before, on the one side, to encounter them that come with the ball, and of the other party to succor them, in manner of a foreward. Again, other troops lie

> hovering on the sides, like wings, to help or stop their escape; and where the ball itself goeth, it resembles the joining of the two main battles; the slowest footed, who come lag, supply the show of a rearward; yea, there are horsemen placed also on either party (as it were in ambush) and ready to ride away with the ball if they can catch it at advantage. But, they may not so steal the palm; for gallop any one of them never so fast, yet he shall be surely met at some hedge corner, cross lane, bridge or deep water, (which by casting the country) they know he must needs touch at: and if his good fortune guard him not the better, he is like to pay the price of his theft, with his own and his horse's overthrow to the ground. Sometimes, the whole company runneth with the ball seven or eight miles out of the direct way which they should keep. Sometimes a footman getting it by stealth, the better to escape unespied, will carry the same quite backwards, and so at last get to the goal by windlass: which once known to be won, all that side flock thither with great jollity: and if the same be a gentleman's house, they give him the ball for a trophy, and the drinking out of his beer to boot.
>
> The ball in this play may be compared to an infernal spirit: for whosoever catcheth it, fareth straightways like a mad man, struggling and fighting with those that go about to hold him: and no sooner is the ball gone from him, but he resigneth this fury to the next receiver, and himself becometh peaceable as before. I cannot well resolve, whether I should more commend this game, for the manhood and exercise, or condemn it for the boisterousness and harms which it begetteth: for as on the one side it makes their bodies strong, hard, and nimble, and puts a courage into their hearts to meet an enemy in the face: so on the other part, it is accompanied with many dangers, some of which do ever fall to the players share: for proof whereof, when the hurling is ended, you shall see them retiring home, as from a pitched battle, with bloody pates, bones broken and out of joint, and such bruises as serve to shorten their days; yet all is good play, and never attorney nor crowner troubled for the matter.
>
> (Carew, 1602: 197–9)

Carew's account gives a good idea of the loose overall structure of this type of game. There was usually no limitation on the number of participants, no stipulation of numerical equality between the contending sides, and no restrictions on the size and shape of the playing area. The hurlers did not play on a demarcated field, as is the case in modern sports, but rather on the territory between and surrounding the goals of the two sides – the aforementioned houses, villages, gates and garden walls located on what had been agreed upon as the 'goals' in the sense of 'targets' of the two competing sides; that is, the places to which custom had decreed that they had, respectively, to carry or transport the ball and set it down to win. Cornish hurling was a rough and, by modern standards, by no means totally violent and unregulated game. One of the customary rules emerges from Carew's

account: when tackled, the player in possession of the ball had to pass it to a team-mate. There was also a rudimentary division of labour within each team into what Carew, using a then-contemporary military analogy, called a 'fore-ward', a 'rere-ward' and two 'wings'. This shows that the terms 'forward' and 'wing' to denote particular playing positions – a practice which survives in present-day Association and Rugby Football – has a long ancestry, and military roots. Carew also mentioned a division between players on horseback and players on foot. This is interesting because it suggests that in these folk games, elements of what were later destined to become separate games – in this instance, not only Association and Rugby Football but also sports such as present-day Irish hurling, field hockey and polo – were rolled together in an undifferentiated whole.

Further to this, Carew also described a game which he called 'hurling to goales' which was played on a more restricted, limited area than 'hurling to the countrie'. He described this second game thus:

> For hurling to goals there are fifteen, twenty or thirty players, more or less, chosen out on each side, who strip themselves into their slightest apparel and then join hands in rank one against another. Out of these ranks they match themselves by pairs, one embracing another, and so pass away; every of which couple are specially to watch one another during the play.
>
> After this, they pitch two bushes in the ground, some eight or ten feet asunder; and directly against them, ten or twelve score off, other twayne in like distance, which they term their goals. One of these is appointed by lots to the one side, and the other to his adverse party. There is assigned for their guard a couple of their best stopping hurlers; the residue draw into the midst between both goals, where some indifferent person throweth up a ball, the which whosoever can catch, and carry through his adversary's goal hath won the game. But therein consisteth one of Hercules's labours: for he that is once possessed of the ball, hath his contrary mate waiting at inches, and assaying to lay hold upon him. The other thrusteth him in the breast, with his closed fist, to keep him off; which they call butting, and place in well doing the same no small point of manhood.
>
> If he escape the first, another taketh him in hand, and so a third, neyther is he left, until having met (as the Frenchman says) '*Chausseura son pied*,' he either touch the ground with some part of his body, in wrestling, or cry hold; which is the word of yielding. Then he must cast the ball (named dealing) to some one of his fellows, who catching the same in his hand, maketh away withal as before; and if his hap and agility be so good as to shake off his counter waiters at the goal, he findeth one or two fresh men, ready to receive and keep him off. It is therefore a very disadvantageable match, or extraordinary accident, that leeseth many goals; howbeit, that side carrieth away best reputation, which giveth most falls in the hurling,

> keepeth the ball longest, and presseth his contrary nearest to their own goal. Sometimes one chosen person on each party dealeth the ball.
>
> The hurlers are bound to the observation of many laws; as, that they must hurl man to man, and not two set upon one man at once: that the Hurler against the ball, must not *but*, nor hand-fast under girdle: that he who hath the ball must *but* only in the other's breast; that he must deal no fore-ball, *viz*. he may not throw it to any of his mates, standing nearer the goal, than himself. Lastly, in dealing the ball, if any of the other part can catch it flying between, or ere the other have it fast, he thereby winneth the same to his side, which straightway of defendant becometh assailant, as the other of assailant falls to be defendant. The least breach of these laws, the hurlers take for a just cause of going together by the ears, but with their fists only; neither doth any among them seek revenge for such wrongs or hurts, but at the like play again. These hurling matches are mostly used at weddings, where commonly the guests undertake to encounter all comers.
>
> (Carew, 1602: 195–7)

The roughness described here by Carew is what one would expect of matches played by large numbers of seventeenth century English people – primarily males – and according to loosely defined oral rules. However, it is arguably also the case that 'hurling to goales' could be described as a fairly advanced folk game. Dunning and Sheard expanded on this in 1979 by writing:

> Its rules, although oral, [and not written] were explicitly defined. It was also, relatively speaking, orderly and controlled. It involved the institutionalisation of a rudimentary sense of 'fairness', that is of a tendency to equalise chances between contending sides. Thus, although the size of teams was not fixed, custom decreed equality of numbers. The rules, furthermore, stipulated that 'ends' should be determined by drawing lots, that is, in terms of an impersonal chance criterion rather than particularistic social criteria such as the residential locations of the contending parties or their power and social status.
>
> (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 35–6; 2005: 31)

There were no referees to keep control of these matches, nor assistant referees or linesmen, unless, that is, one includes the 'indifferent person' who started matches and was noted in Carew's account of 'hurling to goales' as throwing up the ball to begin proceedings. Nor was there an outside body such as the FA to appeal to in cases of dispute. Also worthy of note is the pairing of rival players before a match and the fact that the individuals in these pairings were expected to 'watch one another during play', which appears to have been an early form of man-to-man marking. In addition, the taboo in these games on forward passing was a feature reminiscent of modern Rugby. That games of this overall type continued to be played until at least the nineteenth

century emerges from an account of a kind of football that was recorded as being played each Christmas Day in the early 1800s in South Cardiganshire, Wales:

> In South Cardiganshire it seems that about eighty years ago the population, rich and poor, male and female, of opposing parishes, turned out on Christmas Day and indulged in the game of 'Football' with such vigour that it became little short of a serious fight. The parishioners of Cellan and Pencarreg were particularly bitter in their conflicts; men threw off their coats and waistcoats and women their gowns, and sometimes petticoats. At Llanwenog, an extensive parish below Lampeter, the inhabitants for football purposes were divided into the Bros and Blaenaus…. The Bros, it should be stated occupied the high ground of the parish. They were nicknamed 'Paddy Bros,' from a tradition that they were descendants from Irish people who settled on the hills in days long gone by. The Blaenaus occupied the lowlands and, it may be presumed, were pure-bred Brythons….At any rate, the match did not begin until about mid-day….Then the whole of the Bros and Blaenaus, rich and poor, male and female, assembled on the turnpike road which divided the highlands from the lowlands. The ball…was thrown high in the air by a strong man and, when it fell Bros and Blaenaus scrambled for its possession, and a quarter of an hour frequently elapsed before the ball was got out from the struggling heap of human beings. Then, if the Bros, by hook or by crook, could succeed in taking the ball up the mountain to their hamlet of Rhyddlan they won the day; while the Blaenaus were successful if they got the ball to their end of the parish at New Court. The whole parish was the field of operations, and sometimes it would be dark before either party scored a victory. In the meantime, many kicks would be given and taken, so that on the following day some of the competitors would be unable to walk, and sometimes a kick on the shins would lead the two men concerned to abandon the game until they had decided which was the better pugilist. There do not appear to have been any rules for the regulation of the game; and the art of football playing in the olden time seems to have been to reach the goal. When once the goal was reached, the victory was celebrated by loud hurrahs and the firing of guns, and was not disturbed until the following Christmas Day.
>
> (*Oswestry Observer*, 2 March 1887, quoted in G. L. Gomme, 1890: 243–4)

Some authorities have been reluctant to use accounts of 'hurling', 'knappan', 'bottle-kicking' and similar games such as the variants of East Anglian 'camp-ball' as evidence regarding the folk antecedents of modern football. These authorities seem to think that the word 'camp' has its modern meaning and fail to see that it probably derives from or is cognate with the German *kämpfen* which means to fight, hence implying that the name of the game

means 'fighting' or 'fight-ball'. Such a misunderstanding is plausible but arguably based on a failure fully to appreciate the nature or character of this type of game. They were played according to local oral customs, not according to national or international written rules. Hence the chances of variation in names and playing customs between communities were considerable because there were neither written rules nor central organisations to unify the name or the manner of playing. Given that, references to football in medieval and early modern sources do not imply a game played according to a single set of rules. The identity of names was therefore no guarantee of the identity of the games to which these names referred. By the same token, the differences between folk games that were given different names were rarely as great as those between modern sports. That is, as far as one can tell, the differences between hurling, knappan, camp-ball, bottle-kicking and, as referred to in the medieval and early modern sources, football, were neither so great nor so clear-cut as is the case with those between Association Football, Rugby, hockey, polo, American and Australian Football today.

Some of these games may have had different names because they were traditionally played with different implements. The 'knappan', for example, was a wooden disc. The 'bottle' in the Hallaton-Medbourne game, which takes place between these two Leicestershire villages – the tradition of having a bottle-kicking match on Easter Monday continues to this day (2014) – is a wooden keg. 'Football' is the name which most frequently recurs, but references to it in some earlier accounts seem to be referring more to a type of ball rather than to a type of game. For example, the London prohibition of 1314 referred to a 'tumult arising from great footballs', not from 'playing football', whilst the Manchester prohibition of 1608 referred to playing '*with* the ffotebale' rather than to 'playing ffootbale' as we would say today (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 22; 2005: 20). As far as we have been able to ascertain, the type of ball to which this name was given was an inflated animal bladder, usually – but not always in the earliest days – encased in leather. Balls of this larger type probably lent themselves better than smaller, solid balls to kicking. This could explain the origin of the term 'football'. Alternatively, the term could have signified a game played *on foot* as opposed to on horseback. Only gradually does the term seem to have come to be used primarily with reference to a type of game. However, despite the increasing preponderance of this latter meaning, it would, we think, still be wrong to assume that, in folk games called 'football', the ball was only or mainly propelled by foot, or, conversely, that in games called 'hurling' or 'handball', it was only thrown or otherwise propelled by hand. That is because prohibitions in these folk games were less clearly defined and less strictly enforceable than is the case in modern sports. Indeed, as we shall try to show in greater detail as our arguments and data in this book unfold, Association Football, the minimal handling, mainly kicking game, and Rugby and American Football, the handling, carrying and throwing game(s) in which, relatively speaking, kicking is de-emphasised, are all mainly products of the nineteenth century.

Whatever their names, and whether they were associated with a particular festival or not, the folk antecedents of modern football were, compared with their present-day counterparts and especially as played in the more developed societies of the West, openly emotional affairs that were, above all, characterised by physical struggle. Such restraints as they involved were, relatively speaking, loosely defined and imposed by custom as opposed to elaborate formal regulations which are written down and – compared again with their medieval predecessors – required players to exercise a high degree of self-control and involved the intervention of external officials when a deliberate foul was committed or when a foul occurred accidentally or when the self-control of one or more of the players broke down and they fought either in pairs or en masse. As a result, the basic game-pattern – the character of these folk games as struggles between groups, the open enjoyment in them of excitement akin to that aroused in battle, the riotousness, and the relatively high level of socially tolerated physical violence – was always and everywhere much the same. In short, these games were cast in a common mould which tended to transcend differences of names and locally specific traditions of playing.

The cultural marginalisation of folk football

Before we move our narrative and explanation on to the crucial part played in the development of football in the public schools, it is, we think, a matter of importance to consider the contention that these folk games died out, or were at least culturally marginalised, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Joseph Strutt, for example, wrote in 1801 that 'Football is so called because the ball is driven about with the feet instead of the hand. It was formerly much in vogue among the common people of England, though of late years it seems to have fallen into disrepute, and is but little practised' (Strutt, 1801; 1903: 93–4). Strutt has been shown, in recent years, to have been, to a certain extent, incorrect. More particularly, John Goulstone and Adrian Harvey have proved conclusively in books published respectively in 2001 and 2005 that an organised footballing sub-culture continued to exist in Britain in that period. Indeed, these authors claim that the game in that period could even be described as being in a relatively healthy state. It seems reasonable to suppose, however, that Strutt must have possessed some compelling evidence to put forward his view and, in fact, he was by no means completely alone in arguing as he did. An author who called himself by the initials 'JDC' – we think he must have been the football journalist John Dyer Cartwright, who had previously contributed a series of important articles to the football rules debate which took place along with the formation of the Football Association in 1863 – commented in 1864 that the violence which had come to be associated with many football contests in that period 'led, in many cases, to the interference of the law, which ultimately stopped them', whilst in other areas 'the players seem to have wearied of the disputes and fights' (JDC, 1864: 247). William Hone similarly recalled a letter passed on

to him in which a traveller journeying through Kingston-upon-Thames was taken by surprise to be in the middle of what was described as the 'Foot-ball day'. The traveller was apparently unaware of what he regarded as a fading sporting custom. (Hone, 1827: 244–6, quoted in Young, 1968: 6). However, most authorities on the subject were also agreed that football had not disappeared completely and that the county of Yorkshire was one area where it still thrived. An anonymous Old Etonian, for example, noted in 1831 that football 'is a game which the common people of Yorkshire are particularly partial to' (from Blake, 1831: 47, quoted in Marples, 1954: 96); whilst Tony Money, in comparing the area to others where the game had been virtually extinguished in mid-Victorian times, noted that 'Yorkshire was the county where football had clung on most tenaciously' (Money, 2000: 3). Cartwright had similarly noted in his 1864 article that football 'is still popular in some districts. The Sheffield "grinders" '– he was presumably referring by this term to the fact that Sheffield has a long history of knife-making – 'are noted for their games at football' (JDC, 1864: 247).

It is our belief that a process of the cultural marginalisation of folk football was certainly taking place in those years but that Strutt and others had, in all likelihood, overly exaggerated the extent of the transformation. The period between *c.*1780 and *c.*1850 formed a watershed, a stage of rapid transition in which there occurred what Elias would have called a 'civilising spurt'; that is, an advance in people's 'threshold of repugnance' with regard to engaging in and witnessing violent acts (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 40; 2005: 35). In fact, in referring to the East Anglian version of football named 'camp-ball', the historian Morris Marples noted that, in the early part of the nineteenth century, there had been a tremendous match between Norfolk and Suffolk in which nine men lost their lives. It may accordingly have been the case that the scandal of this event had turned public opinion against a game that was so manifestly dangerous (Marples, 1954: 106). We concede that the apparent decline of football in those years was certainly a complex and nationally patchy process, but we feel that it is necessary to stress the fact that the comments of those who felt that the game was being played less regularly than had been the case in former times had probably been based on evidence of some sort. In short, their published views were not simple fabrications.

Variants of folk football in continental Europe

Ball games similar to the British folk antecedents of modern football were also played in France. Just as in Britain, these folk games were prohibited by royal edict, for example by Philippe V in 1319 and by Charles V some 50 years later (Marples, 1954: 25). Such attempts were made as late as the beginning of the Revolution, suggesting that the French authorities at that time, independently of whether they were aristocrats or bourgeoisie, were just as unsuccessful at suppressing these games as their British counterparts had been. Similar edicts were also enacted in colonial

America, showing that the earliest English settlers and perhaps some of their French Canadian counterparts as well may have played such games and that these activities were similarly regarded as threats to public order (Gardner, 1974: 96).

In Italy, a somewhat more regulated game, the *gioco del calcio*, had developed by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The participants, we are told, were 'young Cavaliers of good purse', and two teams of 27 members on each side played every evening in the Piazza di Santa Croce in Florence from Epiphany to Lent (Marples, 1954: 67). That it remained a rough game is emphasised in an English translation, published in London in 1656, of a description by Boccalini. The beginning of his account reads as follows:

> The noble Florentines plaid the last Tuesday at the calcio in the Phebean field…and though some, to whom it was a new sight to see many of these Florentine gentlemen fall down to right cuffs, said, that that manner of proceeding in that which was but play and sport, was too harsh, and not severe enough in real combat….[T]he Commonwealth of Florence had done very well in introducing the Calcio among the citizens, to the end that having the satisfaction of giving four or five good round buffets in the face to those to whom they bear ill will, by way of sport, they might the better appease their anger (than by the use of daggers).
>
> (Young, 1968: 88–90)

The presence of pike-carrying soldiers in pictorial representations of the game (Marples, 1954: facing p. 21) suggests that the social control function attributed to *calcio* by Boccalini may not have always been performed. In fact, it seems reasonable to suppose that pikemen were regarded as necessary at matches in case the excitement of the struggle led the young noble players, members of the crowd, or both, to get carried away and lose their self-restraint (Guttmann, 1986: 51).

Both Marples and Young provide some support for the occurrence of a process of diffusion from *calcio* to football in Britain. Both authors cite the involvement of Richard Mulcaster, headmaster in turn of Merchant Taylors' and St. Paul's schools in London. He was familiar with Italian texts on pastimes, though nowhere do we learn of his visiting Florence and personally viewing *calcio*. Marples and Young also argue strongly for the resemblance of Cornish hurling to *calcio* with Young noting Carew's Italian connections that are evident in his having translated some of the works of the Italian poet, Torquato Tasso (Young, 1968: 39–43; Marples, 1954: 41–2 and 68–9). However, Marples tempered his enthusiasm for this hypothesis by suggesting that although the English upper classes in those periods may have been influenced by literary descriptions more than firsthand experience of *calcio*, folk games in Britain and Ireland were 'played with none of the formality and elaborate ceremony of Italian *calcio*. On the contrary…it had lost none of its ancient vigour and ferocity' (Marples, 1954: 42).

Further to this, it has been suggested by the German scholar, Bredekamp, that *calcio* formed the model on which Association Football is based, but there is no direct evidence of such a process of diffusion (Bredekamp, 1993: 53–4). In support of his claim, Bredekamp cites just one piece of data: the fact that English people associated with the British Consulate in Livorno took part in a ceremonial game of *calcio* there in 1776. However, as evidence, this is very weak. In Bredekamp's account, the English people involved remain nameless. Nor is anything said about *how* they played *calcio*, *how familiar* they were with the rules, or *how frequently* they played. More importantly, nothing at all is said in this context about these people trying to introduce the game to friends and acquaintances back in Britain. In other words, the inferential component in Bredekamp's account is so strong, and the evidential component so weak, that it is better for the moment to suppose that the early development of Association Football, and of Rugby, too – they were socially co-produced as we shall attempt to show later – was a process which occurred relatively autonomously in the British Isles: that is in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Let us move on in Chapter 2 to a discussion of the public schools – most particularly Eton and Rugby – the status rivalry between them and the part they played in the development of football, both its Association and its Rugby forms.

Notes

1 Our thanks go to Malcolm Bailey, formerly of Charterhouse School, for detailed information on Charles Wreford-Brown.
2 The concept of 'sportisation' was developed by Norbert Elias as a means of denoting the social process in the course of which modern forms of sport arose. See Elias and Dunning (1986).
3 Carew was High Sheriff of Cornwall and a noted antiquary. Not to be confused with his son Sir Richard Carew.

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2 Public school status rivalry and the early development of football

The cases of Eton and Rugby

There are two broad kinds of mythical accounts of the origins of sports and games: those which trace them to the actions of a specific individual and those which trace them to a collectivity. 'Sport-games', a term invented by Norbert Elias, seems to us to be an appropriate term to use for these activities to which both of these expressions are regularly applied. An example of an individual origin myth is the one that traces the beginning of Rugby to the alleged deviant act of William Webb Ellis at Rugby School. Another traces the beginning of baseball to an alleged act in 1839 of General Abner Doubleday in Cooperstown, New York (Gardner, 1974: 60–1; Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 66; 2005: 57). Both accounts are implausible.

Most attempts to explain the origins of Association Football are myths of the collective rather than the individual kind. They also take different forms. For example, it was once believed in Kingston-upon-Thames, the Surrey town, that the local game traditionally played there each Shrove Tuesday originated from a Saxon defeat of Danish invaders in the early Middle Ages. The head of the defeated Danish chieftain, it was said, was kicked in celebration around the streets, and the game grew out of those events. A similarly implausible belief used to be held in the East Midlands town of Derby, only this time the game is said to have originated from a defeat of Roman troops by native Britons in the third century AD (Marples, 1954: 6–7). Such beliefs are mythical because there is no evidence to support them from the time when the supposed originating events are believed to have taken place. In fact, the reverse of this kind of belief is sociologically more plausible, namely that the Britons and Anglo-Saxons may have already been playing football-like games at the time of their battles with Romans and Danes and that, holding football matches as part of their victory celebrations, they may have substituted the defeated leaders' heads for the ball. That they might have done this is consistent with what is known about their levels of civilisation in Elias's sense of the term. But, again, there is simply no hard evidence to confirm or to refute any hypothesis of this kind.

Origin myths of an anthropologically more plausible kind trace the origins of football to a pagan fertility rite. Writing in 1929, for example, W. B. Johnson noted that it is common in rituals of primitive peoples for a globular object

to symbolise the sun. In other words the football is said to have been seen as a symbolic representation of the bringer and supporter of life, a hypothesis which receives indirect support from the fact that *la soule*, the French name for a form of football which traditionally flourished in Normandy and Brittany, appears to be cognate with, and possibly derivative of, *sol*, the Latin word for 'sun' (Johnson, 1929: 225–31. Quoted in Marples, 1954: 12–13). What is not explained in this origin myth, though, is why the symbolic sun should have been kicked and thrown around in what is generally agreed to have been a rough and physically dangerous game.

An earlier variant of this hypothesis was proposed by E. K. Chambers who, according to Marples in 1954, argued in 1903 that a football symbolically represents not the sun but the head of a sacrificial beast (E. K. Chambers, 1903. Quoted in Marples, 1954: 14–15). The object of the game, he conjectured, was for players to get hold of the symbolic head and bury it on their lands in the hope of ensuring abundant crops. Direct support for such a hypothesis was said to have been provided by the fact that the object of some forms of folk football, for example that played at Scone in Scotland, was to place the ball in a hole (Marples, 1954: 12). Further indirect support is said to come from the 'Haxey Hood game', a folk ritual which still survives today in Haxey, Lincolnshire. The 'hood' in this game is a roll of sacking or leather and the players' aim is to fight for possession of the roll and convey it to their respective village inns. That the roll or 'hood' is the symbolic representation of an animal is said to have been indicated by a speech traditionally made by 'the Fool', an official in the ceremony which takes place the day before the game. The relevant part of the Fool's speech goes:

> We've killed two bullocks and a half,
> but the other half we had to leave running field:
> we can fetch it if it's wanted. Remember it's
> Hoose agin hoose, toon agin toon,
> And if you meet a man, knock him doon
> (Marples, 1954: 15)

It is deduced from this by Marples, Johnson and other scholars, that the 'hood' in this game represents half a bullock, that is part of a sacrificial beast. The point about hypotheses of this kind is that it is impossible to test them by reference to direct empirical evidence. They are thus bound to remain more or less plausible speculations, but there is no direct way of determining whether or not the idea of playing with a football originated from a fertility rite in which the ball symbolically represented the sun, the head of a sacrificial beast, both of these things, or, for that matter, neither of them or anything else. Indeed, there is no way of determining conclusively whether football had a ritual origin or not. However, the ritual speech of the Fool in the Haxey Hood ceremony does, we think, point in a sociologically plausible direction. More particularly, while it may not allow one to determine what the origins

of football were in an absolute sense, it does permit one to establish its function as a violent but enjoyable means for expressing conflict between rival groups which enabled the latter to confirm one aspect or dimension of their superiority/inferiority relative to one another.

Yet another form of collective origin myth holds that modern football is a more or less direct derivative of one of the following: the ancient Chinese game of *Tsu Chu* (kick ball); Japanese *kemari*; Roman *harpastum*; Greek *episkyros*; or the Italian *gioco del calcio* (Young, 1968: 2; Green, 1953: 5–6). In none of these cases, however, with the partial exception of Italian *calcio* as we showed in Chapter 1, is there evidence which allows one to trace an empirically visible line of descent. A somewhat more plausible explanation was provided by the French scholar, J. J. Jusserand, in 1901 and accepted by the American academic, Francis Peabody Magoun in 1938 (Magoun, 1938: 134–7). Noting the existing parallels between the folk football of England and France, Jusserand suggested that they must have had a common origin. And since the records go back further in France than in England, he concluded that football must have originated in France and been brought to England by the invading Normans in and after 1066. If Jusserand is correct, it is more than a little ironic for he will have proved the French origins of what is widely regarded as having been an originally English sport. Our view is that Jusserand's desire to prove the superiority of the French over the English probably helped to tilt him in the direction of this conclusion. This is the case because – apart from the name, which is obviously English – all the evidence suggests that, while football *per se* may not have originated in England, Association Football and Rugby, the game-forms which developed in the nineteenth century, most certainly did. Such a view is not mere speculation but can be supported by reference to a substantial amount of data.

Morris Marples accepted the plausibility of the Jusserand hypothesis but speculated that the existence of football-like games such as 'hurling' and 'knappan' in Cornwall, Ireland and Wales is consistent with what he called the 'Celtic Hypothesis' – namely the idea that football-like games underwent an independent but parallel development among the Franks, the Anglo-Saxons and the Celts. Although it is impossible to support it by reference to direct evidence, this line of reasoning is convincing. However, it can be taken further. Since the Chinese, the Japanese, the Greeks, the Romans, the Italians, the English, the French and the Celts all, at some stage in their histories, played forms of a game which have been proposed with varying degrees of plausibility as *the* ancestral form of football, it seems reasonable to hypothesise that football-like games most probably had multiple origins, being played in different forms in all or most societies with the technological ability to construct appropriate types of ball and the freedom from material and military necessity to engage in forms of play. It is possible that, the lower the division of labour in such social contexts, the more closely they approximated structurally to the pattern of social organisation called 'mechanical solidarity' by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim,

the more their game-forms would have had a religious and ritual character (Durkheim, 1964: 70ff). That is because, in societies of that type and at that stage in their development, as Durkheim shows, the ritual and the sacred are all-pervasive.

In short, although it is necessary to maintain a critical distance from the particular anthropological explanations of the origins and development of football proposed by authors such as Johnson and Chambers, there are good sociological reasons for believing that hypotheses of this kind may not be totally wide of the mark. However, these reasons remain speculative. They may be more or less plausible, but it is impossible to support them by reference to trustworthy data. However, there is evidence about the history and development of football which, if properly interpreted, begins to allow one to distinguish facts from myths, as we shall endeavour to show. We have already looked, in Chapter 1, at evidence which suggests that as the nineteenth century wore on the folk forms of football and related games, whilst they by no means disappeared entirely, did, relatively speaking, diminish in the frequency with which they were played. They began to be culturally marginalised and their place began to be taken by various forms of pub-related team games and, particularly, forms of football which developed in the public schools. It is to evidence regarding the latter, i.e. football in the public schools, to which we shall now turn.

Eton, Rugby and status rivalry

In the MA thesis that he submitted to the University of Leicester in 1961, Eric Dunning outlined for the first time his thoughts on the possibility of status rivalry between the public schools of Eton and Rugby being expressed, among other ways, through their forms of football. He wrote:

> Rugby, as early as the 1820s, had started to develop a model of football peculiarly their own; the boys there developed the practice of running with the ball in their arms. During the 1840s, this practice was legitimised, and they further differentiated their game from the general model by stipulating that goals should be scored by kicking the ball above, rather than below the [cross] bar. One can imagine how this [must have] incensed the boys at Eton, who felt their school to be the leading public school in all respects. They answered by putting an absolute [virtual] prohibition on handling the ball in their own game, as if to say: 'Now we shall see who gives the lead to others!' It was, one might suggest, an attempt to put the upstart Rugby in its place.
>
> (Dunning, 1961: 116–17)

In their *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football* (1979; 2005), Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard elaborated on this original hypothesis as follows:

> Given the intense status rivalry between [public] schools in that period [the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s], it must have incensed the boys at Eton to have their thunder stolen by an obscure, Midlands establishment which had only recently become [recognised as] a public school. They considered their own to be the leading school in *all* respects [as they still do at the time of writing]. By placing an absolute taboo on the use of hands in their version of football and decreeing that goals could only be scored below the height of the 'goal sticks' [later to be called 'goal posts'], they [the Etonians] were, one can suggest, attempting to assert their leadership of [the] public schools and put the 'upstart' Rugbeians in their place.
>
> If this [argument] is [at least partly] correct, it means that, what later became an important driving force in the early development of football, namely a struggle between public schoolboys to [get their schools recognised as] 'model makers' for the game on a national level, made its initial appearance in the 1840s. The emergence of distinguishing marks in the game at Rugby and the imposition of an absolute [virtual] taboo on the use of hands [in the 'Field Game'] at Eton are probable examples of how the game developed under the impetus of such competitive pressure.
>
> (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 99; 2005: 86)

This is, in our view, a compelling theory. It is one which we shall attempt to elaborate on and test in this book, along with exploring other sociological and historical debates which have arisen in relation to the different forms of football which emerged over time in Britain and elsewhere (e.g. in France and Ireland). The 'status-rivalry theory', though, stands at the centre of our earliest deliberations in this regard and may, we think, hold the key to explaining the eventual bifurcation of football on the national and international levels into the Association and Rugby forms. It is, though, important in this connection to follow Elias and stress the fact that neither of these emergent forms had a single, individual 'author' or 'creator', and that both developed as part of an overall, relatively anonymous, social process (Dunning, 1961: 1). It is nevertheless possible, we believe, to trace a number of the key people who contributed to the formation of the distinct 'Association' and 'Rugby' games over many years, eventually developing them into their relatively stable modern forms. As we shall attempt to show, the public schools, especially Eton and Rugby, were – along with the universities of Cambridge and Oxford which were, and remain to this day, closely related to the former – among the key social locations in this connection and more influential in this regard than the public house forms of football suggested by Goulstone and Harvey.

The early development of different forms of football in the major public schools

Types of football that were similar in many ways to the 'folk' and 'mob' forms that were practised in the towns and villages of the British Isles in the medieval

and early modern periods as well as in conjunction with public houses, festivals and holidays, were being played by boys at the major public schools of Britain at least as early as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. More particularly, as we sought to show in the previous chapter, the folk forms of football began to decline around this time in conjunction with such overall interconnected social processes as industrialisation, urbanisation, state-formation and the emergence of more effective forms of policing. However, versions of these games continued to flourish and be regularly played in the public schools. As Dunning and Sheard expressed it in their *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players*, boys in the public schools in that period

> enjoyed immunity in that context partly because, there, they were not perceived as a threat to property and public order, and partly because, even when public school masters tried to suppress them, e.g. because they believed them to be a threat to property and order *in the schools*, they lacked the power to put their wishes into effect.
>
> (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 46; 2005: 40)

The seven most prestigious of these establishments at that time were, in alphabetical order: Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Shrewsbury, Westminster and Winchester. They were social institutions where, for the first time, the pupils subjected the game of football to stricter regulation by means of written rules, more stringent frameworks of overall organisation, and, arguably, more civilised forms of behaviour (Dunning, 1961: 27). The schools were initially begun as charitable institutions for the education of 'poor and needy scholars and clerks' with these disadvantaged individuals being known at Eton then and now as collegers and restricted in number to 70. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the public schools were transformed into boarding schools for fee-paying pupils from the upper and upper middle classes. At Eton, these individuals were and still are called 'oppidans' or 'townboys'. At least two consequences arguably followed from this usurpation by the higher classes. The first was that the class discrepancy between masters (teachers) and pupils inherent in the structure of this type of school where middle class and often upwardly mobile academics attempted to cater for the educational needs of boys who mostly came from higher social strata than themselves, meant that masters were unable to prevent the emergence of forms of self-rule by the boys. The second was that this power and status discrepancy between masters and pupils led to a chronic lack of discipline and not infrequent rebellions by the boys. That the use of the term 'rebellion' is apposite in this connection is illustrated by the following examples, together with the rest, in Table 2.1. At Eton in 1768, for example, the prefects forced the headmaster, Dr Foster, to resign over a disagreement concerning the prefects' right to punish junior boys for breaking bounds; that is, for leaving the school grounds without official permission. The Harrow revolts in 1771 and 1808 occurred because the boys were not consulted over

Table 2.1 Selected list of public school rebellions, 1728–1832 (Dunning and Sheard 1979: 51; 2005: 44)

1728	Eton	1797	Rugby
1768	Eton	1798	Eton
1770	Winchester	1808	Charterhouse, Harrow, Winchester
1771	Harrow	1810	Eton
1774	Winchester	1818	Eton, Shrewsbury, Winchester
1778	Winchester	1820	Rugby
1783	Eton	1822	Rugby
1786	Rugby	1828	Winchester
1793	Winchester	1832	Eton

the appointment of two new headmasters. The revolt at Winchester in 1818 could only be quelled by the militia using bayonets – there was as yet no effective police force in the country (Mack, 1938: 80–1) – and in 1793, the boys there, we are told, 'victualled the College for a regular siege, ransacking the shops for provisions'. They also 'provided themselves with swords, guns and bludgeons and…mounted the red cap of liberty and equality' (Adams, 1878: 143–51). At Rugby in 1797, the headmaster's classroom door was blown off its hinges, his windows were smashed and his books were thrown onto a bonfire following the flogging of a boy for the possession and use of gunpowder. Order was only restored with military help (Rouse, 1898: 182–5).

Youthful bravado probably played a part in these rebellions. Those in the 1790s and 1800s were undoubtedly affected, at least superficially, by then-contemporary events in France. On at least one occasion, for example, a group of Etonians marched out of their school and along the River Thames to Datchet, shouting '*liberté*, *egalité*, *fraternité*' and waving a French *tricoleur*. From a sociological point of view, however, the rebellions were the most obvious surface manifestations of a struggle between masters and boys in which, for a long time, neither party was able to establish effective dominance over the other. The result was the gradual crystallisation of a system of dual control which came later to be known as the 'prefect-fagging system'. This was a system in which the rule of masters was granted a degree of recognition in the classroom in return for the reciprocal recognition of the right of 'prefects' – the leaders among the older boys – to exercise dominance as far as extracurricular activities were concerned.

The 'fagging' part of the system emerged as part of the same social process. The fact that masters were unable effectively to control the oldest boys meant, as much as anything else, that they were unable to control them in relation to their younger fellows. As a result, there emerged a dominance hierarchy among the boys determined mainly by relativities of age and physical strength; that is, the boys who were older and/or physically stronger 'lorded it' over those who were younger and/or physically weaker. This dominance was particularly evident in games, especially football, where the senior boys required of their juniors that the latter should occupy the less glamorous positions – almost

always keeping goal en masse by being strewn along the baselines – an action which reinforced the authority of the former. In general terms, the juniors were forced into the role of 'fags'; that is into providing menial, ego-enhancing and possibly also homosexual services for their seniors. The strongest held sway and, as one would expect of teenage males untrammelled by effective adult control, they often exercised their power cruelly and without mercy.

The prefect-fagging system was arguably central to the early development of football at this stage. At each public school the game came to be one of the means by which older boys asserted dominance over their juniors. One of the customary duties which developed for fags was that of 'fagging-out' at cricket, boxing, sports such as 'hare and hounds' (a cross-country paper chase), and, of course, crucially, football. As far especially as the latter was concerned, this meant that the fags were compelled to play and restricted for the most part to the role of 'keeping goal'. We hear, for example, that at Westminster in the early nineteenth century, 'the small boys, the duffers and the funk-sticks' – those who were scared of playing such a violent game – 'were the goalkeepers, twelve or fifteen at each end'. 'Douling', the name given to football at Shrewsbury, was the same as they used for 'fagging'. It is reputedly derived from the Greek word *doulos*, meaning 'slave'. At Winchester in the early nineteenth century, two fags, one at either end, were even used as goalposts, the ball having to pass between their outstretched legs to score. Fags were also used as a means of boundary demarcation; that is, they were lined up around the pitch (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 54–5; 2005: 46–8).

Boarding on a fairly permanent basis presented the boys at public schools with increased leisure time away from the influence of adults relative to what they would have experienced at home. The boys did not only possess increasing opportunities; they also had ready-made colleagues and opponents with whom to enjoy these fresh outlets. The game of football in its various then-existing forms came to be prominent among the leisure activities with which they filled this 'leisure space'. The 'progress' of the game at this particular stage in its development, therefore, was ably assisted by the increased leisure time afforded in the public schools and by the presence together of hundreds of adolescent boys in particular places for extended periods of time. The fact that few if any headmasters attempted seriously to curb the game may have had something to do with the fact that it served to keep the majority of the boys on the school premises and away from trespassing on the lands of local farmers.

Just like in its folk antecedents, football in the public schools at this stage was governed by orally agreed rules, meaning that the character of the game varied over time and from school to school. Differences in play were perhaps mainly affected by decisions made in relation to the geographic peculiarities of particular local playing areas. The game was not yet played on pitches constructed and marked out specifically for playing Association Football or Rugby according to rules decided upon by an international or national governing body such as the Fédération Internationale de Football Association

(FIFA) or the Rugby Football Union (RFU). Locally specific traditions 'ruled the roost'. Despite such differences, however, handling the ball as well as kicking it were allowed at all the schools. Football in the public schools at this stage resembled its folk antecedents in this regard.

Most authorities who have so far written on the subject seem convinced that the pupils of each public school developed their own unique brands of football specifically because of the space and type of playing surface and surroundings available at their establishment (Shearman 1888: 271; Marples 1954: 107; Green 1953: 11; Macrory 1991: 23). It seems strange to us how so many historians apportion credit to inanimate objects such as walls, trees and hedges in their attempts to explain the development of football. In short, their explanations take the form, to a greater or lesser degree, of what one might call 'geographical' or 'environmental determinism' – explanations which are, in our view, sociologically deficient. That is the case because it must surely be more adequate to suggest that most rules evolved in the various institutions as pupils – especially those who were relatively powerful among their fellows generally, but perhaps mainly, in this case, in terms of their footballing prowess – considered and accepted different proposals or rule changes which were deemed in the cauldron of competition to be improvements to their game. It is also sociologically more plausible to suggest that the limits imposed by school surroundings may have been initially influential, for example, when the boys were 'collectively developing' their original games, but that the influence of such constraints would have diminished over time and that their place would have been increasingly taken by such social or social structural constraints as standardised 'pitches' which were laid down by the boys. Such geographical or physical constraints included those connected with 'The Island', the Bronze Age burial mound at Rugby that was surrounded until 1847 by water and which was referred to in the 1845 Rugby School football rules as follows: 'XXXIII The Island is all in goal' – i.e. that 'The Island' was considered to be part of the playing area, even though an obvious boundary of water divided it from the rest of the field. The acceptance and consequent employment of water in this connection is reminiscent of several folk games. We are thinking here especially of the fact that the participants were, and still are, often forced to 'negotiate' the River Henmore during the Ashbourne football game in Derbyshire. The Eton Wall Game, as its name implies, is dominated by the wall against which most of the action still takes place; the wall runs alongside the Slough–Windsor road. The 'hill' at Harrow plays a similarly important part in the form of football played at that school, though not, as one might expect, because the participants are required to struggle up a slope. The pitches are, in fact, situated at the bottom of the slope and, as such, all tend to become somewhat muddy and waterlogged when the game is being played. Matches, accordingly, often become trials of strength to release the mud-heavy ball from the mud-strewn surface. It is also necessary to realise that, looking at these games as a totality, the generations of boys attending these institutions amended their laws by small amounts – in step-by-step

adjustments as and when the need arose in the perceptions of those who were most powerful. Consequently, the modern games of football – i.e. in the first instance, Association and Rugby – have to be seen not as having been invented overnight, but rather as having emerged in the course of a lengthy, unplanned social process that was initially influenced by participants who were acting in relation to their physical surroundings; one which was continually dependent on game-related decisions taken by the players themselves, perhaps with some advice from their teachers (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 65; 2005: 57).

All the forms of public school football played at this stage could be described as rough and, compared with the game-forms that developed later, wild. In the 'scrimmages' – disorderly disputes to gain possession of the ball involving large groups of players – in Charterhouse 'cloisters football', for example, we are told that 'shins would be kicked black and blue; jackets and other articles of clothing almost torn into shreds; and fags trampled underfoot'. At Westminster, 'the enemy tripped, shinned, charged with the shoulder, got you down and sat upon you – in fact, might do anything short of murder to get the ball from you'. In Charterhouse 'field' football, furthermore, – i.e. in a form of the game played on a grass-covered pitch rather than 'in the cloisters' – 'there were a good many broken shins, for most of the fellows had iron tips to their very strong shoes and some freely boasted of giving more than they took'. Iron-tipped shoes were also used at Rugby where they were called 'navvies'. According to an Old Rugbeian reminiscing in the 1920s, navvies had 'a thick sole, the profile of which at the toe much resembled the ram of an ironclad' – i.e. a battleship. They were employed especially for purposes of 'hacking', the practice used for breaking up a scrimmage (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 55–7; 2005: 47–9).

The emergence of written rules and the early stages of the bifurcation of Association Football and Rugby

During the 1830s and 1840s, at a point where the cultural marginalisation of folk football was beginning to reach its peak, newer forms of the game that were more appropriate to the emergent social conditions and correlative values of an urbanising and industrialising society in which state-formation and civilisation were correlatively advancing began to develop in the public schools. Centrally involved in this process were the following six features:

(1) the committing of the rules of football to writing
(2) a stricter demarcation and limiting of the size and shape of the playing area
(3) the imposition of stricter limitations on the duration of matches
(4) a reduction in the numbers of players taking part
(5) an equalisation in the size of the contending teams
(6) the imposition of stricter regulations on the kinds of physical force that it was legitimate for the players to use.

It was in the course of what one might call this process of 'incipient modernisation' – which seems to have been more comprehensive than the comparable (and probably in part related) processes that were taking place in the wider society – that the very different Association and Rugby ways of playing football began recognisably to emerge out of the matrix of locally differentiated public school games. The scholars John Goulstone and Adrian Harvey have recently presented some evidence which shows that processes of limited modernisation also occurred around this time in contexts *outside* the public schools; that is, especially in the context of football connected with public houses and played for stake money. Until recently, scholars working on the history of football have invariably accepted the opinion that football went into decline in the latter part of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century, surviving as a vigorous and regularly practised pastime only, or perhaps mainly, in the public schools. Goulstone and Harvey, however, have shown that these scholars and the authors of the eighteenth and nineteenth century sources on which they relied were, to a limited degree, mistaken. What Goulstone and Harvey show is that football matches between sides of equal, but variable and not yet standardised, numbers were taking place in non-public school contexts at least around the same time as comparable developments were occurring in the public schools. They may even have preceded them. As we suggested earlier, these non-public school matches were generally pub-related, with stake money playing a significant part in their operation and continuity. This suggests that, as in the cases of cricket, boxing and horse racing in the eighteenth century, one aspect of the initial modernisation of football – the introduction of the practice of playing matches between sides of limited and equal numbers – was partly connected with gambling and incipient monetarisation, if not yet the full-blown commercialisation and professionalisation of the game. That said, however, in our opinion the currently available evidence points overwhelmingly to the public schools and universities (particularly Cambridge) as having formed the principal institutional *loci* where, not only the incipient modernisation of football but also and, more importantly, the bifurcation into the Association and Rugby forms took place. To return to our initial point, of the two forms of football to emerge from the public schools, Rugby appears to have been the first to begin to take on its distinctive profile.

As we have already suggested, it is important to realise that the development of football should be seen as a collective process in which no single individual or group deliberately 'invented' a particular game. As Norbert Elias would have expressed it, and as we suggested earlier, the process was '*men*-made' rather than 'man-made' (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 62; 2005: 53). It is also sociologically more plausible to suppose that Association Football and Rugby were co-produced. That is, they are best understood as having developed not simply within particular public schools in isolation, but within the wider social field formed by *all* the public schools and the admixture of industrialisation, urbanisation, state-formation and civilisation reached in Britain

between about 1830 and the 1860s. It was a stage when tensions between the landed classes and the rising middle class – or bourgeoisie – were growing more intense and, it seems reasonable to suppose, these intensifying class and status tensions were reflected in relations among the public schools, playing a part in the development of these, in many respects diametrically opposite, ways of playing football.

Assuming that the available data provide a reasonably reliable guide, it would seem that the first public school to commit its football rules to writing was Rugby. According to Marples (1954: 137) and Young (1968: 63), this process took place in 1846. In 1960, however, Eric Dunning found a set of laws dated 1845 in the library at Rugby School (Dunning, 1961; Macrory, 1991: 86–90). These rules were basically the same as those produced in 1846, except that they were preceded by a set of disciplinary and organisational rules which provide a useful clue as to why this process of codification may have taken place. The prefect-fagging system at Rugby had recently been reformed by Thomas Arnold, headmaster there from 1828–42. Basically, what Arnold achieved – we are referring here to his disciplinary not his academic achievements – was the transformation of the Rugby variant of the prefect-fagging system from a system of dual control which was conducive to persistent disorder, into a system of indirect rule which was conducive to greater harmony both in staff–pupil relations and in those among the boys themselves. There is, however, little evidence – unless one counts the visit of Queen Adelaide in the autumn of 1839 when Arnold accompanied her as she watched, at her own request, a game of football – that he was directly involved in the transformation of Rugby football which depended on this development. Indeed, as far as the currently available evidence suggests, the school's football rules were not committed to writing until 1845, three years after Arnold's death.

A crucial aspect of the reformed prefect-fagging system at Rugby, as far as the development of football was concerned, consisted of the fact that it permitted the masters to increase their power and control whilst simultaneously preserving a substantial measure of self-rule and independence for the boys. A system of informal assemblies which they called '*levées*' grew up – the name presumably derived from the practice of Louis XIV of France of holding meetings whilst rising from bed and dressing. Significantly, for present purposes, it was a 'Sixth Form *Levée*' (an assembly of senior boys) which produced the written rules of 1845, the first section of which was concerned with legitimising and tightening up the administrative role of the prefects in relation to football. These assemblies followed the practice of debating the rules on 'The Island' after matches: the boys would sit on a grassy knoll surrounded by water – in 1845 it was an island although today the knoll exists but the water is gone – and discuss whether or not to allow certain actions in their game.

Correlation, of course, does not necessarily imply causation. However, the fact that the available evidence points towards Rugby as having been both the first public school to achieve effective reform of its prefect-fagging system and

the first to commit its football rules to writing strongly suggests that these two processes were linked. There is reason, furthermore, to believe that besides Arnold's qualities as a teacher, the fact that effective disciplinary reform was first achieved at Rugby rather than at some other public school may have been connected with Rugby's relatively recent formation as a public school – it had been a local grammar school until the 1790s – and the fact that its pupils tended to come from lower ranks in the upper and middle classes than those at, for instance, Eton. The status discrepancy between masters and pupils would thus have been lower at Rugby, making that school correspondingly easier to control and to reform (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 74, 75; 2005: 64, 65). At Eton, though, only the 70 collegers would have tended to come from lower in the social scale, whilst the majority of the many more 'oppidans' would have come from considerably higher.[1]

If the surviving evidence is a reliable guide – and we think it is – the second public school to commit its football rules to writing was the socially more prestigious Eton, located next to Windsor on the opposite side of the River Thames and with its associations with the royal court. Written rules were produced there in 1847, only two years after the socially inferior Rugbeians had committed their football laws to writing. Evidently the size of teams was customary and taken for granted by Etonians at that time – Percy Young claims that eleven-a-side football was played at Eton as early as 1841 (Young, 1968: 67–8) – for there is no mention of it in the 1847 rules. The fact that matches between limited, equal numbers – 15 or 20 per side – also began at Rugby in 1839 or 1840, although matches between uneven sides continued to predominate, suggests the possibility that there were forms of communication among the public schools as far as football matters were concerned (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 90; 2005: 78). There may also have been some borrowing and modelling by the public schools in this regard from public house-related games in the wider society, and vice versa, i.e. from public schools to the public houses. We also believe that the Etonians' response to Rugby's codification was all the more significant because other major public schools did not follow this lead. On the contrary, as Table 2.2 indicates, their fellow public schools were positively tardy in the publication of their rules.

Furthermore, Dunning's original use of the concept of 'status rivalry' involved the suggestion that, in issuing rules in 1849, which were in many senses directly opposed to Rugby's written regulations of 1845, the Eton boys were deliberately attempting to challenge a school which they believed to be an obscure, upstart institution located somewhere in Middle England. At that time, much as now, the Eton boys firmly believed that their school was superior to Rugby in every respect, academically as well as in sporting terms. That the latter could possibly publish a set of football rules indicative of the high status of *their unique form* of the game would have been seen at the time as an overt challenge to Eton's exclusive standing both in the mid-Victorian educational community and in English, even British, society at large. It certainly seems unlikely that, because the two sets of rules were so diametrically

Table 2.2 Initial codification dates of football rules at the major English public schools

Rugby	1845	Rugby School archives
Eton	1847	Eton College archives
Shrewsbury	1855	Oldham, 1952: 235[a]
Uppingham	1857	Tozer, 1974: 57–8
Harrow	1858	Harrow School archives
Westminster	1860[b]	Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 98; 2005: 85
Charterhouse	1862[c]	Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 98; 2005: 85
Winchester	1863[d]	Sabben-Clare, 1981: 108

[a] The Shrewsbury rules are noted as 1855 by Oldham but the original copy of the rules at the school only says that it is taken from the score book of Richard Saul Ferguson, who attended the school from 1853–6.

[b] Date given to Eric Dunning in 1961 by J. D. Carleton, then headmaster of Westminster.

[c] Date given to Eric Dunning in 1961 by R. H. Crawford, then master in charge of football at Charterhouse.

[d] Steven Bailey (1995: 39) is probably correct when he says, 'I am sure that a printed edition of Winchester Football rules was only thought necessary when the debate was raging in the press about the adoption of a set of football rules as the "universal code" '. He continues in his end note: 'John D. Cartwright, in his series of articles on each school game, was supplied only with a written copy of the Winchester rules'. See also J. D. Cartwright, Chapter IV, "Football: the Game at Eton in the Field and the Winchester Rules" (*The Field*, 14 November 1863: 487). Cartwright refers to the receipt of the Winchester rules in *The Field* (28 December 1863: 581).

opposed, the issuing of the Eton rules, and, indeed, the form and content taken by the rules themselves, were an accidental or unconnected chance historical anomaly. However, the unearthing by Graham Curry in 1995 of a set of written rules for football as played 'in the field' at Eton, and dated October 1847 just a little over two years after the issuing of Rugby's original written regulations appears, we think, to make the whole argument even more convincing.[2]

Regarding variations in the use of hands – i.e. the biggest difference between the Association and Rugby forms of football – it is, we think, useful to view the various school football games in this period as differentially located on a continuum stretching, at one end, between an imaginary game with no handling at all, and, at the other, an imaginary game with no restrictions whatever on the use of hands. Seen in these terms, the Eton Field Game is positioned fairly closely to the former end, whilst the Rugby game is closer to the latter. The games of the other major public schools – Charterhouse, Harrow, Shrewsbury, Westminster and Winchester – would be ranged in no particular sequence between the two. However, they would all be closer to the end of the continuum occupied by the Eton Field Game than the position occupied by Rugby. That is because the boys of each of these schools favoured a mainly kicking rather than a handling and carrying form of football. But let us reiterate our major point: if we are right, it was the Eton and Rugby games that

were the most innovative and which diverged most from the range which had constituted the early nineteenth century norm.

Rugby football was easily the most aggressive, some might say violent, form of the game. Whilst some schools allowed certain belligerent acts, they also forbade actions which might have been construed as overly forceful. Again the forms of football played at Eton and Rugby stand at opposite ends of the continuum with no violent acts at all allowed in the Field Game. Indeed, Rule 20 of the latter shows explicit civilising tendencies when it states: 'If a player falls on a rouge, or bully, although not on the ball, and calls "Man Down" or calls for "Air", the said Bully, or Rouge, must be broken, and formed anew.'

The terms 'rouge' and 'bully' appear to require further explanation. Marples (1954: 111) enlightens us thus in this connection by writing:

> The scrummage, known as a 'bully', survives, but consists of only four players *per* side. There is no handling or passing, and the main tactic is to dribble the ball along the ground towards the opponents' goal. If it is kicked through, three points are scored. But there is an alternative way of scoring, akin to a 'try' in Rugby football. If in certain circumstances the ball is touched down over the goal-line, a 'rouge' (one point) is scored. The scoring side then has the option of trying to 'force' it, that is, drive the ball through the goal while it is held in a 'bully'.

Most schools operated a strict offside law which leads one to believe that it was regarded as 'highly ungentlemanly' to attempt to gain an advantage by trying to creep unnoticed into 'enemy territory'. Perhaps the origin of the Eton Field Game word 'sneaking' lies here: it was used to describe the more general word 'offside' or, as a phrase, 'off one's side'. Rugby and the other major public schools again took up juxtaposed positions when legislating for the act of scoring. The former is the only example of scoring a goal by kicking the ball *over* rather than *under* a cord or sticks and posts of a certain height.

William Webb Ellis – the final denial?

It is widely, and we think correctly, believed and argued that the Rugby game first acquired its distinctive form at Rugby School. What we find much more difficult to accept is the idea that this form came into existence as the result of a solitary deviant act by a single boy.[3] The act in question is said to have taken place in 1823 and the boy in question is said to have been one William Webb Ellis, who, 'with a fine disregard for the rules of football as played in his time, first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the Rugby game', i.e. carrying and running with the ball or 'running-in'.[4] Two conflicting explanations of the Webb Ellis episode exist.

Jennifer Macrory, formerly archivist at Rugby School, presents one side of the argument in her book, *Running with the Ball: The Birth of Rugby Football*, published in 1991. Macrory sets what she regarded as the facts before us as follows:

> The facts…are these. Running with the ball was unknown at Rugby before 1821, though it was practised in a limited way after 1830. A new ground and fluctuating numbers created different conditions of play during the 1820s leading to various changes which had become established among Arnold's pupils in the 1830s. Change was not taboo provided that it was approved by a consensus of leading players. Ellis himself persisted in practices which were not readily acceptable and carried sufficient weight as a praeposter and fine cricketer to be able to do as he pleased. He did not, however, succeed in persuading all the other leading players to adopt his methods, and was probably regarded as unfair more for refusing to accept the custom of consensus than for attempting an innovative move. He was a pushy character with a reputation, whether deserved or not, for bending the rules both at work and at play. He was named as the boy first remembered as running with the ball in an article written by a gentle, elderly antiquarian who had no part in the rivalries between the advocates of the various forms of football which had been promoted in the 1860s. Indeed Matthew Bloxam rather disapproved of the innovations which he saw in the Rugby game, and infinitely preferred it as it was in his youth, 'football and not handball'. In naming William Webb Ellis he intended to imply no commendation, and there is no reason to cast doubt on his reliability as a source.
>
> (Macrory, 1991: 34)

The aforementioned Matthew Bloxam first described Ellis's supposed act in 1876 in an article submitted to *The Meteor*, a Rugby School magazine,[5] in response to more general correspondence on the Rugby game in *The Standard*. Four years later, he again wrote to *The Meteor* with a similar claim. It reads:

> A boy of the name of Ellis, William Webb Ellis…who in the second half-year of 1823, was, I believe, a praeposter, whilst playing Bigside at football in that half year, caught the ball in his arms. This being so, according to the then rules, he ought to have retired back as far as he pleased, without parting from the ball, for the combatants on the opposite side could only advance to the spot where he had caught the ball, and were unable to rush forward until he had either punted it or had placed it for someone else to kick, for it was by means of these placed kicks that most of the goals were in those days kicked, but the moment the ball touched the ground the opposite side might rush on. Ellis for the first time disregarded this rule, and on catching the ball, instead of retiring backwards, rushed

> forwards with the ball in his hands towards the opposite goal, with what result as to the game I know not, nor do I know how this infringement of a well known rule was followed up, or when it became as it is now, a standing rule.
>
> (*The Meteor*, 22 December 1880, 157: 156)

Macrory goes on to describe Bloxam as 'a thoroughly honest antiquarian with an impeccable reputation for careful scholarly investigation' (Macrory, 1991: 29). However, Dunning and Sheard had presented a contradictory argument in 1979, specifically challenging aspects of Bloxam's supposed evidence. As they put it:

> There is reason to believe that the Webb Ellis story is a myth. It was first put forward by Bloxam in 1880,[6] but he had left the school in 1820, i.e. three years prior to the supposed event. His account, therefore, was based on hearsay recalled at a distance of over 50 years.
>
> (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 60; 2005: 52)

Despite the overlapping of the Rugby School careers of Bloxam and Ellis – they were in attendance together for five years – they were by no means exact contemporaries, though the brother of the former was at Rugby for nine years, a period that overlapped with that of Ellis (Macrory, 1991: 29), implying the possibility that Bloxam could have learned of Ellis's supposed act from his (Bloxam's) brother. Macrory herself accepts that Ellis's single alleged act did not have the effect of changing the rules of the game immediately, and admits that 'running with the ball' was merely introduced rather than firmly established during the 1820s (Macrory, 1991: 46).

In 1895, however, in a context of what one might call the 'intra-Rugby conflict' associated with the incipient separation of the game into Rugby Union and Rugby League, the Old Rugbeian Society, as representative of the former, convened a committee to explore the origins of the Rugby game and, with regard to Ellis's innovation, clearly stated that 'the innovation was regarded as of doubtful legality for some time, and only gradually became accepted as part of the game, but obtained customary status between 1830 and 1840 and was duly legalised first in 1841–2' (Old Rugbeian Society, 1897: 3). The committee, we are told, had indeed been 'requested by the Old Rugbeian Society to investigate these statements and also to enquire into the account of the origin of our game put forward on more than one occasion by the late Mr. Matthew Holbeche Bloxam' (Shearman, 1888: 272).

The Old Rugbeian report offers its support for the story penned by Matthew Bloxam and the telling of Webb Ellis's supposed exploit of running with the ball presumably held in his hand and arm. Yet careful examination of the correspondence sent to the Committee by Old Rugbeians suggests a different story. For example, the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, Thomas Hughes,

mentions an entirely new player, the Scotsman, Jem Mackie. According to Hughes:

Dear Sir,

> Your Committee have raised an old and warmly debated question of half a century back. In my first year, 1834, running with the ball to get a try by touching down within goal was not absolutely forbidden, but a jury of Rugby boys of that day would almost certainly have found a verdict of 'justifiable homicide' if a boy had been killed running in. The practice grew, and was tolerated more and more, and indeed became rather popular in 1838–39 from the prowess of Jem Mackie, the great 'runner-in'.
>
> Jem was very fleet of foot as well as brawny of shoulder, so that when he got hold of the ball it was very hard to stop his rush. He was a School House and Sixth Form boy, therefore on the numerically absurdly weak side in those two exciting matches of that time.[7] (He was M.P. for Kirkcudbrightshire in later years, and a very useful but silent member). The question remained debatable when I was Captain of Big Side in 1841–42 when we settled it (as we believed) for all time. 'Running in' was made lawful with these limitations, that the ball must be caught on the bound, that the catcher was not 'off his side', that there should be no 'handing on' but the catcher must carry the ball in and 'touch down' himself. Picking up off the ground was made absolutely illegal, as [was] running in from off your side – a ball caught by a player 'off his side' must be at once knocked on or the holder might be mauled; and no handing on was allowed. I am not familiar with the present rules but from looking on now and then I suppose our old settlement has been superseded; at least the game seems to me to have developed into much too much of hand-ball. I may be *laudator temporis acti* [a praiser of time past], but hold very strongly that the football of the fifties and early sixties was the finest form that football has ever attained. I don't doubt Matt. Bloxam was right that 'running in' was not known in his day. The 'Webb Ellis tradition' had not survived to my day.
>
> Ever yours most truly,
> Thos. Hughes

Hughes failed – perhaps through excessive modesty – to acknowledge the part that he himself had played in popularising Rugby football through the descriptions in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. He also clearly believed that Mackie, and not Webb Ellis, should be credited with popularising the action of running with the ball, thereby playing an important part in embedding the practice into the Rugby game. Yet the Old Rugbeian Committee ignored his pleadings, despite them being from a famous ex-pupil and former football captain at the school (Hughes was captain in 1841–2). Hughes also bemoaned the fact that the game had become more handball than football – something which is consistent with the Rugby–Eton rivalry hypothesis – for at the same time the Eton Field Game was continuing to develop as a minimal handling game.

In a second letter to the Committee, Hughes alluded to the practice of debating the rules on 'The Island' after a match, when the boys would sit on this grassy knoll surrounded by water on one side of their playing area and discuss whether to allow certain actions in their game. Since Hughes suggested that 'running-in' was rare during his first year, 1834 (see his first letter), although the practice had grown in popularity by Mackie's time (1838–9), the likelihood – assuming that the practice of debating on 'The Island' was in place in 1823 – is that Webb Ellis's supposed act of 1823 would have been rejected out of hand in post-match debate and regarded more as an isolated and rather foolish, perhaps even delinquent, act. Whatever turns out to be the case in this regard, it is clear that what we are dealing with here is more a social or collective, rather than a primarily individual, process.

Hughes wrote yet another letter, this time to a 'Mr. Wilson' on 18 March 1895 (Old Rugbeian Society, 1897). It confirms the continuation of the practice of post-match debate on 'The Island' during his days at the school:

Dear Mr. Wilson,

> I don't suppose you will find any entry of the rules as to 'running in' in writing amongst the old Bigside books, if indeed these still exist, which I should doubt. Our Bigside Football 'levies', at which such matters were settled, were held on the Island, or the little mound under the Elms, between Littleside and Bigside (I fancy it has disappeared like the moat) either before or after matches, during which sharp discussion had arisen whether such and such a goal should count, or the like. I certainly can't remember signing any written rules as Captain, but am quite clear about the practice having been settled, as in my last [letter].

There is a grain of hope in these discussions for those who supported the Webb Ellis myth. This appeared in a letter to the Old Rugbeian Committee, penned by Mr Thomas Harris who had entered the school in 1819, aged seven. Part of his correspondence, written to a man called – or more probably nicknamed after the illustrious Greek – 'Homer', and dated 13 May 1895, is reproduced below:

My Dear Homer,

> I will try and answer the questions submitted as to Rules of Football at Rugby in my time, ending with the year 1828.
>
> 1. Picking up and running with the ball in hand was distinctly forbidden. If a player caught the ball on a rebound from the ground, or from a stroke of the hand, he was allowed to take a few steps so as to give effect to a 'Drop-kick', but no more: subject, of course, to interruption from the adverse players. I remember Mr. William Webb Ellis perfectly. He was an admirable cricketer, but was generally regarded as inclined to take unfair advantages at Football. I should not quote him in any way as an authority.

By page 22 of their 1895 report, the Old Rugbeian Committee was ready to deliver its conclusion. It ran:

> It may, we think, be fairly considered to be proved from the foregoing statements, that (i) in 1820 the form of football in vogue in Rugby was something approximating more closely to Association than to what is known as Rugby football today; (ii) that at some date between 1820 and 1830 the innovation was introduced of running with the ball; (iii) that this was in all probability done in the latter half of 1823 by Mr. W. Webb Ellis, who is credited by Mr. Bloxam with the invention and whose 'unfair practices' were (according to Mr. Harris) the subject of general remark at the time. To this we would add that the innovation was regarded as of doubtful legality for some time, and only gradually became accepted as part of the game, but obtained a customary status between 1830 and 1840, and was duly legalised first by Bigside Levee in 1841–42 (as stated by Judge Hughes) and finally by the Rules of 1846.

The Old Rugbeian Committee even admitted to the flaws in Bloxam's evidence. They wrote:

> Mr. Bloxam's very circumstantial account of Mr. Ellis's exploit, though not that of an eye-witness (for he had left the school some three years before) cannot be ignored, and though we have been unable to procure any first-hand evidence of the occurrence, we are inclined to give it our support.
>
> (Old Rugbeian Society, 1897: 10–11)

Running with the ball was probably an accepted practice at Rugby by the 1830s, though rarely attempted. Undoubtedly its major aim – to score and secure a try at goal – was probably even more rarely achieved, though had Webb Ellis scored, his supposed action might have been remembered by a greater number of former pupils. If he really did pick up the ball and run with it in 1823, he was probably one of many, over a period of perhaps 20 years before 1838–9, who tried but failed to establish the legitimacy of this practice and it was Mackie, the 'great runner-in', who should surely be credited most with mastering and popularising the tactic. Unfortunately, Mackie's exploits occurred some 15 years later than those attributed to Webb Ellis and this undoubtedly swayed the Old Rugbeian Committee into accepting the priority of the latter's supposed act. To people convinced of the prestige-conferring power of age, 1823 was, after all, 15 years more exalted than 1838!

The evidence for Webb Ellis as the founder of the game is so thin, and that in support of Mackie so strong, that any even-handed judgement ought surely to find in favour of the latter. However, there is reason to believe that the period in which the Old Rugbeian enquiry took place may well have influenced the findings of the Committee. Indeed, one can put it more strongly than this: there is reason to believe that events in the 1890s were central in

leading to the establishment of the Old Rugbeian Committee in the first place (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 60; 2005: 52). Let us elaborate on this.

There can be little doubt that the decade of the 1890s was a difficult period in the history of Rugby football. The game had spread to the north of England where it had begun to emerge as a commercial spectacle with players and spectators drawn principally from the working class. This process of commercialisation, professionalisation and, dare one say it, 'proletarianisation', was conducive to intensification, and culminated in the bifurcation of the game – namely the split between Rugby Union and Rugby League, which took place at a meeting of Yorkshire and Lancashire clubs held at the George Hotel, Huddersfield, on Thursday 29 August 1895. After the meeting, the following statement was issued:

> The clubs here represented, forming the late Senior Competition, consider that the time is now opportune to form a Northern Rugby Football Union and will do their utmost to push forward as rapidly as possible the establishment of such a union.
>
> (*Yorkshire Post*, 30 August 1895. Quoted in Sheard, 1972: 299)

The issue itself had been forced by a Yorkshire Rugby Football Union proposal two years previously, which stated that 'players [should] be allowed compensation for *bona fide* loss of time' (Owen, 1955: 97). It is difficult to believe that it could have been a coincidence that the year, 1895, witnessed both the publication of the report by the Old Rugbeian Committee concerning the origins of their game, and the split between the RFU and the Northern Union – later to become the Rugby League. The report was occasioned by what Rugbeians perceived as the threat posed to *their* game by its spread to groups they considered to be 'alien' and 'inferior'. They were increasingly being beaten, quite literally 'at their own game', by teams representing these groups. The game was beginning to escape from their control and to follow directions which ran counter to their values. By giving pride of place in their report to the Webb Ellis story – an origin myth which locates the beginnings of Rugby football in their school – they were, it is reasonable to suggest, attempting to reassert their proprietorship in the face of a powerful 'alien' threat.

One sizeable error which the Committee of Old Rugbeians appeared to have made was to glorify and make more permanent the Webb Ellis story by erecting the commemorative tablet on the headmaster's wall in the Close in 1900. The tablet reads as follows:

> This stone
> commemorates the exploit of
> WILLIAM WEBB ELLIS
> who with a fine disregard for the rules of football
> as played in his time
> first took the ball in his arms and ran with it
> thus originating the distinctive feature of
> the Rugby game AD 1823

The Committee seemed to be championing an anti-hero by almost legitimising this act of unsporting behaviour, describing Webb Ellis's action as having been undertaken with 'a fine disregard' for the then accepted laws of the game, thus seemingly justifying the breaking of the established rules. Through erecting the tablet, they succeeded in reinforcing a myth. Despite the glorified wording of the inscription, the anachronism of its discovery and the defiance of the regulations involved, the Webb Ellis myth has rarely been challenged over the years. Yet although the authenticity of the episode is open to question, it cannot be doubted that in many quarters the story has proved perfectly acceptable and not been seriously disputed. The year is 2011, the setting is Eden Park, Auckland, and the New Zealand captain Richie McCaw is being presented with the Rugby World Cup trophy. The inscription on the silverware? The Webb Ellis Cup!

Let us look now at some other public school football rules of the time and undertake a thorough and intensive examination, in particular, of the rules of Rugby and Eton in the mid-nineteenth century. For reasons which we think will become clearer later, we have also included in this connection the 1858 rules of Sheffield Football Club, the 1863 rules of Cambridge University, and the 1863 laws of the then emergent Football Association (See Table 2.3).

Rules analysis and the use of hands

Under the headship of Thomas Arnold, the fame of Rugby School had begun to spread and, with it, the fame of their form of football. The Rugby boys, it seems reasonable to suppose, were hoping to draw attention to themselves by developing such a distinctive game. However, it would seem similarly not unlikely that, by developing a form of football that was equally distinctive but in key respects diametrically opposite to the game played at Rugby, the Etonians were deliberately attempting to put the 'upstart' Rugbeians in their place and to 'see off' this challenge to Eton's status as *the* leading public school *in all respects*. As Elias showed, status competition between upper class and rising middle class groups played an important part in the civilising processes of Europe (Elias, 2000). More particularly, in 'phases of colonisation', members of the latter would adopt the manners and standards of the former, leading these upper class groups in 'phases of repulsion' to develop, as means of status demarcation and exclusion, more refined standards involving the imposition of a demand for the exercise of even greater self-control. The hands are among the most important bodily implements of humans and, by placing a virtual taboo on their use in a game, the Etonians were demanding of players that they should learn to exercise self-control of a very high order. In an Association Football playing country today, where children learn from a young age to kick a ball and not to use their hands, this might not seem a particularly difficult demand. However, when it was first introduced, it must have been extremely difficult to resist the temptation. Indeed, we hear that when Etonians and others first tried to

Table 2.3 Comparison of early football rules

	Use of Hands	*Violent Play*	*Offside*	*Scoring*
Rugby School 1845	Fair catch Running in and carrying	Charging Hacking Holding	Strict	Over the bar Between the posts
Eton Field Game 1847	Stop the ball Touch when behind	Rouge	Three defenders Sneaking	Between the sticks but not above seven feet Also 'rouge'
Shrewsbury School 1855[a]	Catch allowed – then 'hoist' or fair kick	None	Strict	Between posts, any height
Sheffield FC 1858	Fair catch No knocking or pushing on	No holding or pushing Charging of place kick No hacking or tripping	None	Must be kicked
Uppingham School 1857	Fair catch Carrying	No tripping up Holding allowed	Strict	Kicked between poles and under crossbar
Harrow School 1858	Fair catch	Charging No holding, tripping or shinning	Strict	Kicked Jump through 'base' if close enough
Westminster School[b]	Fair catch – then half volley kick	Shinning Scrimmages by the railings	Strict	Between trees, any height
Thring's Simplest Game 1862[c]	Stop the ball and place it on the ground before the feet	No tripping, kicking or heel-kicking. No charging when opponent out of play	Strict	Between posts and under bar
Cambridge University 1863	Ball may be stopped but not held or hit	Charging only	Strict	Between poles at any height
Charterhouse School 1863[d]	Stopping only	No holding, pushing, kicking or tripping	Three defenders	Between flags and under cord

Table 2.3 (*cont.*)

	Use of Hands	*Violent Play*	*Offside*	*Scoring*
Football Association Draft November 1863	Fair catch Running with the ball	Hacking Charging No tripping or hacking unless opponent running with the ball	Strict	Between posts at whatever height Must be kicked
Winchester College[e] 1863	Fair catch Running with the ball if chased	Tripping allowed Hot (Scrum-like)	Strict	Kick the ball over opponents' goal line which was as wide as the pitch itself
Football Association December 1863	Fair catch No carrying	No tripping, hacking, holding or pushing	Strict	Between posts at whatever height Must be kicked

[a] The original Shrewsbury football was called 'douling', derived from the Greek word for 'slave'. Indeed, the punishment for missing douling was a 'kicking' (Charlesworth *et al.*, 1995: 6).

[b] The analysis attempted here is based on Markham's (1903: 92–5) description of the Westminster game during his time at the school – which ran from 1849–55. As we note here in the text, there are indications that the game, despite closely resembling its Rugby School counterpart in terms of the use of hands and shinning (hacking), would, over the next four to five years, move away from this type and gradually edge towards the Eton Field Game.

[c] Produced when J.C. Thring was an assistant master at Uppingham School.

[d] Our analysis has been carried out on the 1863 copy of the rules.

[e] We have used Bailey (1995: 40–1) for our analysis of the 1863 Winchester rules.

introduce the non-handling game to members of the working class, the latter were required to play holding a shilling or other coin and were allowed to keep it if they succeeded in not using their hands. The use of hands was and still is one of the main foci of conflict in football. It may be useful, therefore, to pause for a moment to analyse the differences between Rugby and Eton attitudes to the employment of hands in football. It seems appropriate in this connection that we should examine both the 1845 Rugby School 'laws' and the rules of the 1847 Eton Field Game in greater depth. The Rugby School laws of 1845 read:

1845 RUGBY SCHOOL FOOTBALL LAWS

Laws of Football Played at Rugby School,
28 August 1845

RESOLUTIONS

That only in cases of extreme emergency, and only by the permission of the heads of the sides, shall any one be permitted to leave the Close, after calling over, till the game be finished and consequently, that all dressing take place before that time.

That the punishment for absenting oneself from a match, without any real and well-grounded reason, be left to the discretion of any Praepostor.

That whenever a match is going to be played, the School shall be informed of it by the Head of the School in such manner as he shall think fit, some time before dinner on the day in question.

That no unnecessary delay take place in the commencement of the matches, but as soon as calling over be finished, the game be commenced.

That the old custom, that no more than two matches take place in the same week be strictly adhered to, of which, one must always take place on Saturday, without some strong cause to the contrary.

That all fellows not following up be strictly prohibited from playing any game in goal, or otherwise conducting themselves in any way which shall be deemed prejudicial to the interests of their side.

That in consequence of the great abuse in the system of giving notes to excuse fagging, &c, and otherwise exempt fellows from attendance at the matches, no notes shall be received which are not signed by one of the Medical Officers of the School, and countersigned by the Head of the House, or by a Master when the case specified is not illness.

That all fellows at Tutor during calling over, or otherwise absent, shall be obliged to attend as soon after as possible.

That the Head of the School take care that these resolutions be generally known among the School, and as far as the case may be they shall apply equally to the big sides.

That Old Rugbeians shall be allowed to play at the matches of Football, not without the consent, however, of the two heads of the sides.

RULES

I. FAIR CATCH, is a catch direct from the foot.
II. OFF SIDE. A player is off his side if the ball has touched one of his own side behind him, until the other side touch it.
III. FIRST OF HIS SIDE, is the player nearest the ball *on his side*.
IV. A KNOCK ON, as distinguished from a *throw on*, consists in striking the ball on with the arm or hand.
V. TRY AT GOAL. A ball touched between the goalposts may be brought up to either of them, but not between. The ball when *punted* must be within, when caught without the goal: the ball must be place-kicked and not dropped, even though it touch[ed] two hands, and it must go over the bar and between the posts without having touched the dress or person of any player. No goal may be kicked from touch.
VI. KICK OFF FROM MIDDLE, must be a place.
VII. KICK OUT must not be from more than ten yards out of goal if a place-kick, not more than twenty-five yards, if a punt, drop, or knock on.
VIII. RUNNING IN is allowed to any player on his side, provided he does not take the ball off the ground, or take it through touch.
IX. CHARGING is fair, in case of a place-kick, as soon as a ball has touched the ground; in case of a kick from a catch, as soon as the player's foot has left the ground, and not before.
X. OFF SIDE. No player being off his side shall kick the ball in any case whatever.
XI. No player being off his side shall hack, charge, run in, touch the ball in goal, or interrupt a catch.
XII. A player when off his side having a fair catch is entitled to a fair *knock on*, and in no other case.
XIII. A player being off his side shall not touch the ball on the ground, except in touch.
XIV. A player being off his side cannot put *on his side* himself, or any other player, by knocking or throwing the ball.
XV. TOUCH. A player may not in any case run with the ball in or through touch.
XVI. A player standing up to another may hold one arm only, but may hack him or knock the ball out of his hand if he attempts to kick it, or go beyond the line of touch.
XVII. No agreement between two players to send the ball *straight out* shall be allowed on big side.
XVIII. A player having touched the ball straight for a tree, and touched the tree with it, may drop from either side if he can, but the opposite side may oblige him to go to his own side of the tree.
XIX. A player touching the ball off his side must *throw* it *straight out*.
XX. All matches are drawn after five days, but after three if no goal has been kicked.

XXI. Two big side balls must always be in the Close during a match or big-side.
XXII. The discretion of sending into goal rests with the heads of sides or houses.
XXIII. No football shall be played between the goals till the Sixth match.
XXIV. Heads of sides, or two deputies appointed by them, are the sole arbiters of all disputes.
XXV. No strangers, in any match, may have a place kick at goal.
XXVI. No hacking with the heel, or above the knee, is fair.
XXVII. No player but the first on his side, may be hacked, except in a *scrummage*.
XXVIII. No player may wear projecting nails or iron plates on the heels or soles of his shoes or boots.
XXIX. No player may take the ball out of the Close.
XXXI. No player may stop the ball with anything but his own person.
XXXI. Nobody may wear cap or jersey without leave from the head of his house.
XXXII. At a big-side, the two players highest in the School shall toss up.
XXXIII. The Island is all in goal.
XXXIV. At little side the goals shall be four paces wide, and in kicking a goal the ball must pass out of the reach of any player present.
XXXV. Three Praepostors constitute a big-side.
XXXVI. If a player take a punt when he is not entitled to it, the opposite side may take a punt or drop, without running if the ball has not touched two hands.
XXXVII. No player may be held, unless he is himself holding the ball.
As these Rules have now become the Laws of the game, it is hoped that all who take an interest in Football will contribute all in their power to enforce their observance.

The 1847 Eton Field Game rules were as follows:

1847 ETON FIELD GAME RULES

1. The game begins strictly at half past twelve, unless previously agreed on.
2. At the expiration of half the time, goals must be changed, and a bully formed in the middle.
3. Play is to cease at half past one, or punctually at the expiration of the hour agreed on.
4. To prevent dispute it is better to appoint, before the game begins, two umpires: one chosen by each party; and a referee to be agreed on by both parties, whose decision, if the umpires differ, is to be final.

5. It will be the duty of the umpires to enforce the rules: to decide on disputes that arise; to break a rouge or bully, when necessary, and to see fair play for both parties.
6. If a player shall have begun the game and shall be hurt, or otherwise disabled from going on, no substitute may take his place.
7. If a player be not present, when the game begins, no substitute may play, until he comes, but the game must proceed without him.
8. The goal sticks are to be seven feet out of the ground; a goal is gained when the ball is kicked between them provided it is not over the level of the top of them.
9. The space between each goal stick is to be eleven feet.
10. A rouge is obtained by touching the ball first, after it has been kicked behind.
11. When a rouge has been obtained the ball must be placed one yard from the centre of the goal; and no player is to touch the ball, or let it rest against his foot, until the player, who has obtained the rouge, has kicked the ball himself.
12. No player may run behind the goal sticks before the ball be kicked behind, either to prevent or obtain a rouge.
13. Should the player, who has prevented the rouge have been behind before the ball, a player of the opposite side may touch it, and obtain a rouge.
14. If a ball go behind the goal sticks and without being touched, be kicked before them again, any player of the opposite side, if he can touch it first, may obtain a rouge.
15. If the ball be kicked behind by a cool kick, that is, when no one of the opposite side be bullying the kicker, no rouge, whoever touches it, can be obtained.
16. If a rouge be obtained before the time for leaving off expires, and the time expires before the rouge is finished, the said rouge must be played out, until either a goal be obtained, or the ball be kicked outside the side sticks, or behind the goal sticks.
17. No rouge, or goal obtained after the time expires is admissible, except in the case of Rule 16.
18. The Bully, or Rouge must be broken immediately a player falls on the ball and formed anew.
19. No crawling on the hands and knees with the ball between the legs is allowed.
20. If a player falls on a rouge, or bully, although not on the ball, and calls 'Man Down' or calls for 'Air', the said Bully, or Rouge must be broken, and formed anew.
21. The umpires must use their discretion on the 15th, 18th and 20th Rules: and may make a player get up from the ground, if he has fallen without breaking the rouge.
22. Hands may only be used to the stop the ball, or touch it when behind. The ball must not be carried, thrown or struck by the hand.

23. A rouge may be obtained by touching the ball, when on the line of the goal sticks.
24. No player, if behind, before the ball, may pick it up, or carry it to one of his own side to touch, but must leave it where it stopped.
25. The ball is dead when outside, or on a line with the side sticks, and must not be kicked.
26. When the Ball is dead, it must be thrown in, or a bully formed parallel to the place where it stopped: these are to take place alternately.
27. If the Ball bounces off a bystander or any other object outside the line of the side sticks, it may be kicked immediately on coming in.
28. If the Ball, when kicked out, bounds from any object without coming in, it must be put in parallel to the place where it struck that object.
29. A player is considered to be sneaking when only three, or less than three, of the opposite side are before him and may not kick the ball.
30. One goal outweighs any number of rouges. If each party has an equal number of goals, that party wins which has the majority of rouges in addition to the goals. If no goals are obtained, the game is decided by rouges.
31. These Rules may be altered and revised in any way by the Keeper of the Field at any future time, with the approbation of the first four choices.
32. Should the decision be equally divided, the first keeper must have the casting vote.
33. No person can keep the field two football terms running unless it is mutually agreed on.
34. No Keeper of the Field can keep the Wall during the same term.

October 1847
H.H. Tremayne
A.R. Thompson[8]

There is no direct reference in the 1845 Rugby rules to the fact that a player was allowed to catch and carry the ball, though this may have been thought too obvious to include. However, Rule 8, stating that 'running in' is permissible, clearly shows that the game had been given a catching and carrying form, which therefore necessitated the use of the hands. It appears a little surprising that the Eton rules do not mention the restriction on the use of hands until Rule 22 and, even then, hands were not disallowed completely. However, the second sentence is emphatic enough because of the use of the words 'must not', though the crux of the matter is that they outlawed carrying. The exact rules read as follows:

RUGBY: Rule 8: Running in is allowed to any player on his side, provided he does not take the ball off the ground, or take it through touch.

ETON: Rule 22: Hands may only be used to stop the ball, or touch it when behind. The ball must not be carried, thrown or struck by the hand.

The Rugby rules of 1845 also contain three references to the act of throwing the ball. They read as follows:

> I. FAIR CATCH, is a catch direct from the foot.
>
> IV. A KNOCK ON, as distinguished from a *throw on*, consists in striking the ball on with the arm or hand.
>
> VIII. RUNNING IN is allowed to any player on his side, provided he does not take the ball off the ground, or take it through touch.
>
> XIV. A player being off his side cannot put on his side himself, or any other player, by knocking or throwing the ball.
>
> XIX. A player touching the ball off his side must throw it straight out.

In the 1847 Eton Field Game rules, there are nine references to touching the ball (presumably with the hands) in scoring a 'rouge';[9] one reference to throwing the ball in; and, finally, one to using the hands to stop the ball. It would appear incorrect, therefore, to state that these rules regulated for an *absolute* taboo on handling the football, although there remained, of course, an absolute taboo on carrying, making the Eton form of football, as Association Football is today if one includes the actions of the goalkeeper and a player taking a throw in, one of *minimal handling and no carrying*.

Each game defined the amount of physical contact allowable between participants. At Rugby School they included:

> IX. CHARGING is fair, in case of a place-kick, as soon as a ball has touched the ground; in case of a kick from a catch, as soon as the player's foot has left the ground, and not before.
>
> XVI. A player standing up to another may hold one arm only, but may hack him or knock the ball out of his hand if he attempts to kick it, or go beyond the line of touch.
>
> XXVI. No hacking with the heel, or above the knee, is fair.
>
> XXVII.No player but the first on his side may be hacked, except in a *scrummage*.
>
> XXVIII.No player may wear projecting nails or iron plates on the heels or soles of his shoes or boots.
>
> XXXVII.No player may be held, unless he is himself holding the ball.

Whilst the game of Rugby School football continued to be a largely physical affair where brute force and strength were preferable attributes to skill, there was still much evidence of 'civilising' processes taking place. There were limits placed on where an opponent could be hacked, for example. Hacking above the knees in the more tender areas was prohibited and restrictions were also placed on equipment and holding. However, in the Eton Field Game rules of 1847 there were hardly any laws limiting violence. There is certainly no mention of the Rugby practice of hacking; that is, kicking an opponent on

the shin regardless of whether he had possession of the ball or not. As we have previously stated, only one Eton rule dealt with vigorous play – that allowing 'air' to someone caught in the middle of a 'bully' or 'rouge'. There appears to be a safety aspect to this rule and the Eton Field Game must have seemed a much tamer spectacle when compared to its Rugby counterpart. That the players of the latter were more concerned with overt manliness is illustrated in a quote from an Old Rugbeian in 1860 in which he compared the current game with that of his schooldays only two or three years earlier:

> you haven't a chance of getting a decent fall in the present day; and no wonder either when you see young dandies 'got up regardless of expense', mincing across Big Side, and looking just as if their delicate frames wouldn't survive any violent contact with the ball. Hang the young puppies! We shall have fellows playing in dress boots and lavender-coloured kid gloves before long…My maxim is hack the ball on when you see it near you, and when you don't, why then hack the fellow next to you.
>
> (*The New Rugbeian*, Vol. III, 1860; quoted in Evers 1839: 177–9. Quoted in Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 95; 2005: 82–3)

Finally, and providing the third aspect in which the Eton Field Game was virtually diametrically opposed to the Rugby School way of playing, we must examine the methods of scoring. Part of Law V in the Rugby rules stated that in order to score a goal, the ball 'must go over the bar and between the posts'. The corresponding rule in the Field Game at Eton –Rule 8 – stated: 'The goal sticks are to be seven feet out of the ground; a goal is gained when the ball is kicked between them provided it is not over the level of the top of them.' The development of football forms had not yet reached the stage where a tape or crossbar joined the tops of the 'goal sticks' or goal posts, but there is a clear indication that, if one existed, the ball must pass beneath them in order to register a goal.

Morris Marples speculated in 1954 that the first schools where a non-handling game developed were Westminster and Charterhouse (Marples, 1954: 140). However, the currently available evidence suggests that he was wrong. For example, writing in 1903, Captain Francis Markham, a former Westminster pupil, remembered that 'when I first came, running with the ball (Rugby fashion) was allowed, and "fist-punting", when you had the ball in hand – hitting the ball with your doubled fist' were both acceptable in Westminster football until 1851 or 1852 (Markham, 1903: 95).[10] In other words, there seems to have been an interval of four to five years between the virtual abolition of handling at Eton and the outlawing of such a practice at Westminster. Perhaps after a period of experimentally introducing a Rugby element into their football, the Westminster boys were following Eton's lead. Similarly, when written rules were produced at Charterhouse in 1862, stopping the ball with one's hands and catching were both allowed (Dunning, 1961: 104). According to Shearman (1889: 289), furthermore, the rules at Harrow included four governing the use

of hands as late as the 1880s. It would thus seem that Eton was the first public school to impose a virtual taboo on the use of hands. It follows accordingly that the Eton Field Game was probably the earliest prototype of Association Football.

The Eton Field Game as a prototype of Association Football

In order to take our argument a step further, we need to examine the substantial amount of evidence which suggests that some nineteenth century individuals believed strongly that there existed a distinct resemblance – and perhaps also what one might call a 'developmental' or 'causal link' – between Association Football and the Eton Field Game. Let us review this evidence.

The author of a letter to *The Times* which was published on 5 October 1863 – exactly three weeks prior to the inaugural meeting of the Football Association on 26 October that year – commented as follows: 'I am myself an Etonian, and the game of football as played by us differs essentially in most respects from that played at Westminster, Rugby, Harrow and most of the London clubs.' This created what one might call a 'spree' of correspondence from footballers with clear preferences for their own public school forms of the game (*The Times*, 5–10 October 1863). Furthermore, in March 1864, a correspondent to *Chambers' Journal of Popular Literature, Science and Arts* (12 March 1864: 176) suggested similarly that: 'Eton football is very different from that of Rugby. They do not allow the ball to be caught or carried.' Also worthy of mention is a point made in an article published in the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* in March 1878 describing a Scottish Association Football victory over England by seven goals to two. What the author wrote is suggestive; namely that: 'The game, we believe, somewhat resembles that which is cultivated at Eton; at least the Rugby practices of carrying the ball, of mauling, and throttling are not in use' (7 March 1878). Finally, Alfred Gibson and William Pickford, writing in 1906 (Vol. 1: 23), appear to agree with us in part when they suggested that, 'Eton…legislated against the use of hands, and so marked the incipient divergence between the Association and Rugby codes. It was lawful to stop the ball with the hand, but not to catch, carry, throw or strike it.' In summary, consciousness of the public school origins of what, if we are right, were the two most strongly diverging games, seems to have been quite widespread at that time.

Why should the boys at Eton have wanted to produce such a game? One doubtful possibility is that the Etonians produced an almost entirely kicking game completely oblivious to what was happening at the other public schools. Indeed, pupils at the school would not merely have been recruited locally. They would have been 'boarders'; that is, living at the school during term time and at home during holidays and this would have resulted in a great deal of cross-cultural mixing of ideas on a variety of topics – including football. These institutions would have been veritable 'melting pots' and the boys

attending them were unlikely to have been 'cultural dopes'. In addition, they considered their school to be the leading public school in all respects. It was the second oldest, only Winchester being able to take pride in a longer history. Having been founded by Henry VI in 1440, Eton was also able to boast about being a royal foundation. Moreover, being located next to Windsor, it continued to have connections with the royal court and to recruit its pupils mainly from the highest social strata. One can easily imagine how the Eton boys would have reacted to the development of a distinctive way of playing football at Rugby – in their eyes at the time an obscure Midlands establishment which catered primarily for *parvenues*. One writer commented thus on the distinct differences between the two games:

> Football in the 'Field' at Eton is a very different game to that played in the school close at Rugby….In these matches, there are but twenty-two players instead of the seventy or eighty as in the Rugby game, and there is no cross-bar to the goal posts and catching or holding the ball, and, consequently running with it are not allowed.
>
> (John Dyer Cartwright, *London Society*, 5, 1864: 251)

Even as late as 1863, the editorial of the *Eton College Chronicle* was sarcastically scathing about the Rugby game when compared to their own football code. The Etonian editors wrote:

> in drawing up the Rules we would venture to suggest that the game be what is called 'Football', which term we understand to mean a game of kicking a ball; that is to say, not a game in which the ball should be carried, as it is at some places; nor a game for kicking each other, in which case we suppose it would have been called 'kick-fellow' or 'shin-mate'.
>
> (*Eton College Chronicle*, 10 and 15 October 1863)

Whilst the boys in each school continued to enjoy their own particular brand of football, the diffusion of the game was about to move into a more significant phase where the proponents of each form clashed directly over their worth and, perhaps for the first time, had to consider sporting compromise as a solution to their continuing enjoyment and extended participation. In our next chapter, we shall accordingly pay more attention to the universities of Cambridge and Oxford – where the ongoing development of football was to continue apace.

Notes

1 The Eton Wall Game, as played on St Andrew's Day (30 November) each year, is contested by the collegers and the oppidans.

2 In 1960 the leading boys at Eton would not permit Eric Dunning to have access to their records. However, by 1995 Graham Curry was allowed to view the school's football records and came upon the Field Game rules of 1847.

3 Webb Ellis's 'single act' has been largely accepted by the following: Young, 1968: 63; Marples, 1954: 117–18; Magoun, 1938: 85; Macrory, 1991: 34.
4 This forms part of the inscription of the commemorative tablet on the headmaster's wall in the close at Rugby School, which was erected by the Old Rugbeian Society in 1900.
5 *The Meteor*, 10 October 1876: 528. Each major public school published at least one magazine or journal. Below is a list:

ETON: *Eton College Chronicle*
RUGBY: *The Meteor; The New Rugbeian*
HARROW: *The Harrovian*
CHARTERHOUSE: *The Carthusian*
WESTMINSTER: *The Elizabethan*
WINCHESTER: *The Wykehamist*
SHREWSBURY: *The Salopian*

The school magazine chronicled events for pupils past and present and was often a source of biographical material. However, as J. A. Mangan (1981: 243) points out, magazines 'always perpetuated established values rather than challenged them'. This particular point is surely relevant in our study of the Webb Ellis episode and its reporting in *The Meteor*.
6 Dunning and Sheard were incorrect to suggest 1880 as the date of Bloxam's entry into the 'Webb Ellis debate'. As previously stated, Macrory has since discovered his correspondence to *The Meteor* of October 1876.
7 During the 1830s, scratch matches at Rugby School began to be replaced by games between sides representing particular groups. One of the most important was that between School House, the largest single house, and the rest of the school. Although the former were absurdly outnumbered, they more than made up for this with better organisation, leadership and tactics. (See Macrory, 1991: 57–8). The account given in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Chapter 5) of a School House v. the Rest of the School game is particularly revealing.
8 Both Tremayne and Thompson were oppidans. They were, therefore, fee-paying pupils from the upper and upper middle classes. Tremayne was also 'Captain of the Boats' at Eton.
9 Interestingly, the scoring of a rouge is still used in Canadian Football. The gaining of one point in this way appears similar to the 'safety', worth two points, in American Football.
10 It may also be pertinent to note that, according to Bailey (1995: 41), the 1863 Winchester rules allowed tripping, though on their revision in 1876 this was strongly prohibited.

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3 The universities and codification

In the middle of the nineteenth century, as far as football was concerned, support began to polarise around the Rugby model and what we can now recognise as its embryo Association Football counterparts. Besides the Eton Field Game, which was arguably dominant in this regard, the latter included its equivalents at Charterhouse, Harrow, Shrewsbury, Westminster and Winchester. In short, the bifurcation of Association Football and Rugby, which appears to have been set in motion principally by Eton–Rugby rivalry in the 1830s and 1840s, was being perpetuated on a more widespread level. A parallel step involved the game's diffusion to the universities of Cambridge and Oxford and the consequent growth in the importance of football in its various forms as a leisure activity at these institutions. A significant centre of diffusion was Cambridge University or, to be more specific, Trinity College. It is our particular intention to trace the development of the game there and also to establish further the hypothesis of status rivalry between the public schools of Eton and Rugby and its effects on the development of what have since become, worldwide, the two major forms of football: Association and Rugby.

Early football at the universities

The significance of the universities of Cambridge and Oxford for the development of Association Football – there is, as will be seen, far more relevant evidence that emanates from the former – lies principally in the fact that it was at those institutions that young upper and middle class adult males began for the first time regularly to play the emergent, newer forms of football. These forms began to be engaged in by undergraduates in the late 1830s in conjunction with the spread of the 'games cult' to the universities, a fact which is hardly surprising since the majority of students came from public schools. Sport, of course, was already established as a university institution. What happened in conjunction with the games cult was that ball games – together with rowing, cricket and track and field athletics – began to replace sports such as hunting at the top of the prestige hierarchy of university sports. It was, in other words, a largely 'civilising development' in Elias's sense. Cricket and rowing were the first sports to become established at

the universities but, from about 1850, devotees of football began to vie for a higher position on the ladder of university sporting prestige for their games. As they gained acceptance, men from different schools, brought up according to different football traditions, were thrown together. Since only relatively small numbers from particular schools found themselves in the same college at any one time, in order to secure regular and meaningful contests it was necessary for 'old boys' (former pupils) of different schools to play together. However, the absence of common rules meant that such matches were often full of conflict.

We know that football as an organised activity had certainly been played in public schools at least as early as the 1820s. It therefore seems fair to assume that certain forms of the game – either identical models of various public school games or variants of these – were being played in the universities of Cambridge and Oxford as early as the 1830s. Boys with some knowledge of how to play, therefore, and in many cases also with a desire to do so, would have filtered through the educational system and on to universities by that time. According to the extant data, however, it was the undergraduates of Cambridge who sprang more often to the fore, providing us with useful insights into the ways in which the game was continuing to develop through one of England's major educational institutions. However, the early days were rarely without difficulty, as football's adherents strove to establish their new sport.

Early information is rather sketchy, though Dr George Elwes Corrie provided an interesting insight. His studies began at St Catherine's College, Cambridge, in 1813, and at the time the following extract was written he held the position of Master of Jesus College. A reference to football appeared in his diary for 10 December 1838. He wrote, 'In walking with Willis we passed by Parker's Piece,[1] and there saw some forty gownsmen[2] playing at football. The *novelty* and liveliness of the scene was very amusing' (Corrie, 1890: 108). Corrie's description of the game as a novelty supports the contention that, in the late 1830s, football was a recent addition to university sporting life. John Venn, in a comment which also referred to the 1830s, noted that:

> Hockey and football were left to the boys. I have been since informed that some devotees of what was commonly regarded as a school game occasionally indulged in obscure places, in the peculiar art that they had acquired at Rugby or Eton. But I am certain that I never saw the game played, and that no friend of mine ever practised it. This is confirmed by my brother, who was four years my junior. He tells me that he remembers a friend coming into Hall and relating that he had seen a number of Rugby men, mostly freshmen, playing a new game: that 'they made a circle round a ball and butted each other'.
>
> (Venn, 1913: 280)

As one can see, Venn was quite scathing about the new game in general, whilst his brother appeared particularly unimpressed by the Rugby form. These

early references to football suggest that the game remained in a rudimentary state of development at that stage and that the Rugby and Eton forms were the most practised.

Thomas George Bonney gave a further insight into undergraduate days, his own having begun at St John's in 1852. He commented that, 'In winter we often got up a game of football on Parker's Piece. None of the Colleges, so far as I remember, then had "grounds" of their own' (Bonney, 1921: 17). However, during the decades of the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s, the footballers of Cambridge University began to codify their pastime and were destined eventually, more particularly in 1863, to have a lasting influence on the development of the Association form.

Codification

The currently available evidence suggests that there was an attempt to form a football club at Cambridge University and possibly to codify a set of common rules as early as 1837. Edgar William Montagu, an Old Salopian (former pupil of Shrewsbury School) from 1830–8, attended Gonville and Caius College between 1837–42.[3] He claimed in a letter written on 10 June 1897 to George Fisher – who was conducting research for a forthcoming book on the history of the school – that he was involved in an early attempt at codification (Fisher, 1899). He wrote that,

> I and six other representatives of the School made a Club, and drew up rules that should equalise the different game. I had it in my hands just now when looking for the plan I spoke of. It was then we had two matches on Parker's Piece. I fancy I was our best man, having the speed. But, in the second match, just as I gave the return off kick, a Rugbeian bore down on me after the kick off and kicked my knee cap half off so that I had to wait in goal all the contest.

Montagu also wrote to Edward Tudor-Owen[4] on 3 December 1899 that 'I was one of seven who drew up the rules for football, when we made the first football club, to be fair to all the schools' (Shrewsbury School Archives – Miscellaneous Letters File). In all likelihood, Montagu, recalling events 60 years earlier, may have made mistakes with the exact details – but there seems no reason to disbelieve his basic assertion that compromise rules were framed at Cambridge in the late 1830s or early 1840s. However, as he notes in the correspondence of 10 June 1897, his recollections may have been more vivid than we might think: '…as you say, it is difficult to get at exactness, though to us who were actually there, all is a photograph' (Fisher, 1899). Unfortunately copies of these rules have not survived. The Shrewsbury School Register notes that Montagu left in 1838, whereas Venn (1940) records that he was admitted at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, on 8 December 1837. In a letter from Edgar Montagu to George Fisher, dated

10 June 1897, Montagu maintained that he did not begin at Cambridge until 1838 (Shrewsbury School Archives, 'Montagu 3'). Even if he had begun his university career in late 1837, it seems improbable that Montagu would have possessed sufficient influence to partake in significant revision of the rules of football as early as that date. This evidence leads us to conclude that the first Cambridge University Football Rules should, at present, be dated tentatively as having been constructed in 1838.

Another Old Salopian, Lewis William Denman, was also involved in this flurry of communication. He attended Magdalene College, Cambridge, between the years 1839–44, making him an almost exact contemporary of Montagu. He recalled an annotation on a letter dated 29 November 1899 which was sent to him for comment by Tudor-Owen. It reads as follows:

> I know two games at football in my time were played at Cambridge. The first, Shrewsbury and Harrow v. Rugby and Winchester, in which I did not play, but was won by S & H. The second in which I did play. We would not let Rugby (it was Rugby v. Shrewsbury) "Carry the Ball". We beat them 4 games out of five.
>
> (Shrewsbury School Archives – Miscellaneous Letters File)

George Fisher (1899: 404), in his book *Annals of Shrewsbury School*, similarly noted that,

> There was a good deal of football played in the later years of Dr. Butler's head-mastership [Butler was head from 1798–1836] by G. C. Uppleby,[5] Robert Phayre, Edgar Montagu, Lewis Denman, and other athletes of the school. Some of these devoted football players were instrumental shortly afterwards in starting a football club at Cambridge and drawing up rules, which were framed with the view of enabling players from other schools to join the club on fairly equal terms. One year Shrewsbury men up at Cambridge managed to get together fifteen players for a match against a Rugby twenty-five, and the match ended in a draw, neither side kicking a goal.

It seems possible to suggest that compromises over rules may have been easier to arrange in those days than one might have imagined. However, whilst this quotation may suggest that handling was not seen as decisive by Rugbeians at that time, it perhaps also confirms that this particular practice was regarded as especially repugnant, not only to Etonians but also to other ex-public schoolboys – other than those from Rugby School – who were actively involved with football at Cambridge in the early 1840s.

Football was only played sporadically at the university around this time. There is evidence for this in the writing of Albert Pell, an Old Rugbeian who entered Trinity College in 1839. He describes the game as being 'unknown' at that point and noted the difficulties he experienced in simply raising enough players to take part. He said,

> I had to go, therefore, into the highways and lanes, and there I could only find twelve willing to make the venture. Among them was a host himself, Barstow, afterwards a sitting magistrate in London.[6] He must have weighed about twice what I did, but he undertook to be the captain of one side of six, and I of the other seven, and soon we had our first 'puntabout' on Parker's Piece, and in a month we had our goals up, with a Bohemian in charge of them and our coats, when we played. Then we began, objects of wonder and at first contempt. In time curiosity, with the renown of Barstow's deportment, style of play, and language, attracted quite a little circle of onlookers. We played the Rugby game, of course, which I had some difficulty in teaching Barstow, and still more in keeping him to the rules of it when he was master of them. He was full of vigour and wit, sometimes rather broad, but we established football at Cambridge.
>
> (Pell, 1908: 70–1)

The status of Trinity College as a centre of diffusion, as we shall discuss later in this chapter, is certainly strengthened by the fact that both Pell and Barstow attended that institution. Although the latter clearly learned the Rugby rules, there still existed areas of tension between football codes and their protagonists – as is shown in Barstow's consistent failure to play within Rugby's laws, despite being familiar with them.

A further attempt at codification was made in 1846. Two more Old Salopians – John Charles (J. C.) Thring and Henry de Winton, together with some Old Etonians – are said to have played several games on Parker's Piece, though, again, written versions of their rules have not survived (G. Green, 1953: 15). We believe it worthy of note that several former pupils of Shrewsbury School should have been involved in early efforts at framing compromise rules at Cambridge. Two years later, in 1848, there was stronger evidence that football rules were being codified. This is contained in a letter sent on 8 October 1897 by Henry Charles Malden (G. Green, 1953: 15–6), who entered Trinity College in 1847. In his letter he related the events that took place at a gathering at that college one year later. Malden was one of two representatives chosen primarily because he had *not* attended a major public school – having been educated at Windlesham House, a preparatory school run by his father in Brighton to which Henry would return as headmaster (Wilson, 1937). Malden wrote as follows:

> I went up to Trinity College, Cambridge. In the following year an attempt was made to get up some football in preference to the hockey then in vogue. But the result was dire confusion, as every man played the rules he had been accustomed to at his public school. I remember how the Eton men howled at the Rugby men for handling the ball. So it was agreed that two men should be chosen to represent each of the public schools, and two, who were not public school men, for the 'Varsity. G. Salt and myself were chosen for the 'Varsity. I wish I could remember the others.

> Burn, of Rugby, was one; Whymper, of Eton, I think, also.[7] We were 14 in all I believe. Harrow, Eton, Rugby, Winchester, and Shrewsbury were represented.
>
> We met in my rooms after Hall, which in those days was at 4 pm; anticipating a long meeting. I cleared the tables and provided pens, ink and paper. Several asked me on coming in whether an exam was on! Every man brought a copy of his school rules,[8] or knew them by heart, and our progress in framing new rules was slow. On several occasions Salt and I, being unprejudiced, carried or struck out a rule when the voting was equal.
>
> We broke up five minutes before midnight. The new rules were printed as the 'Cambridge Rules', copies were distributed and pasted up on Parker's Piece, and very satisfactorily they worked, for it is right to add that they were loyally kept, and I never heard any public school man who gave up playing from not liking the rules.
>
> Well, sir, years afterwards someone took those rules, still in force at Cambridge, and with a very few alterations they became the Association Rules. A fair catch, free kick (as still played at Harrow) was struck out. The offside rule was made less stringent. 'Hands' was made more so; this has just been wisely altered.

It will not have escaped the reader's notice that Malden noted that there were 14 attendees at the meeting, though he could only recall the names of four of them. It is difficult, therefore, to draw conclusions about the numbers involved from each school and the comparative of weight of opinion expressed. It must be significant, however, that the only extant attendees all attended Trinity College. It is also significant, we think, that Malden stressed the conflict between Old Rugbeians and Old Etonians at this meeting, especially over handling the ball. Additionally, in his book, Morris Marples has noted that Old Etonians regarded such 'cherished features of Rugby tactics as hacking over, tripping and running with the ball…as not only rough but vulgar' (Marples, 1954: 143). William Charles Green, in his account of his undergraduate days at King's (1851–4), similarly recalled that:

> There was a Football Club, whose games were played on the Piece, according to rules more like the Eton Field rules than any other. But Rugby and Harrow players would sometimes begin running with the ball in hand or claiming free kicks, which led to some protest and confusion. A Trinity man, Beamont,[9] (a Fellow of his college soon after), was a regular attendant, and the rules were revised by him and one or two others, with some concessions to non-Etonians. Few from King's College ever played at this University game:[10] about the end of my time there began to be other special Rugby games on another ground.
>
> (W. C. Green, 1905: 77)

Although Green mentioned disagreement between Etonians and ex-pupils from Rugby and Harrow, it would appear unfair to equate exactly the games at these latter two schools. The earliest set of Harrow Football Rules are dated 1858 and, during a match, it was possible to use one's hands to make a catch, which must have been akin to a 'mark' in the modern game of Rugby Union. However, there was certainly no provision for running with the ball and Rule 7 states rather emphatically, 'The Ball, when in Play, must never be touched by the hand, except in the case of a Catch, as above stated.' This use of hands would run contrary to the Eton Field Game, where their only use would be to stop the ball. Whilst the Harrow game was certainly different from the Eton form, it was not as diametrically opposed as that of Rugby in the method of scoring and carrying the ball.

Green's penultimate sentence almost treats non-Etonians with contempt, and only serves to underline the fact that men from Eton appear to have dominated the Cambridge football scene in that period. There is, in fact, a direct link between Eton and Cambridge. In 1440 Henry VI founded Eton College and only a year later also began King's College, Cambridge, which was to be directly supplied with scholars from Eton, i.e. collegers rather than oppidans. In personal correspondence with Graham Curry (17 January 1997), Penny Hatfield, archivist at Eton College, expanded on this issue as follows:

> The link between Henry VI's two foundations was a very close one. By the 1840s, only scholars of Eton could become scholars of King's, and the Eton teaching staff was drawn exclusively from Kingsmen, so there was a sort of circle. Each year a 'roll' was drawn up of boys eligible for 'election' into College at Eton and of Etonians eligible for King's. In each place, there were meant to be only 70 so that a vacancy at King's (through death, resignation of a Fellow to marry or for whatever reason) had to be filled at once by the next boy on the roll for King's. This in turn created a vacancy at Eton which was filled by the next boy on the Eton roll. Naturally there were more vacancies at Eton, where a certain number of boys were bound to leave every year simply because of their age, than at King's, and a number of scholarships were endowed to help Etonian Collegers who had to leave but had not got a place at King's. (The advantage of a King's place was the chance, not only of a College living but also of a return to Eton as a master and, probably, subsequent election as an Eton Fellow, a very profitable position.) Oppidans, however, had no such link with King's and attended a variety of colleges in both universities, though Christ Church, Oxford, and Trinity, Cambridge, tended to be particular favourites. (King's scholarships were subsequently opened to all Etonians, and the link did perhaps steer many in that direction but by no means all.)

Old Etonians, along, of course, with other students at Cambridge, were often faced in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s with the problem of having to play games

with undergraduates from other schools who championed their own school's rules with equal vigour. Most former public schoolboys would have been of the firm belief that their school's football rules were superior to those of other institutions and, though each game may have shared some characteristics with the others, there would have been important areas in which they differed. It seems reasonable to suggest that no school games differed more markedly than the Eton Field Game and the Rugby School game, particularly in terms of use of the hands and the means of scoring. There was a strong possibility, in other words, that tension would occur between various groups of footballing participants, though more often than not it appears – as we have previously suggested – that the major axis of tension in this regard was between old boys of Eton and old boys of Rugby, the leading proponents, in the former's case, of the minimal handling/no carrying game; and in the latter's of the handling and carrying forms of football (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 98–105; 2005: 85–91). Having framed and played under school rules that were in several ways diametrically opposed to each other, these clashes between Old Etonian and Old Rugbeian undergraduates are perhaps unsurprising. Tension between the members of an established and an outsider institution would have added to the conflict (Elias and Scotson, 1965).

The next known attempt to provide written regulations at Cambridge University took place in 1856. The regularity with which new rules were issued at that university indicates a probable lack of effectiveness in the 'laws', thus perhaps supporting the argument that there was continual tension between the ex-pupils of various public schools in their dealings with each other on the football fields of the university (Dunning, 1961: 120–5; Sheard, 1972: 127; Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 104; 2005: 90). The 1848 regulations, though we cannot be sure as no copy survives, may have been generally satisfactory for the players who reflected the balance of power among Cambridge undergraduates at that time. That is, a clear majority was in favour of a kicking and minimal handling game. By 1856 the majority still lay with the undergraduates preferring a style closer to the Eton Field Game.

The 1856 Cambridge Rules, one copy of which has been preserved at Shrewsbury School, read as follows:

Laws of the University Foot Ball Club

1. This Club shall be called the UNIVERSITY FOOT BALL[11] CLUB.
2. At the commencement of the play, the ball shall be kicked off from the middle of the ground: after every goal there shall be a kick-off in the same way.
3. After a goal, the losing side shall kick off; the sides changing goals, unless a previous arrangement be made to the contrary.
4. The ball is out when it has passed the line of the flag-posts on either side of the ground, in which case it shall be thrown in straight.
5. The ball is behind when it has passed the goal on either side of it.

6. When the ball is behind, it shall be brought forward at the place where it left the ground, not more than ten paces, and kicked off.
7. Goal is when the ball is kicked through the flag-posts and under the string.
8. When a player catches the ball directly from the foot, he may kick it as he can without running with it. In no other case may the ball be touched with the hands, except to stop it.
9. If the ball has passed a player, and has come from the direction of his own goal, he may not touch it till the other side have kicked it, unless there are more than three of the other side before him. No player is allowed to loiter between the ball and the adversaries' goal.
10. In no case is holding a player, pushing with the hands, or tripping up allowed. Any player may prevent another from getting to the ball by any means consistent with the above rule.
11. Every match shall be decided by a majority of goals.

(Signed)

H. Snow, J. C. Harkness	}	*Eton*
J. Hales, E. Smith	}	*Rugby*
G. Perry, F. G. Sykes	}	*University*
W. H. Stone, W. J. Hope-Edwardes	}	*Harrow*
E. L. Horne, H. M. Luckock	}	*Shrewsbury*

December 9th,

Three rules noteworthy in terms of the influence exerted by the kickers over the handlers are numbers 7, 8 and 10, concerning, respectively, the method of scoring, the use of hands, and tackling an opponent. Rule 7 allowed only goals scored by kicking the ball *beneath*, as at for instance Eton, rather than *over* the crossbar (or in this case a string), as at Rugby. Rule 8 allowed limited use of the hands, though it also prohibited carrying the ball and went on further to reiterate that: 'In no other case may the ball be touched with the hands, except to stop it.' Finally, Rule 10 prevented any use of the limbs to impede the progress of an opponent, thereby ruling out the hacking and holding practices which were integral parts of the Rugby form of football at that time.

The committee of ten which drew up the 1856 laws consisted of six representatives of three major public schools who generally adhered to rules which saw the participants playing a minimal handling/no carrying and kicking type game – that is, the representatives from Eton, Harrow and Shrewsbury. Two others were from Rugby, the main proponents of the handling form, and two more were listed as representing the university. Neither Perry nor Sykes, the university representatives, had attended a major public school and, as such, were present to act as mediators or

perhaps to arbitrate should agreement become impossible. Even if the latter gentlemen had favoured Rugby's game, the minimal handlers would have remained in the majority. As a result, the final draft resembled a compromise between the Eton, Harrow and Shrewsbury forms, and the direct exclusion of the Rugby game.[12]

We believe it correct to suggest, therefore, that one group *had* achieved a certain amount of dominance in relation to football at Cambridge in this period. This group was the Old Etonians, who had direct links with the university – particularly with Trinity College – and who were, in turn, moulding the direction of football at that institution.[13] Their influence and subsequent dominance seem to be indicated in the development of football rules at Cambridge along the lines of a kicking and minimal handling game, which resembled the Eton Field Game more than any other. Although representatives of Rugby School were included in the committees of 1848, 1856 and 1863, the fact that they appear to have exerted so little influence adds to the contention that the opponents of their game found themselves in a position of persistent ascendancy in Cambridge footballing circles. However, the increasing dichotomy of football had been taken on apace as, for the first time, young men from different sporting backgrounds had sat down around a table and used their previous experience and preferences to develop a code for their immediate use.

It is probably also significant to note that the two Old Etonian representatives, H. Snow and J. C. Harkness, were the first signatories of the 1856 regulations. Support for such a hypothesis is provided by the fact that the signatures were not set down in the alphabetical order of the representatives' schools.

The Sykes Letter

At Easter 2002, Graham Curry was fortunate to discover in the library of St John's College, Cambridge, a letter which appears quite significant regarding the central issue of this chapter. This letter seems to have remained undetected by researchers until now. It was written by Frederick[14] Galland Sykes, a signatory of the 1856 rules, and clearly dates those regulations to the Michaelmas term; that is, the autumn of that year. However, it cannot be claimed that the letter was contemporaneous, as Sykes was writing to the editors of *The Eagle* (vol. 19, 1897: 586–8) – the St John's College magazine – some 40 years after the original publication of the rules. Previously, football historians had been uncertain when dating them. Geoffrey Green (1953: 16) described them as '*circ*. 1856', for example, whilst Percy Young (1968: 75) was even less sure, suggesting sometime between the years '1854 and 1858'. We feel bound to include virtually the whole of Sykes's letter as it falls into the category of new data. We have only omitted the concluding paragraph and the 1856 rules themselves, since the latter are the same as quoted in other

sources. Set out as in the original with all the parentheses having been inserted by Sykes himself, it reads as follows:

DUNSFORTH VICARAGE, YORK 26 *May*, 1897
GENTLEMEN,

I send for your perusal the original laws of the University (Cambridge) Football Club. My copy cannot be the first issue, because several of us took our degree in 1857, and had left Cambridge on the date given. It must have been sent for by me afterwards. Dr. Kynaston (Snow) and Dean Luckock – where the others are now I know not – can corroborate or correct me:

1. The Laws were drawn up in the Michaelmas Term of 1856, I believe. This meeting took place in W. H. Stone's rooms in Trinity College. Up to that time, University Football consisted in a sort of general melee on Parker's Piece, from 1.30 to 3.30 p.m. Hall was at 4. There were no rules. A man (called Ringwood, I think) appeared on the ground and provided footballs. At first, he had a tent at the corner as you enter, and afterwards a room on the right-hand side near there where we put our things. We paid a subscription of Five Shillings for the Michaelmas Term, the only term we played – unless perhaps it was a gratuity of less amount. When we met in sufficient numbers, we chose two sides, and stragglers adopted the weaker side, or did as requested. The hand was freely used, everyone adopting his own view, until a crisis was reached in 1856, resulting in the drawing up of these rules. I never heard of an accident, and though the game was played vigorously, there was no violence, the ball being the objective, not the persons of the players. The rules of the two great games now played, the Rugby and the Association are not familiar to me, except that my impression is that the hand is much used in the Rugby game, and not at all in the Association. The Eton game (as far as I remember) is akin to the Association in this respect, except that the scrimmage is a special feature and alien to Rule 10. The rules evidently bear the impress of Rugby, in parts of Rule 8 and in Rule 4. Rule 8 coincides with Eton, in the latter part but not Rule 10, which seems framed against the Eton scrimmage. What the Shrewsbury game was I don't know, but it seems to me that the Association game is more like the game practised at the smaller and private schools, and that we are indebted to them for its inception, and partly also to Eton. The Association is quite alien to Rugby. Do you think (as I do) that the enclosed Laws may be regarded as the nucleus of the Association game? At that time, football was played only in Schools and at the Universities, so that it did not generally exist. There were no laws at Cambridge, whatever Oxford had. Different schools had their own rules, which had never been subjected to amalgamation. Each had its own. The enclosed rules seem to be the first attempt at combination, and from this point of view perhaps they led up to the Association rules. The use of the hand is prohibited, I am told now. If so, all the better. We had to make a compromise, as in Rule 8. But we advanced a step.

2. About the same time, the St. John's College Football Club was started. Jennings Rees, a Fellow, and great friend of mine, was the first President.[15] The Eton element was strong among us, and I believe they adopted the Eton game. Dr. Kynaston was a warm supporter, and I think Shrewsbury men from other Colleges joined. The future history of the Club is not known to me.

3. The theory in my day was that football had better be dropped, after leaving School or the University.

(a) First, because men would be unable to keep their tempers and would fight.

(b) Next, because their bones were more brittle and more liable to break in case of a fall or concussion.

Judging from the newspapers, the expectation has been to some extent realised. My own feeling is that it would be better to revert to the old days, and confine the game to boys, youths and young men at the University *in statu popillari*. Probably it would be simply going through a similar process a second time; for there seems to be evidence that, in old days, it was played generally and then given up. And I think those who have seen a picture of an American football player would agree, seeing that Americans have not yet learned how to bear defeat.

Will you kindly return my enclosure when you have finished with it?

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,
F. G. SYKES.

One of the most intriguing aspects of this letter is the date – 'December 9th, 1857' – given by Sykes at the bottom of the rules. Even if, as the writer claimed, this particular copy was sent to him a year after the actual framing of the original laws – that is, 1856 – it would be difficult to ignore the coincidence that the same date, though omitting the year, also appears on the copy residing at Shrewsbury School. However, other than the fact that Sykes was recalling events that had happened 40 years previously, there is no reason to disbelieve his assertion that several of the signatories had left Cambridge by late 1857. Intriguingly, there is a comma after 'December 9th' in the Shrewsbury version, leaving one to wonder if a year had been envisaged but omitted by the author or printer. The only other difference between Sykes's copy and the one residing at Shrewsbury School is that the former, when referring to the club in the opening line, lists 'Football' as one word – probably feeling there was no requirement to accentuate the word 'Foot' in 1897 when the Association form had clearly established itself in preference to the Rugby code. In 1857 there may have been a greater need to state that the game being played was one where the foot was predominant over the hand.

Second, Sykes referred several times to the influence of proponents of the Eton form of football – we presume that he means the Field Game – and he leaves us in little doubt that football's development owed much to Etonian involvement. In addition, Sykes's comment about a 'crisis' in 1856 is

interesting. It seems to be linked to the two phrases 'the hand was freely used' and 'everyone adopting his own view'. In order to stop this copious use of the hands, it appears that the 1856 legislators drafted Rule 8, which stated: 'When a player catches the ball directly from the foot, he may kick it as he can without running with it. In no other case may the ball be touched with the hands, except to stop it.' The second phrase may note the chaos that ensued from a previous lack of compromise, a situation remedied by the issuing of the 1856 Cambridge Rules. Finally, the influence of men from Trinity is further emphasised by the fact that the actual meeting to discuss the formulation of these particular regulations took place in 'W. H. Stone's rooms in Trinity College'.

Codification continued

Let us turn now to the 1863 Cambridge Rules. Whereas, in 1856, only four major public schools, together with the university, had been represented on the football rules committee at Cambridge, by 1863 the number of schools that had to be accommodated had increased to six. The following were present at the 1863 meeting, all adding their signatures to the regulations: Reverend Robert Burn (Shrewsbury), who was listed as the Chairman; Robert Harvey Blake-Humphrey and William Thomas Trench (Eton); John Templar Prior and Henry Lewis Williams (Harrow); William Robert Collyer and Marcus Trevelyan Martin (Rugby); William Parry Crawley (Marlborough) and William Shaw Wright (Westminster).

Again, apart from the Chairman, the names of the Eton representatives were listed first. The Rugby-playing party had been reinforced by a representative from Marlborough, a new Rugby-playing school whose ex-pupils were, by that time, attending the university in more significant numbers. Interestingly, no one from a minor school was represented to present an objective view or pass a casting vote should an impasse have been reached. The explanation may simply be that Reverend Burn would probably have been expected to decide on points of dispute as Chairman. The final draft of the 1863 Cambridge Rules, which were to have a lasting effect on the game of football, was as follows:

I. The length of the ground shall not be more than 150 yards. And the breadth not more than 100 yards. The ground shall be marked out by posts and two posts shall be placed on each side-line at distances of 25 yards from each goal line.
II. The *goals* shall consist of two upright poles at a distance of 15 ft. from each other.
III. The choice of goals and kick-off shall be determined by tossing and the ball shall be kicked off from the middle of the ground.
IV. In a match when half the time agreed upon has elapsed, the sides shall change goals when the ball is next out of play. After such change or a goal obtained, the kick-off shall be from the middle of the ground in the same direction as before. The time during which the game shall last and the numbers on each side are to be settled by the heads of the sides.

V. When a player has kicked the ball any one of the same side who is nearer to the opponents' goal line is *out of play* and may not touch the ball himself nor in any way whatsoever prevent any other player from doing so.
VI. When the ball goes out of the ground by crossing the side-lines, it is out of play and shall be kicked straight into the ground again from the point where it is first stopped.
VII. When a player has kicked the ball beyond the opponents' goal line, whoever first touches the ball when it is on the ground with his hand, may have a *free* kick bringing the ball straight out from the goal-line.
VIII. No player may touch the ball behind his opponents' goal-line who is behind it when the ball is kicked there.
IX. If the ball is touched down behind the goal-line and beyond the line of the side-posts, the *free* kick shall be from the 25 yards post.
X. When a player has a free kick, no one of his own side may be between him and his opponents' goal line and no one of the opposing side may stand within 10 yards of him.
XI. A free kick may be taken in any manner the player may choose.
XII. A goal is obtained when the ball goes out of the ground by passing between the poles or in such a manner that it would have passed between them had they been of sufficient height.
XIII. The ball, when in play, may be stopped by any part of the body, but may *not* be held or hit by the hands, arms or shoulders.
XIV. *All* charging is fair, but holding, pushing with the hands, tripping up and shinning are forbidden.

Probably because of their in-built majority on the committee, the minimal handlers again legislated against those particular aspects of the Rugby game which they felt contributed to excessive violence and which, had they been included, would have produced a form of football barely resembling anything they had previously experienced. Indeed, Rule XIII legislates quite clearly on the key concept of the use of the hands by prohibiting catching. It might be possible to surmise, therefore, that the framers of such a rule never envisaged the Rugby practice of carrying the ball. Nevertheless, there are elements of the Rugby game present in these regulations, as might be expected with the inclusion on the committee of two Old Rugbeians and a former pupil of Marlborough School. Rule XII is certainly reminiscent of that game's principal method of scoring.

Interestingly, Marples suggests that 'the Rugbeian party accordingly broke off relations with the rest, and continued their own game in isolation' (Marples, 1954: 143). Old Rugbeian undergraduates had undoubtedly been playing their own style of football on Parker's Piece for some years, this being one of the many types of the game which took place side-by-side at the university. Indeed, in subsequent years the various varieties continued to flourish at Cambridge. In 1868, five years after the formation of the Football Association, separate fixtures were still being played by the Cambridge Harrow and Cambridge

Eton clubs, as well as by the Cambridge Rugby Club (*Light Blue*, 1868: 123). In 1883, Cambridge Etonians played Trinity Etonians under Eton (presumably Field Game) rules in the same week as Cambridge University had a fixture against Old Etonians under Association Rules (*Cambridge Chronicle*, 30 November 1883). This evidence indicates that there were many diverse ways of satiating one's football appetite at Cambridge in the early 1860s and beyond, though whilst the Rugby faction may have been gradually growing apart from the minimal handling fraternity the 1863 rules do not necessarily provide us with a major watershed in university football. Rather, from a Cambridge point of view, they might be regarded as another set of compromise rules designed to alleviate tensions between footballers at the university and, quite simply, increase the possibilities of matches between interested undergraduates. As we shall discuss in Chapter 5, their importance in a wider context lies in the subsequent use made of them in 1863 by the nascent Football Association.

Codification did not end with the 1863 rules. As late as 30 March 1867, the Cambridge undergraduates were revising their laws, though the code of that year failed subsequently to gain a wider notoriety. It is surely significant that students at the university felt the need to continue to draft their own laws, despite the existence of the Football Association in London. This may well be, more than anything, a comment on the relative weakness of the FA at that time. It is, nevertheless, interesting to note that the committee responsible for drafting the rules had continued to take on an ever broader representation. Four separate clubs from university colleges – St John's, Emmanuel, Jesus and Christ's – were involved, together with delegates of the university club and former pupils of Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Marlborough, Shrewsbury and Westminster, all of whom were signatories to the 1863 agreement. Individuals who had attended Cheltenham, Uppingham, Charterhouse and Winchester had also been invited, the latter three being distinctly in favour of what could now be referred to as an Association-like form. There were also several amendments to the laws of four years earlier. First, the players employed a differential scoring method, one similar to the Eton 'rouge'. More particularly, Law 7 noted: 'When the ball goes out of the ground by crossing the goal line between the touch down posts and the goal posts, whoever first touches the ball when it is in the ground with his hand may have a free kick, bringing the ball twenty five yards straight out from the point where the ball crossed the goal line.' This, then, linked with Law 17 which allowed for drawn games to be settled by 'the number of touch downs from which goals were not obtained'. In addition, free kicks were taken from the side lines and 'If in the opinion of the umpire a touch down was unfairly prevented by holding, pushing or otherwise, he is empowered to allow it' (Weir, 2004: 11).

The Trinity evidence

We have previously argued that former pupils of Eton formed the most influential group of undergraduates, certainly at least in football terms at

Cambridge in the middle years of the nineteenth century. However, we would like to develop this hypothesis further and offer the suggestion that, at least during the debates over the framing of compromise rules at the university, members of Trinity College were extremely powerful in the decision-making process. Indeed, though a strong link existed between Eton and King's College, perhaps because of the relatively small numbers of students at King's – there were only nine undergraduates in attendance there in 1850 (*Cambridge University Calendar for the Year, 1851*) – or perhaps because those students were more intent on academic rather than sporting achievement, it was Trinity and not King's that provided us with evidence of Old Etonian domination of the footballing sub-culture at Cambridge around that time. Any analysis of the processes involved should, accordingly, begin at Eton.

We have already alluded to the fact that there were two types of pupil at Eton. First we find the 70 collegers, generally destined for King's College, Cambridge, whose entry into Eton had been determined by a certain amount of academic prowess which allowed them, or rather their parents, the luxury of avoiding the payment of fees. Second came the oppidans, or 'townboys', who were generally less academically inclined, fee-paying, and often followed a path to Trinity College. The former had usually played the Wall Game whilst at Eton; whereas the oppidans were more active at the Field Game. Relative to the number of collegers, which was fixed at 70, the numbers of oppidans were, by the second half of the nineteenth century, considerably larger. This number also fluctuated from year to year. This might allow us to suggest, with the help of Table 3.1, that this Eton–Trinity axis formed a major basis for football development at Cambridge from 1830 onwards. It appears that Trinity men controlled Cambridge football and, therefore, with an annual influx of influential oppidans from Eton together with football enthusiasts from other mainly kicking and minimal handling public schools such as Shrewsbury and Harrow,[16] the Cambridge compromise rules issued during this period were distinctly anti-Rugby. The influence exerted by boys from Eton – generally regarded as being the public school possessing the highest status, both academically and sportingly – is paramount. Jealously guarding their own types of football, the majority of these students appear to have almost systematically legislated against other variants – especially that of Rugby School, which they regarded as being the antithesis of their unique forms. It may also help to explain why there was so much football activity at Cambridge in this period when compared to the amount recorded as having taken place at Oxford.

At first sight, the comparative lack of Old Etonians in the above list – there are only six of them – would seem to contradict our argument concerning the high degree of influence exerted by former pupils of Eton. It is important to realise, however, that these committees were selected to provide a cross-section of opinion and ideas on football rules, presumably so that, when the rules were later practised and enforced, minimal argument would ensue. It is also interesting to note that, at least in the 1848 and 1856 lists, representatives

Table 3.1 Public schools and colleges attended by framers of Cambridge University compromise football rules, 1838–63 (Venn, 1940)

Year	*Name*	*School/Schools*	*College*
1838	Edgar Montagu[a]	Shrewsbury	Gonville and Caius
1846	John Charles Thring	Shrewsbury/Winchester	St John's[b]
1846	Henry de Winton[c]	Shrewsbury	Trinity
1848	Henry Charles Malden	Windlesham	Trinity
1848	George Salt	Norwich	Trinity
1848	George Burn	Rugby	Trinity
1848	Frederick Whymper[d]	Eton	Trinity
1856	Herbert Snow[e]	Eton	St John's
1856	James Clarke Harkness	Eton	St John's
1856	John Hales[f]	Rugby	Trinity
1856	Edward Smith[g]	Rugby	Peterhouse
1856	George Perry	Clapham	Trinity
1856	Frederick Galland Sykes	Unknown[h]	St. John's
1856	William Henry Stone	Harrow	Trinity
1856	William John Hope-Edwardes	Harrow	Trinity
1856	Edward Larkin Horne[i]	Shrewsbury	Clare
1856	Herbert Mortimer Luckock	Shrewsbury/ Marlborough	Jesus
1863	Robert Burn[j]	Shrewsbury	Trinity
1863	Robert Harvey Blake-Humfrey	Eton	Trinity
1863	William Thomas Trench	Eton	Trinity
1863	John Templer Prior	Harrow	Trinity
1863	Henry Lewis Williams	Harrow	Trinity
1863	William Robert Collyer	Rugby	Gonville and Caius
1863	Marcus Trevelyan Martin[k]	Rugby	Trinity
1863	William Parry Crawley	Marlborough	Trinity
1863	William Shaw Wright[l]	Westminster	Trinity
Also involved but not recognised as signatories			
1837–	Lewis William Denman[m]	Shrewsbury	Magdalene
1845	Albert Pell	Rugby	Trinity
	Thomas Irwin Barstow	Shrewsbury	Trinity
1846	Fenton John Anthony Hort[n]	Rugby/ Cheltenham	Trinity
1846	William Henry Waddington[o]	Rugby/ Repton	Trinity
1846	William John Beamont	Eton	Trinity
1852	Thomas George Bonney	Uppingham/ Charterhouse	St John's
1856	Wiiliam Jennings Rees	Royal Institution, Liverpool	St John's

[a] This form of his name is from Venn (1940). Some sources say '*Edward*'; still others say '*Montague*'.

[b] The accepted educational path at that time from Shrewsbury was to progress to St John's College, Cambridge.

[c] His name was Henry Wilkins until 1839 and subsequently changed to Henry de Winton. He was head boy and in the cricket XI at Shrewsbury.

Table 3.1 (*cont.*)

[d] Whymper played cricket for Cambridge against Oxford at Lord's in 1856 and 1857 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 179).

[e] Snow changed his name to Kynaston in 1875. He rowed in the Boat Race for Cambridge in 1841 and 1842 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 91).

[f] Hales represented Cambridge against Oxford at cricket at Lord's in 1855 and 1856 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 185, 186).

[g] Finally, in 2011, we feel we have discovered Smith's identity. He appears to have been Edward Smith, former pupil of Rugby School who attended Peterhouse College from 1852–8. He was the younger brother of John Simm Smith who was educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge. Many thanks to Rusty Maclean, archivist at Rugby School, for confirmation of Edward Smith's attendance at Rugby.

[h] Sykes's school has proved, so far, impossible to locate. Jon Smith, librarian at Trinity College, Cambridge, has suggested that he may have been privately tutored. He is buried at Dunsforth, Yorkshire where he served as vicar for over 40 years.

[i] Horne played cricket for Cambridge against Oxford at Lord's in 1855, 1857 and 1858 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 185, 187 and 188).

[j] Robert Burn is said by Oldham (1952: 233) to have been involved with the 1848 Rules as well as those framed in 1863. He was an ex-pupil of Shrewsbury, a tutor and, by the latter date, a Fellow at Trinity, and would have been a high status individual. He was also a Reverend and brother of George, who was likely to have been the Rugby representative in 1848 (G. Green, 1953: 15–16). G. Green's account of Malden's letter differs in some respects to the one in Shrewsbury School Archives. Most importantly for our purposes, G. Green states that George Burn attended school at Rugby, which is confirmed in Venn (1940); whilst the version at Shrewsbury School simply notes that an individual named Burn was present without giving his school.

[k] Martin played cricket for Cambridge against Oxford at Lord's in 1862 and 1864 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 192, 194).

[l] Wright represented Cambridge in the long-jump against Oxford in 1864 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 2).

[m] Denman rowed in the Boat Race for Cambridge in 1841 and 1842 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 88).

[n] Jennifer Macrory (1991: 143) suggests that two Old Rugbeians – Fenton John Anthony Hort and William Henry Waddington – might have been involved with the 1846 debate. This runs counter to Titley and McWhirter's claim that Hort was present in 1848. Their attendance dates at Cambridge would have allowed them to be present at both gatherings. Significantly, both attended Trinity College and it may be that they were involved with the codification of the 1845 Rugby School rules.

[o] Waddington rowed in the Boat Race for Cambridge in 1849 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 89).

from minor schools were included to provide detached opinion and casting votes when no agreement could be reached between those representing the 'big guns'.

Of the 26 framers of the five sets of compromise rules issued at Cambridge, 17 were students at, or otherwise had links with, Trinity College. This is a high percentage (63 per cent) even though Trinity generally had the largest intake of students. Using the mid-point of the nineteenth century – that is 1850 – as a guide, out of the 1,753 students at the university in that year, 525 attended Trinity (30 per cent) (*Cambridge University Calendar for the Year, 1851*). Only

three of the signatories did not attend Trinity, St John's or Gonville and Caius and it may not have escaped the notice of those familiar with the geography of Cambridge's colleges that these educational institutions lie adjacent to each other along Trinity Street and St John's Street in the city. The consequences of this proximity for the ease of any diffusion of ideas are surely significant. We can only conclude that members of Trinity College clearly formed a disproportionate block of influential football enthusiasts in the framing of new rules for this growing sport.

Early football at Oxford University

We realise that the vast majority of this chapter concerns events at the University of Cambridge. We believe that we have 'followed the evidence' and articulated the events of history in an accurate fashion – the reality is that most of the football activity and rules compilation in the mid-nineteenth century did take place at Cambridge. Nonetheless, it will be useful for us, however briefly, at least to note some of the events that took place at Oxford, even though they took place later. Tony Money, in his book *Football at Radley: 1847–2000*, appears to have discovered an early game between that school and some friends from Exeter College, Oxford, in December 1853. Whilst not attempting to minimise its importance, it does seem that this may have been an isolated event of only local significance. Nevertheless, it is worth recording that some sort of organised football was taking place in that area during the early 1850s. Colin Weir's *The History of Oxford University Association Football Club: 1872–1998* provides the most interesting information on those early years, though Weir generally fails to undertake any analysis of several noteworthy events. Some form of the game seems to have been played at the university in the 1830s (Weir, 1998: 8), though there is more concrete evidence some years later from a novel published in 1853 in which a character is said 'to kick a football until he became…as stiff as a biscuit' (in Marples, 1954: 141).

It comes as no surprise to us that the first extant evidence of organised football at Oxford involves Etonians and Old Etonians. Colin Weir remarks,

> The forerunners of the OUAFC [Oxford University Association Football Club] must surely be those Oxford Old Etonians who fielded a team against Eton College on the Christ Church cricket ground on 26 November, 1856 – a match that was played under Eton rules.
>
> (Weir, 1998: 8)

He goes on to confirm the status of Old Etonians at the university, saying that, on 30 November 1859, 'the first intimation of soccer rivalry between the two senior Universities [took place] when Oxford Old Etonians played their Cambridge counterparts, clearly under Eton rules' (Weir, 1998: 8). By 1864 the annual match between Oxford and Cambridge Old Etonians, held at Eton, was first played, and this form of the game seemed to have been

relatively popular at Oxford as this *Eton College Chronicle* (24 November 1864: 126) report revealed: 'FOOTBALL AT OXFORD – The Eton game of football is played three times a week during the present term, it is always well attended.'

Former pupils of Winchester and Harrow also became involved and, eventually, a set of rules was drawn up in 1864–5. Though no copy survives, these laws were insistent that 'no hands' were to be used and the game became a dribbling form of football. On 9 November 1871, a meeting of undergraduate footballers drew up the university's earliest set of existing rules. However, the set in question is largely intended for administrative purposes, with the club playing according to Association rules except for Rule 8 which dealt with the controversial offside law. This stated 'That the Club play according to the "Association Rules" omitting Rule 6: "unless there are at least 3 of his opponents between him and their own goal." '

The offside rule employed by the university in those years remains unclear though it seems likely that the number of opponents between the player receiving a pass and the goal may have differed from the 1871 FA rules. Less likely is that the university used the strict offside law where every player of the team in possession would have attempted to remain behind the ball. At this same meeting, 35 officers of the club were elected. Interestingly, 13 of the 35 committee members were from Christ Church College. It is intriguing, moreover, that both the President and the Treasurer attended Christ Church. The high percentage of delegates representing this college is not explained by its sheer size. According to Judith Curthoys, archivist at Christ Church College, Oxford, the colleges of Magdalen, New and Balliol would have been the equivalents of Christ Church in terms of numbers of students in 1871. Interestingly, Arthur Pember, the first President of the Football Association, attended Christ Church. However, what is all the more engrossing is the fact that *none* of the 35 were Old Etonians! As yet we have no explanation as to why there were so many men from Christ Church College on the Oxford University AFC committee of 1871. Interestingly, as noted by Penny Hatfield's personal correspondence earlier in this chapter, there existed an educational link between Eton and Christ Church, which makes it especially surprising that no Old Etonians appeared on the 1871 committee. However, we do feel able to restate our reasons why the Cambridge University football community was so much more influential than its Oxford counterpart, and why football rules at the former significantly predated any events in terms of lawmaking at the latter. The existence of so many influential, high status Old Etonian oppidans, determined to ensure that their form of football held sway at Cambridge, undoubtedly swung the issue. In a test of strength with their Rugby opponents, they continually guaranteed that their minimal handling style of football remained as the dominant type of the game in its nascent years there. The necessity to advance their own particular form of the game also meant that there was a requirement, in terms of time, to promote their football preferences swiftly. We believe that the lack of an Old Etonian

presence at the 1871 Oxford University AFC gathering makes this hypothesis all the more believable. By this time, footballing preferences were far more ingrained and there was little need to impress particular forms of the game upon players at an institution.

There is also some evidence which suggests that Oxford undergraduates favoured the Rugby form of football. Macrory writes:

> There were always enough Old Rugbeians in residence for them to be able to organise games of football played to their own rules for those who wished, and the Old Rugbeian match played annually at Rugby School was chiefly arranged by Oxford men….The high attendance of Old Rugbeians from Oxford may have had something to do with the ease of railway communications between Oxford and Rugby, but the indications are that it was seldom difficult to raise a side from Oxford to play against the school.
>
> (Macrory, 1991: 144)

One needs to tread carefully when dating the first inter-university match. The earliest date cited is by Percy Young (1968: 216) who maintains that an Oxford–Cambridge match first took place in 1855. It seems reasonable to suggest at this time that the encounter mentioned by Young would probably have been played under a set of rules advocated by one of the more prestigious public schools, and played by old boys of that establishment. Indeed, we have already alluded to matches played between Old Etonians at the two institutions in 1859 and 1864, though members of the two university clubs strongly believe that the initial encounter took place at Kennington Oval cricket ground in London on 30 March 1874. The Cambridge minute book recorded a win for their opponents by 2-0, although this appears as 1-0 in other records (Aston, 1983: 221). This encounter took place under Association rules, though we are keen to restate that it was predated by other Oxford v. Cambridge fixtures played under differing laws. For instance, *The Times* (2 December 1863: 5) carried the following reports of inter-Varsity encounters played as early as 1863 under, first Harrow and, second, Eton football rules:

> FOOTBALL AT CAMBRIDGE
>
> Eleven Harrow members of the University of Oxford came over on Saturday, November 28, to play their annual match against their old schoolfellows of the sister University. The game (which was played on Parker's Piece) was well kept up, and attended by numerous spectators, who saw, no doubt, with some satisfaction the victory of Cambridge by one base obtained by Mr. Cruikshank.
>
> FOOTBALL AT ETON
>
> The grand match between Oxford and Cambridge was played in the 'Field' and commenced about a quarter past 2 o'clock…As the game went on, the spectators congregated in lines, and formed a large quadrangle,

> within which the contest took place, broken occasionally as the ball was kicked over their heads. The most exciting portion of the contest was at the 'bullies',[17] before the ball was started, when the 22 were seen in one mass, writhing, crawling, and executing all sorts of contortions to get the lead. Altogether, the sport afforded an excellent example of this ancient English game, which few persons have perhaps ever witnessed in the present day; and, played as it was on this occasion, must do much to encourage its revival.

Trinity College, Cambridge, as a centre of innovation and diffusion

In summation, we have attempted in this chapter to provide evidence to reinforce the importance of the role played by undergraduates at, and others connected with, the universities of Cambridge and Oxford in the development of football rules during the middle part of the nineteenth century. As well as providing this substantiation, we believe we have introduced new data and at least one further hypothesis to the debate. Whilst the 'Sykes Letter' clearly dates the 1856 rules, the most interesting new evidence is that which shows the men of Trinity College to have been extremely influential in the rules debate. Were Trinity men in virtual control of football at Cambridge? It seems quite probable that they were. When we link this with the fact that it was likely that high status Old Etonian oppidans were at the centre of this control, we feel able to propose quite strongly that this Eton–Trinity axis held the most important key to the development of the game at this stage.

Nor is it perhaps entirely coincidental that Trinity men were present in the framing of other important football rules. In a paper entitled, 'The Trinity Connection', Gillian Hibbins (1989: 172–92) outlines the origins of Australian Rules Football. Hibbins identified four men present at a meeting to decide upon a set of regulations for football as played in Melbourne. They were, James Bogue Thompson, William Josiah Hammersley,[18] Thomas Wentworth Wills and Thomas Henry Smith. Thompson and Hammersley both attended Trinity College, Cambridge. Evidence exists that Thompson was there between 1845–50 and Hammersley between the years 1845–7 (Hibbins, 1989: 177; and Venn, 1940). These were eventful years with regard to the framing of various sets of Cambridge compromise rules, and there seems every likelihood that Thompson and Hammersley would have been aware of that process.

It is possible, therefore, to speculate that in footballing terms the undergraduates of Trinity College developed an institution that became a centre of innovation and diffusion. Indeed, there appears to be a great deal of data to support the claim that men from Trinity exerted a disproportionate influence on football's diffusion in the mid-nineteenth century. The use made by members of the nascent Football Association of the 1863 Cambridge Rules as an alternative to their original set of draft laws – which were distinctly Rugby-like in nature – simply reaffirms the importance of the Cambridge University football community in general. Finally, whilst it might appear ambitious to

propose that a 'Trinity Connection' was all-important in the general development of football, it may be fairer to suggest that the influence of members of that Cambridge college be accorded some credit for their work at an important stage in the growth of England's national game.

Notes

1 Parker's Piece remains a large expanse of playing field near the centre of Cambridge. It is partially surrounded by elm trees and is still used for organised games of football and cricket.
2 Students at university, especially Cambridge or Oxford, were and still are referred to as 'gownsmen'. The term is usually used to distinguish them from residents of a particular university town, who are known as 'townsmen'.
3 There appears to be some discrepancy over Montagu's educational dates. However, although he is listed in Venn (1940) as entering Gonville and Caius on 8 December, 1837, in all probability he would not have begun his studies there until 1838.
4 Edward Tudor-Owen appeared for the football XI at Shrewsbury and went on to attend Christ Church College, Oxford.
5 George Charles Uppleby was admitted to Magdalene College, Cambridge, on 16 December 1835. At Cambridge he rowed in the winning boat in the Boat Race of 1840 (Venn, 1940).
6 This is almost certainly a reference to Thomas Irwin Barstow, who attended Trinity College (1836–45) and had been to school at Shrewsbury (Venn, 1940). He was a contemporary of Pell's at Trinity and the latter notes that he 'had some difficulty in teaching' Barstow the Rugby game. (Pell, 1908: 71), indicating that he had attended a different school and was more familiar with the Shrewsbury form of the game.
7 Titley and McWhirter (1970: 43) mention that Fenton John Anthony Hort, an Old Rugbeian who entered Trinity College in 1845 (Venn, 1940), was present at the 1848 discussions.
8 To our knowledge, only the boys of Rugby (1845) and Eton (1847) had their rules in written form by that time.
9 William John Beamont was born in Warrington, Lancashire, in 1828, attending the local grammar school and then starting at Eton in 1842. This fact is significant and confirms our belief that the most influential football participants at Cambridge during this time were Old Etonians. As an undergraduate, he is recorded as having been an honorary member of Third Trinity, a boat club composed entirely of former Eton and Westminster pupils. Sadly at present, there is no information relating to his football career at university. Following his election as a Fellow at Trinity, he spent much of his time in the Middle East before returning to become a curate in London and then a vicar in Cambridge. He died relatively young – in 1868 at the age of 40 – and is buried in Trinity College chapel where there is a memorial brass dedicated to him. One portrait photograph of him as a Fellow also exists.
10 Students of King's College, Cambridge, would have previously been collegers at Eton and, as such, if sportsmen, players at the Wall rather than the Field Game.
11 In using the two-word phrase, 'foot ball', rather than merely one word, 'football', the framers no doubt wished to accentuate that their form of the game accentuated the use of the foot as opposed to the hand.
12 It would seem advisable for us to point out that Rugbeians remained especially isolated at this time because former pupils of newer public schools, to which their game had been diffused, were not yet attending university in large numbers. We

are referring here to 'new' public schools such as Marlborough, Cheltenham and Haileybury, virtually all of which had adopted Rugby football. See Dunning and Sheard, (1979: 104–5; 2005: 90–1).

13 It is surely significant that Cambridge adopted Eton's light blue colours. Money tells us how this came about: 'At the second University Boat Race in 1836, Oxford appeared with dark blue colours, and Cambridge, having none of their own, adopted the light blue of their Etonian oarsmen, a piece of Eton blue ribbon bought from a nearby shop just before the start being fixed to the bows' (Money, 1997: 153).

14 Venn (1940) says his first Christian name is spelt 'Frederic'.

15 William Jennings Rees was associated with St John's College, Cambridge, from 1851–60 as an undergraduate, a postgraduate, and a Fellow. In 1858 he became a deacon at Ely but tragically died of consumption in Edinburgh in 1860 (Venn, 1940). Rees attended the Royal Institution, a grammar school for boys in Liverpool. Interestingly, John Dransfield, an early Sheffield FC member and footballer from Penistone, South Yorkshire, also attended the Royal Institution and relates one of his football experiences there in his book, *History of Penistone* (1906: 137). He says, 'I first saw and played with the large footballs now in use when at the Royal Institution School, Liverpool, in 1853–4–5.'

16 The 1858 Harrow Football Rules and the 1866 Shrewsbury Douling Rules ('Douling' was the name given to the game at the school) only allowed handling when taking a catch without the ball touching the ground.

17 Eton 'bullies' were similar in many ways to Rugby scrums.

18 Hammersley represented Cambridge against Oxford at cricket in 1847, when his university beat their opponents by 138 runs at Lord's (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 177).

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4 The Sheffield footballing sub-culture and other early clubs

In Britain, clubs founded specifically with the sole or main intention of allowing their members regularly to play the newer forms of football seem to have been first formed in the mid-to-late 1850s. Perhaps because the game of football in England is nowadays believed to be largely a preserve of the working class, it might be assumed that men of that same social background began the earliest clubs. However, as Dunning and Sheard demonstrate quite clearly, the first teams were initiated by members of the upper and middle classes, 'because, even today, the formation and membership of voluntary associations tends to be characteristic of the higher social strata' (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 105; 2005: 91). Dunning and Sheard continued by placing stress on the element of choice which increasingly accompanied the playing of the game. As they expressed it:

> For the upper- and middle-class adults who formed these clubs, football was [much more] a chosen recreation and not, as with folk-football and football in the public schools, an activity where the social pressure to participate was [very] strong. Folk and public school football were play-forms adjusted to the life of close-knit communities. Participation was less a matter of choice than the accompaniment of a particular status. Now, for the first time, the game became [much more] a matter of individual choice: or more correctly, the balance between choice and compulsion swung in favour of the former.
>
> (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 106–7; 2005: 92)

Whilst a good number of clubs were started in London and the surrounding area, even more seem to have been formed in the Sheffield region. By the mid-to-late 1850s, organised football on a limited scale was being played there; and in 1862 – a full year before representatives of 11 similarly minded organisations met in London to form the FA – there were 15 clubs playing the game in the city (Young, 1962: 19). The district also boasts the existence of the world's oldest recorded football club: Sheffield FC.

Early Sheffield football

In devoting a whole chapter in this book to events in Sheffield, we are mindful of the fact that the city and the surrounding area constituted the first large-scale modern footballing sub-culture in England, indeed, in the world. It is certainly true that many of the first historians to treat football as a serious area for academic research – writers such as Geoffrey Green (1953) and Morris Marples (1954), to name but two – paid little attention to Sheffield and its players. Richard Sparling (1926), Percy Young (1962) and Keith Farnsworth (1995) have, by contrast, written whole books on the subject – indeed, in the latter's case, he produced two volumes – whilst tracts celebrating anniversaries of Sheffield Football Club and Hallam FC have amounted to four accounts (Curry *et al*. 2007; Walters, 1957; Steele, 1986; Steele, 2010). Whilst Adrian Harvey (2001: 53–87) has gone some way towards redressing the balance in this regard, he has perhaps overstated the case, and, as recently as 2009, a further and largely disappointing book which offers very little new data or analysis, has been produced by Denis Clareborough and Andrew Kirkham. Although Geoffrey Green affords the city a good deal of credit, noting that 'the part played…by the Sheffield Association stands bright and clear' (1953: 40), he also remarks on their continuing independence and accepts that the union between the FA and their Sheffield counterparts was, initially at least, 'limited' (1953: 47). John Goulstone is, accordingly, correct when he remarks that Sheffield's coverage has been somewhat sparse. He also alludes to the fact that even Dunning and Sheard, in *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players* (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 105–6, 109; 2005, 91, 94) 'despatch it in a mere fifteen lines'. Even more recently, Graham Curry (2013a) has produced a resource book providing a wealth of information including many primary accounts on the early history of the game in Sheffield. We intend to continue to redress the balance in this regard in the present chapter; but, more important for our purposes, is the fact that the Sheffield football sub-culture provides an excellent example of a hypothesis that we wish to champion – namely that it involved from an early stage a local elite which drew on varied experiences and information to develop, among other things, ordered administration, rules and playing techniques which satiated their own appetite for the game and subsequently influenced the evolution of football on a national and global scale.

Formation and the first playing rules

Sheffield Football Club was formed on 24 October 1857. There are some unsubstantiated suggestions that the club was actually founded as early as 1855, though this may have taken the form of informal gatherings to play relatively disorganised games of football. However, a newspaper report in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of Wednesday 29 September 1954 promoted 1855 as the year of formation. Together with the report is a photograph

purporting to be a team picture from that year. The team group first appeared in Denzil Batchelor's book entitled *Soccer* (as Figure 7 in that book), which was published in 1954. Batchelor claimed that it was: 'The earliest photograph of any English football team: Sheffield Club in 1855.' After much newspaper research, Graham Curry has tentatively dated the group as a London representative side – they are wearing the white shirts normally associated with London – which played against their Sheffield counterparts at Kennington Oval on 4 January 1873. There may, however, be more interesting evidence to support 1855 as the year of the formation. First, the club is listed in the original entries for the first FA Amateur Cup in 1893–4 as 'Sheffield 1855'. Second, Richard Sparling, in his book *The Romance of the Wednesday* (1926: 13), clearly mentions that the 'Sheffield Club is the oldest existing football club in the world, and the minute-books go back to 1855'. In his 'Note to Readers', he acknowledged the valuable assistance of J. C. Clegg, the renowned Sheffield football administrator, and it would be somewhat surprising to hear that such an eminent individual would have erred on the important date of formation. Interestingly, Sparling was the reporter who also wrote a story which was published in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (29 September 1954) and specifically mentioned the minute books. He quoted the long-serving Secretary, H. B. Willey, as saying: 'I used to have the minute book for 1855, but it was borrowed and never returned.'

Having noted the possibility of 1855 as the beginning of the club, it should be said that no hard evidence exists for this date, and virtually all commentators are in agreement that 1857 should be recognised as being the year of formation. The co-founders of the Sheffield club are acknowledged as having been Nathaniel Creswick and William Prest, though the first signs of a written constitution and set of regulations do not appear until 21 October 1858. The Sheffield committee codified its game as follows. There is a good deal of deletion in the original text, and the first draft is noted below in square brackets following the final copy:

1. Kick off from Middle must be a place kick.
2. Kick out must not be from more than twenty five yards out of goal.
3. Fair Catch is a Catch from any player provided the Ball has not touched the ground and has not been thrown from touch. Entitles a free kick.
   [Fair Catch is a Catch direct from the foot of the opposite side and entitles a free kick.]
4. Charging is fair in case of a place kick (with the exception of a kick off) as soon as the player offers to kick, but he may always draw back unless he has actually touched the Ball with his foot.
5. Pushing with the Hands is allowed but no Hacking (or tripping up) is fair under any circumstances whatsoever.
   [No pushing with the Hands or Hacking is fair under any circumstances whatsoever.]
6. Holding the Ball, excepting the case of a free kick is altogether disallowed.

[Knocking or pushing on the Ball is altogether disallowed. The side breaking the Rule forfeits a free kick to the opposite side.]

7. No player may be held or pulled over.
8. It is not lawful to take the Ball off the ground (except in touch) for any purpose whatever.
9. The ball may be pushed or hit [under any circumstances].[1]
   [If the ball be bounding it may be stopped by the Hand (not pushed or hit) but if rolling it may not be stopped except by the foot.]
10. A goal must be kicked but not from touch nor by a free kick from a catch.
    [No goal may be kicked from touch nor by a free kick from a catch.]
11. A ball in touch is dead – consequently the side that touches it down, must bring it to the edge of the touch, & throw it straight out at least five yards from touch.
12. Each player must provide himself with a red and dark blue flannel cap, one colour to be worn by each side.

These rules suggest very clearly in which camp the early football protagonists of South Yorkshire placed themselves. Despite limited use of hands, a practice which was fairly widespread in most if not all football games at the time, the Sheffield Rules disallowed excessively violent behaviour amongst participants by legislating quite plainly against hacking and tripping (Rule 5). Holding the ball (Rule 8) was only allowed when making a 'fair catch', thereby preventing any carrying of the ball, which, along with hacking, were the central features of the Rugby code. Running with the ball in hand is not even mentioned and was clearly forbidden. Numbers 5 and 6 of the rules formulated by the Sheffield Committee in 1858 show that Sheffield football was modelled on one or more of the embryo Association Football games. These rules were:

5. No pushing with the hands is allowed but no hacking or tripping up is fair under any circumstances whatsoever.
6. Holding the ball excepting in the case of a free kick, is altogether disallowed.

One of the most interesting points of the Sheffield rules, and therefore about how the game was played in that city, is the complete absence of an offside law. This may have been because of the lack of direct major public school influence. Rule 29 of the 1847 Eton Field Game states:

29. A player is considered to be sneaking when only three, or less than three, of the opposite side are before him and may not kick the ball.

First of all, it is worthy of note that this is not the strict offside rule of Rugby and pre-empts future Association varieties by allowing for some participants to be forward of the ball depending on the number of opponents in front

of an attacking player when he is about to kick the ball. Second, and more importantly for our attempts to analyse the potential lack of public school influence, the above law refers to the act of being offside as 'sneaking', which was the Eton term. Rarely has there been a more evocative term to describe an underhand and dishonourable deed – an exploit no doubt severely frowned upon by the majority of public schoolboys. Additionally, it is worth reflecting briefly on the offside laws of several of the world's present-day football forms. Australian Football has no offside rule; Rugby Union and Rugby League operate a strict offside; whilst Association Football is, in fact, a compromise – with the possibility of offside but also incorporating the ability for a player to advance the ball forward to positions where teammates may be awaiting a pass.

The Sheffield club appears to have offered membership to 'gentlemen' only and, for many years seems to have remained a socially exclusive organisation (Mason, 1980: 23). Certainly in the context of the hierarchy of social stratification in the city, the initial officers of the club are probably best described as upper class or upper middle class. The President, Frederick Ward, was to become Chairman of Sheffield Forge and Rolling Mills Limited; the Vice-President, Thomas Austin Sorby,[2] was a well-known local merchant in his family's business; Joseph Ellison, the other Vice-President, was also a successful merchant; William Baker was a technologist and local intellectual; whilst Thomas Edward Vickers graduated to become Master Cutler in 1872 and was heavily involved as commanding officer in the local Hallamshire Volunteers (Young, 1962: 17 and Tweedale, 1986: 65–72).

The fact that the 1858 Sheffield rules can be described as 'anti-Rugby' in form – the members had decided against hacking and running with the ball in the hands – suggests three possibilities. First, that they were influenced by certain major public school rules which promoted kicking and minimal handling. Second, Creswick in particular, together with other ex-Sheffield Collegiate pupils, imposed major elements of their school form of football – again, a kicking and minimal handling style – on proceedings. Though in the minority – just 17 of Sheffield FC's original membership of 57 had been educated at the school (Harvey, 2005: 96) – the Collegiate old boys were represented by a no doubt prestigious and powerful negotiator such as Creswick, who was able to mould the rules to his and his associates' liking. It has been suggested that Creswick and Prest decided to write to each major public school requesting a set of rules, using the preferred points of each to decide on a set of regulations for Sheffield. However, though public school influence was present, it was by no means direct. That is, it is doubtful that any of the founders had been educated at or brought the game directly from one of the major schools. Adrian Harvey has cast doubt on the extent and importance of public school influence in Sheffield and it is difficult to refute his claim that few if any of the original members of the club had attended a public school. However, it is possible to disagree with his suggestion regarding the total lack of public school influence on the original rules. Surely a relevant clue lies in an addition

to the rules of 1861–2. The inclusion of a 'rouge' – at that time a peculiarly Eton Field Game practice – must indicate some form of diffusion from that institution. A third reason for anti-Rugby sentiment may have been that local individuals and teams preferred a kicking and dribbling form of football, and this preference may have had some influence on the framing of the first Sheffield rules. We intend to deal with this final point somewhat later in the chapter. What is in no doubt is that early Sheffield football can be described as an embryonic Association form of the game.

Nathaniel Creswick

A closer examination of the lives of the two acknowledged founders of the Sheffield club may provide an insight into the kinds of individuals involved in the early life of the oldest club.

The Creswicks were an old Sheffield family who had lived in the area, we are told, for centuries. On 31 July 1831, Nathaniel Creswick was born – the son of a man who had become a prosperous silver-plate manufacturer – at Park Field, Sheffield. From April 1839 to 24 June 1847, Nathaniel had been educated at Sheffield Collegiate School, a Church of England institution which catered for local middle class boys. He became a solicitor in the town and subsequently Chairman of Joseph Rodgers and Sons Limited, a local silver-plate company. Nathaniel joined the Hallamshire Rifles in 1859 but left the following year to found the 4th West Riding (Yorkshire) Volunteer Artillery in Sheffield. This was quickly to become 'the most notable public interest in Sir Nathaniel's life'. He was also an all-round sportsman – being a pedestrian (a participant in walking races), a runner, a cricketer and a footballer.[3]

In 2007 Creswick's personal diaries were discovered gathering dust in an attic by one of his descendants. Although most references deal with his personal romantic entanglements, there are several remarks on football. The first such mention notes on 31 December 1857 that 'I have established a foot ball club to which most of young Sheffield come and kick'. The fact that 'foot' and 'ball' were used as separate words purposefully accentuates the type of game being played in the city as a kicking form as opposed to a handling variety, whilst the date appears to indicate that the club was formed in 1857 rather than 1855 as has been suggested in some sources. Creswick also mentions three early matches played by Sheffield FC against the local army garrison. He wrote:

> 12 May 1859. Two football matches with the garrison. Lots of ladies came to look on. I was captain and we lost the first match, the second was a tie.
> 19 December 1860. Football match with the garrison on Monday at Owlerton: a fair match, we won.

Interestingly, Creswick's wife – Sarah Ann Walker, whom he married in 1866 – originated from York, the same city as his good friend William Prest.

Creswick was ten years older than his wife and the couple had two children: a boy, Francis, and a girl, Ethel. In the 1891 census, they are listed as living at 7, Maugerhay, Norton Green, on the outskirts of the city, and were sufficiently wealthy to have a cook and a housemaid. Creswick was knighted in 1909 for his voluntary military services.

William Prest

William Prest originated from York where he was born on 1 April 1832, the third son of John Prest. In total, William had three brothers, all of whom he outlived. In 1850 John purchased the old established wine business of John Porter and Sons, which was eventually taken over by John Prest's son, John Beevor Prest, trading initially under the title 'Porter and Prest'. In the mid-1850s William joined his brother and the firm became J. B. and W. Prest, Wine Merchants, 46, High Street, Sheffield. Following the death of his brother John, William was in sole charge until joining forces with E. C. Vinen of London. Initially he lived on Collegiate Crescent in Sheffield, near to the Collegiate School, but by the time of his death he had moved to Dam Cottage on Crookes Road to the west of the city. He had, in fact, lodged there for many years and appeared in the 1861 and 1881 census returns at that address. Prest was another versatile sportsman, an enthusiastic co-founder of the Hallamshire Rifles and, like Creswick, a keen politician. He played for Yorkshire in 16 cricket matches from 1852–62. Politically, he was a Conservative but in his obituary notice of 1885 it was said that, 'however strong might be his feelings in these matters he was never accused of being an offensive politician'. His political ambitions were supported by his sporting achievements because 'his first years of residence in Sheffield were marked by so successful and eager a devotion to athletics as to bring him early in his career into popularity with a large section of the public'.

Being a local man, Creswick's career and life in Sheffield have been documented in considerable detail, but there has been less information unearthed and thus available on William Prest. Interestingly, one of William's brothers, Edward, had attended Uppingham School and Cambridge University. He was thus probably familiar with football as it was played in those institutions at that time. Edward had initially been educated in Wakefield and then spent 18 months at Uppingham, a school famous for its own unique kicking and dribbling form of football. He continued his studies at St John's College, Cambridge, from 1843–50.[4] At Cambridge, it is significant that he was a *direct* contemporary of John Charles Thring (at Cambridge from 1843–8), one of the framers of the university football rules of 1846. More pertinently, Thring was actually at the same college – St John's – as Edward Prest and, coincidentally, shared the same tutor, Dr John Hymers![5] Thring himself was a real football missionary, who held a dislike for the Rugby form of the game and issued his own football rules, called 'The Simplest Game', in 1862. This significant and previously undiscovered information may partly explain why Sheffield

football resembled the future Association game as both these types of football leaned heavily towards a kicking and dribbling style, being distinctly anti-Rugby in form. Later in life, Edward became Archdeacon of Durham and a churchman of considerable note.

William Prest died on 10 February 1885, aged 52. He had suffered a sudden and fatal seizure in the form of a ruptured blood vessel, and was buried with full military honours. His obituary appeared in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* the following day, stating that Prest suddenly collapsed 'within a few paces of his own office'. He had been unwell for a year and had been advised to stay at home. However, such was his commitment to the local Hallamshire Volunteers that he insisted in helping with plans for a ball (dance) to be held for the officers of that group. The obituary makes no mention of a wife or children. His funeral took place on 13 February at the Sheffield General Cemetery with thousands lining the route. Indeed, there were so many present that, rather bizarrely, a letter of complaint appeared in a local newspaper protesting at the damage done to other graves in the cemetery by the large assembly of mourners.

Despite Prest's interesting past, it seems likely that Creswick was the more influential of the two men, especially in the nascent football world, and there is evidence to support this in the offices ascribed to these individuals at the formation of the club; Creswick was appointed Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, whilst Prest merely served on the committee. It also seems likely that, during discussions over the framing of the first rules, Creswick, along with the others present, would have brought to bear their previous experiences of and preferences for particular forms of football. However, it would almost certainly have been the Honorary Secretary/Treasurer who would have exerted the most influence and power.

Other early clubs

Information on other early clubs is sketchy to say the least. The Blackheath club – Blackheath was then a village on the edge of London – began in 1858 when its members decided to follow the Rugby code; whilst a year later, the Forest Club was founded at Snaresbrook in Epping Forest by several Old Harrovians who based their games on a version of the minimal handling tradition and included in their number Charles William Alcock, later to be Secretary of the Football Association (Green, 1953: 17). However, their first match against another club did not take place until 15 March 1862 and it might be possible to compare their early existence with that of Sheffield FC. In other words, the members probably played informally from 1859 onwards but only fully organised their activities several years later (Cavallini, 2005: 13, 15). Ebenezer Cobb Morley, whose initiative led directly to the first meeting of the Football Association, formed a football club at Barnes in 1862. The club itself was based at Limes Field, Mortlake, and, under Morley, the team began to draw many of its players from a

variety of public schools (Butler, 1991: X), local rowing clubs and nearby army establishments (Marples, 1954: 146).

Another centre for early club development was Nottingham. The *Nottingham Guardian* of 28 November 1862, recorded the following:

> The opening of the Nottingham Football Club commenced on Tuesday last at Cremorne Gardens. A side was chosen by W. Arkwright and Chas. Deakin. A very spirited game resulted in the latter scoring two goals and two rouges against one and one.

The use of the rouge as a method of scoring leads us to two possible conclusions as to how elements of the game were diffused to the Nottingham area. Either at least one of the participants was an Old Etonian or, because of the geographical proximity of Sheffield, a football region which already employed the rouge, it was copied from their northern neighbour by Nottingham men who had visited Sheffield and decided to borrow one of that city's playing rules.

Again, the club was, similarly to Sheffield FC, probably playing informally at first – that is in 1862 – and the official history accepts that hard evidence only began to surface in 1864. The author of the club's official history, Tony Brown, admits that 'The true date of Notts.' foundation has to be the meeting at the George Hotel on 7th December 1864' (Brown, 1996: 8). The founders and early team members of Nottinghamshire FC, now known as Notts County, were from similar social levels to those of Sheffield FC. Richard Daft was one of the country's leading cricketers and, along with his brother, Charles, who ran a sports shop in Nottingham, played professionally for the county. Many players worked in the lace trade. Edward Birkhead Steegman busied himself in the family lace business, as did Christopher Silvester Wardle and Alexis Blake Baillon. The first President, Frederick Chatfield Smith, was a prominent landowner in Bramcote, a village just outside Nottingham, whilst his family owned a bank in the centre of the city. There was a good sprinkling of former public school men in the club, indicated by a match on 7 February 1867 between 'Non-public school men' and 'Old public school men'. Those in the club who had been the beneficiaries of a public school education lined up as follows:

> C. Smith (Rugby), J. Patterson (Charterhouse), C. Rothera (Rugby), C. Elliott (Uppingham), J. Lambert (Rugby), J. Keely (Oundle), A. Deedes (Winchester), T. Elliott (Repton), G. Fellows (Repton), T. Crompton (Rugby), T. P. Keely (Repton).
>
> (Brown, 1996: 9)

The elite social backgrounds of the members of the Nottingham Club around this time are clearly indicated by the fact that the 'Old public school men' could raise their own team. Yet it is surely surprising that, despite there being no fewer than four ex-Rugby School men in the club – and perhaps

there were more who did not play a part in this particular match – the rules generally followed were those which favoured a minimal handling game. Indeed, Nottingham clubs usually played under Sheffield Rules, though some matches were recorded as taking place under 'Nottingham Rules'. The latter rules were either never written down or have been lost over time, as none still exist in 2014. Whichever is the case, we can only surmise as to the exact nature of football in Nottingham around this period. It would no doubt have resembled the game in Sheffield as the two clubs were actually able to play a match in Nottingham as early as 2 January 1865 under Nottingham rules – resulting in a single goal victory for the visitors. Despite the fact that no written codification has survived, it seems safe to conclude that the type of football being played there would, in all probability, have closely resembled that which the newly formed FA in London was attempting to promote.

By 1865 a rival club had been formed whose members christened it Nottingham Forest – the latter name being used because of the area in which they played, and which is still known as 'The Forest' today. Initially titled simply 'The Forest Club', they drew their players from the same levels of local society as the Nottinghamshire Club. Their Chairman from 1868–86 was Walter Roe Lymbery, who, when he played, was an accomplished goalkeeper. He also acted as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, eventually held a similar position with Nottinghamshire FA, and represented the county at the Football Association for several years. By occupation he was a lace manufacturer in Nottingham, having established himself in business in 1871. The club was originally formed following a meeting of the existing 'shinney' (a hockey-like game also referred to as 'shinty') club, and their first game was recorded as being on 22 March 1866 (Smales, 1991: 8).

Another early club formed solely for the purposes of playing football was situated in Stoke-on-Trent. However, varied historical sources have failed to agree on the exact date of its foundation. Marples (1954: 146) offers us 1863, and also suggests that the club was started by Old Carthusians (former pupils of Charterhouse School); whilst Young (1968: 98) gives the date as 1867. There are, however, two pieces of more tangible proof for the formation of the club in 1868. First, a correspondent in *The Field* (26 September 1868) stated: 'At Stoke-upon-Trent a new club has been found for the practice of Association Rules, under the charge of H. J. Almond, one of the most prominent performers in the Charterhouse School eleven of last year.' Second, newspaper reports in Tony Matthews's more recent history of the club suggest that it played its first match on 17 October 1868, and reveal further that H. J. Almond scored the only goal for Stoke Ramblers – as they were then known – in a 1–1 draw. Also participating was William McDonald Matthews, another Old Carthusian (Matthews, 1994: 5). The Charterhouse Register for 1769–1872 confirms the attendance of both Almond and Matthews at the school:

> ALMOND, Henry John. b. 17 ApI. 1850, s, of William Almond of Westminster. Gownboys, ApI. 1863 – May 1868; Football xi. 1867–8. Civil

Engineer in Costa Rica. Engineer to La Guayra and Caracas Railway Co., Venezuela. m., Lucy. d. at sea 12 Mar. 1910.

MATTHEWS, William Macdonald. b. 17 Jan. 1851, 1st s, of Henry WiIliames Matthews of London. Dicken's, Jan. 1865–Dec. 1867. Civil Engineer; A.M.I.C.E.; did not practise. Of Tunbridge Wells. m, (1) 1877, Susan Annie Smith, d. of Staff-Cdr. Richard A. Burstal, R.N., of Ramsgate; (2) 1887, Frances Elizabeth, 1st d. of Francis Low of Avonmore, Stillorgan, co. Dublin. d. London 23 ApI. 1916.

It would appear that the names of some of the founders are essentially correct, but that the date of 1863 is some five years too early.

Rivals

Within three years, Sheffield FC had local rivals in the form of the recently established Hallam Football Club. They followed a similar route to other local clubs (Sheffield United and Sheffield Wednesday are two additional examples) in growing from an existing cricket side. They were initially known as the Hallam and Stumperlowe Club, the latter part of the name being included out of courtesy towards those several members of the team who were from a nearby hamlet of that name. Founded by Thomas Vickers and John Shaw, both ex-Sheffield FC members, Hallam played its first match against its local rival.

The reporter for the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* of Friday 28 December 1860, described the match as follows:

> Sheffield Football Club v Hallam and Stumperlowe Clubs – this match was played on Wednesday upon the Hallam cricket ground in the presence of a large number of spectators. Owing to the severe weather several players were absent from each side, but the spirit exhibited by those who were present prevented the game from flagging or becoming uninteresting to the observers, who were extremely liberal with their plaudits on the successful 'charge' or quiet 'dodge', and equally unsparing in their sarcasm and country 'chaff' on the unfortunate victims of the slippery ground or the 'pure' scientific. The day was beautiful and the 'uniform' of the men contrasting with each other and the pure snow had a most picturesque appearance. The Sheffielders turned out in their usual scarlet and white, whilst most of the country players wore the blue garment of the Hallam Club. It would be invidious to pick out the play of any particular gentleman when all did well, but we must give the palm to the Sheffield players as being the most scientific and also more alive to the advantage of upsetting their opponent. No serious accidents, however, occurred – the game was conducted with good temper and in a friendly spirit – and when darkness closed upon the scene, the Sheffield Club, notwithstanding their inferior numbers, counted two goals to nothing, and went home fully satisfied with their victory.

The writer commented in detail on the occasion itself, though he barely informed the reader of the actual events of the game. Such reports were to be a feature of early matches until correspondents acquainted themselves with the finer points of football. The social class of participants was regularly alluded to and we again find that most of the Victorian footballers in the Sheffield area were probably from the upper echelons of society. At least, it is reasonable to surmise this, since the reporter described the players as 'gentlemen'.

Further matches between the clubs took place the following year, a fact which is evidenced by the discovery of correspondence on the subject. The letters were received by John Dransfield, a native of Penistone, about whom we will say more later in this chapter. The first letter, dated 11 February 1861, asked Dransfield to represent Sheffield FC in a match against Hallam at the latter's Sandygate ground, a game played on Tuesday 12 February 1861 and ending in a 2-0 victory for Sheffield (Young, 1962: 18); whilst the second requested that he play for Hallam against Sheffield. This is indicative of how players represented multiple clubs in the early years and probably also hints at the small number of footballers available at that time. One letter, dated 14 November 1861, read as follows:

Dear Sir,

> The members of the Hallam Football Club desire me to ask you if you will play with us in the great match to be played at Hyde Park the Saturday after Christmas Day against Sheffield. As you are not picked to play with Sheffield we shall be glad to play you. 14 on each side. Our uniform is blue (dark) shirt and cap and white trousers.
>
> On our side we will have the following
>
> A. Pearson, Vickers (perhaps both), Pye-Smith, Shaw, Waterfall G. M., Moore, Snape, Hobson, Elliott, Sampson, Wildgoose, Hancock, Waterfall A., Warburton (Dransfield – if you play in his stead)
>
> John C. Shaw
> Hon. Sec. HFBC[6]

Encounters between the sides were often tempestuous affairs, none more so than the fixture on 29 December 1862 at Bramall Lane, where local enmities and the growing seriousness of the game were reflected in the participants' behaviour. This emerges clearly in the following extract:

> Football match at Bramall Lane – On Monday the Sheffield and Hallam football clubs played a match at Bramall Lane cricket ground, the proceeds being devoted to the Lancashire distress fund. The Hallam party having won the toss, played with the wind in their favour, but, at 'half-time', having failed to score, the ends were changed. After a rest of 15 minutes, play was resumed. The great expectation seemed to be that Sheffield, with the wind now in their favour, would soon get a goal. The Hallam men, however, played with great determination and successfully

> defended their goal. They appeared to have many partisans present and, when they succeeded in 'downing' a man, their ardent friends were more noisily jubilant. At one time, it appeared likely that the match would be turned into a general fight. Major Creswick (Sheffield) had got the ball away and was struggling against great odds – Mr. Shaw and Mr. Waterfall (Hallam). Major Creswick was held by Waterfall and in the struggle, Waterfall was accidentally hit by the Major. All parties were agreed that the hit was accidental. Waterfall, however, ran at the Major in the most irritable manner and struck him several times. He also threw off his waistcoat and began to 'show fight' in earnest. Major Creswick, who preserved his temper admirably, did not return a single blow. They were surrounded by partisans and, for a few minutes, there was every appearance of a general fight amongst players and spectators. The advice of older and cooler heads at length prevailed, the field was cleared and play again resumed. At 3 o'clock the play terminated in a 'draw', there being neither a goal nor a rouge scored by either party.
>
> The conduct of Waterfall was much condemned and several of the Hallam players expressed their deep regret at the occurrence. There were a few, however, who seemed to rejoice that the Major had been hit and were just as ready to 'Hallam it' on the slightest provocation. The cry was very general that Waterfall should be expelled from the field, but, though this extreme course was not taken, he was quietly placed as goalkeeper for the short time the play continued….We understand the Sheffield players deprecate the long interval in the middle of the game that was devoted to refreshments.
>
> (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 3 January 1863: 10)

The following reply from the Hallam players was published three days later:

> In the early part of the game, Waterfall charged the Major on which the Major threatened to strike him if he did so again, for which the Major afterwards apologised. Later in the game, when all the players were waiting the decision of the umpires on a rouge, the Major very unfairly took the ball from the hands of one of our players, and commenced kicking it towards their goal, when he was met by Waterfall who charged him and the Major deliberately struck Waterfall on the face, which Waterfall immediately returned.
>
> The Hallam Players (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 6 January 1863)

A further contemporary account of a Hallam v. Sheffield encounter serves to confirm the highly competitive nature of these early local rivalries:

> William Chesterman of the Sheffield Club who recalled his games against Hallam, when 'bull strength' was the principle [sic] feature; he recalled often seeing the ball laying quietly on the ground whilst yards away

> opposing players were blocking, ramming and butting each other. The idea being to charge an opponent whenever you could, whether he had the ball or not!
>
> (Steele, 1986: 7)

Initiators

The Sheffield footballing community as a whole can take credit for the introduction of many new initiatives. The following examples give an idea of the impression the footballers of the city made on the sport:

(1) use of crossbars rather than tape
(2) opposition players being forced to retire a certain distance from restarts
(3) the corner kick was introduced by the Sheffield FA in 1868, four years before its adoption by the FA
(4) at the FA committee meeting of 12 February 1867, Sheffield FC's representatives anticipated restrictions on holding the ball or pushing it with the hands, thus further distancing the game from the Rugby form
(5) Sheffield led the way in penalising offences with a free kick to the opposition
(6) the city's footballing administrators pioneered the Players' Accident Scheme
(7) in the 1866–7 season, local clubs were the first to compete in a cup competition, 'the Youdan Cup'
(8) Sheffield suggested the use of North v. South trial matches in order to select national teams
(9) the city held the first football match to be played under floodlights. This took place at Bramall Lane 15 October 1878. Essentially, the match was held to promote the new invention of electric light and, as such, appeared to be a successful venture.

Penistone and Thurlstone – local influence

One prominent individual who has perhaps not so far received appropriate credit and who may hold a partial key to explaining the development of Sheffield's distinctive form of football was John Marsh (Neill and Curry, 2008). He was born in Thurlstone, a village some 15 miles north west of Sheffield in 1843, and was noted in the 1851 census as living with his family at Dunford Bridge, with his father, Thomas, being listed as a stonemason. However, having involved himself in Sheffield football, John Marsh became one of the founders of the Wednesday Football Club – eventually to become the present-day Sheffield Wednesday – when that institution began life on 4 September 1867. He was elected as Secretary and captain at the first meeting and remained a prominent member for some years. Nicknamed 'the Little Wonder',[7] he captained the Sheffield

Association team in the encounters with London in 1871 and Glasgow in 1874 – leading them through perhaps their most successful era. He returned to his native village in 1874, taking charge of the Crystal Palace Inn that had formerly been run by his mother, Elizabeth, though he also persevered with his previous trade as an engraver. He continued to play football and became Secretary and captain of the local club, which usually played under the title, 'Thurlstone Crystal Palace'. However, on Saturday 26 February 1876, he suffered a fall during a match for Thurlstone against Fir Vale, resulting in a broken arm which never fully mended. Despite travelling to London to have the break rebound, he appears to have slipped into depression because of his injury and died on 21 April 1880, aged 37. His sporting obituary appeared in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* two days later and read as follows:

> The Association football players of Sheffield, London and Glasgow will learn with intense regret of the death of John Marsh, the original captain of the Sheffield team who so frequently led them on to victory. Marsh was undoubtedly one of the best captains that ever commanded a team and he was unquestionably one of the best backs of his day. In that difficult position, he was one of the best judges of whether he could get to the ball before his opponent or not, and when he rushed in he never made a mistake, invariably taking the ball with him. He took in at a glance when peril threatened and brought up the requisite action in time of need. During his career as captain, Sheffield [Association representative team] won almost all before them and never, we believe, lost a match on their own ground. In business he was associated with the late lamented John Rodgers as an engraver – one of the best, if not the best, amateur bowlers in Sheffield. Both were excellent singers and, with the present writer used to sing trios at the Sheffield Wednesday Cricket and Football club dinners. Both were excellent company and we doubt if either made an enemy or lost a friend save by death. Unfortunately for Marsh, he left Sheffield to take an inn at Thurlstone, near Penistone, his native village, formerly kept by his mother. Here he inaugurated a promising team of football players, but unfortunately in one of their matches he was charged and upset and had his arm broken. It was never properly set and he went to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, with the idea of having it re-broken and re-set properly, but the former operation was not gone through. Surgical contrivances were applied to the fractured arm, but without any material result. He was never quite himself again. The depression in the iron trade in the district had an influence on his spirits and this doubtless has had its influence in his premature decline. A benefit was played for him some years ago in Sheffield and realised something over forty pounds. He leaves a widow and several children not altogether, we hope, unprovided for.
>
> (*Sheffield Telegraph*, 23 April 1880)

The activities of the footballers in Marsh's native village of Thurlstone may provide an important clue to the origins of Sheffield's playing preferences and early rules. John Goulstone, in his pamphlet entitled *Football's Secret History*, notes a good deal of football-related activity around that area. He mentions William Marsh – possibly a relative of John's – as an organiser of a match in 1844 which had links to the Horns Tavern in Penistone, the village adjacent to Thurlstone. Interestingly, the *Sheffield Trades Directory* of 1852 listed the inn as being in the charge of Abel Marsh, possibly another relative.

In a letter written in 1928, which is part of the records of Sheffield Football Club, one of the early members, John Dransfield, confirmed the links between the city and players from Penistone and Thurlstone. He said, 'John Charles Shaw, a Penistone man…was in my father's office at Penistone and regularly played football with other youths in one of my father's fields opposite the office….They played with the old small ball.' It is unclear what Dransfield means by the 'old small ball', though he must have thought this significant. Dransfield, Shaw and John Marsh were all natives of that area and would have brought their form of the game to the city. The latter two were even more influential than Dransfield, who continued, 'I believe John Marsh, a Thurlstone man, who went to live and work in Sheffield, was captain after Shaw went to Hallam' (Sheffield Football Club Records: 10/15). This is the first mention of Marsh being captain or even a member of Sheffield FC, though Dransfield repeats the claim in his book on the history of Penistone, so it may be true (Dransfield, 1906: 137). Marsh was certainly a good enough player to have been attached to such a prestigious organisation, but in terms of social standing, his status as an engraver might not rank with those who were associated with the early days of Sheffield FC.

Significantly for the development of the game in Sheffield, a later reference notes a group of Thurlstone men as issuing a challenge for a match in which they were insistent that they would only play 'a game of foot-ball and not hand-ball'. This is significant as it may be a clue to why football in the city would resemble an embryo-Association form of the game. In short, it was simply an additional avenue of rules diffusion and another part of that area's football figuration. However, though the men of Thurlstone and Penistone would undoubtedly have had at least an indirect influence on rules-related discussions in nearby Sheffield, it is unlikely that they would have been as powerful as the high status ex-pupils of the city's Collegiate School.

Sheffield and the 'London' Football Association

Sheffield FC can also have some claim to have been involved in the initial development of the FA. At the first meeting of the London body on 26 October 1863 at the Freemasons' Tavern in central London, Sheffield's observer appears to have been Harry Waters Chambers. His obituary provides us with previously unknown information on the early days of the FA. Part of it states:

> Mr Chambers was concerned in the formation of the Football Association and attended the original meeting in town [London] where rules were formulated and played in the match played to test those rules. The match took place in Battersea Park.
>
> (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 25 December 1907)

The match referred to in the above quote was organised as an exhibition of the new FA rules, and took place on 9 January 1864 between the FA President's [Arthur Pember] XIV and the Secretary's [Ebenezer Cobb Morley] XIV, with Chambers turning out for the former. Below is the match report:

> THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
>
> The first match played actually under the new rules of the Football Association took place on Saturday January 9, in Battersea Park, amongst the members of the various clubs now forming the association.
>
> The sides were chosen by Messrs. Alcock (both capital players); and as the President and the Secretary 'on this occasion only and for their joint benefit', took opposite sides, we class them thus: – The President's side: Messrs. A. Pember, C. W. Alcock, H. W. Chambers, A. M. Tebbutt, Gray, Drew, Graham, Cutbill, Morton, J. Turner, Morris, Renshaw, Leuchars and Scott. The Secretary's side: Messrs. E. C. Morley, J. F. Alcock, C. M. Tebbutt, Lloyd, C. Hewett, G. T. Wawn, J. P. Phillips, Innes, McCalmont, Needham, H. Baker, A. Baker, Hughes and Jackson. Where all played well, individual mention hardly comes within reportable scope, but Messrs. Pember, Hewett, Morley, Chambers, and both the Alcocks especially distinguished themselves. Mr Chambers, the able representative of the Sheffield Football Club, gave a capital taste of his quality. The President's side, after some spirited play, obtained two goals, the final kick in each instance being obtained by Mr C. W. Alcock.
>
> In the evening the members of the association dined together at the Grosvenor Hotel, Pimlico, under the Presidency of Mr A. Pember. 'Success to football, irrespective of class or creed', was heartily drunk and a most agreeable evening passed.
>
> (*Bell's Life*, 16 January 1864)

That Chambers was invited to become involved in the game, together with the reporter's note that he was representing Sheffield FC, confirms that close links between the two areas existed from a relatively early stage. Sheffield FC can, therefore, have some claim to have been involved in the initial development of the FA. While the main delegates were listed assiduously, the FA minutes of the initial gathering noted that 'there were several other gentlemen present interested in the subject, who, although players, did not definitively represent any club'. In Sheffield FC's centenary publication there is a mention of three other gentlemen who, along with Chambers, also acted as representatives of the club at the meeting – G. Allcock, A. W. Willis and J. Morton. The four

individuals only attended as observers. However, Sheffield FC, after some discussions between members, did decide to become a member of the FA a month after its formation.

With the formation of the Football Association in the autumn of 1863 – at first essentially an organisation of London-based clubs – the game seemingly possessed a focal point for further promotion. Strangely, the FA appeared largely to ignore the vibrant Sheffield footballing sub-culture. This is doubly perplexing; first, Harry Chambers had acted as one of Sheffield FC's observers at the FA's initial meeting and was undoubtedly known to them. Second, the South Yorkshire community could have provided comforting support for the nascent, seemingly besieged FA. Despite the differences, it fell to Sheffield FC's Honorary Secretary, William Chesterman, to initiate meaningful contact with the FA by suggesting a contest between the two bodies. This was discussed and accepted at the FA Committee meeting held on 22 February 1866 –where it was suggested that members of affiliated London clubs should put forward nominations of players for the fixture. Although Sheffield were members of the FA, it had always been agreed that they would retain a large degree of autonomy and still play by their own set of rules.

In Sheffield FC's records, Chesterman noted that he 'did not propose for the Sheffield clubs to play the association but our club'. Sheffield's selection was not a truly representative side as it only consisted of players from Sheffield FC. This may further strengthen the view that Sheffield FC, at that point, thought of themselves, probably quite correctly, as an elite body in the city and may illustrate the FA's confusion over the organisation of football in Sheffield. The match between London and Sheffield was played on 31 March 1866 in London's Battersea Park – with the home team winning by two goals and four touchdowns to nil. The fact that the fixture was played under FA rules probably assisted the London combination side. The match itself was reported as 'a very hot one, although Sheffield were over-matched, many of the Londoners were badly knocked about'. It was in this game that the London team first witnessed Sheffield players heading the ball – a sight never seen before in the south of the country and one which caused some amusement.

A return match was mooted but disagreements over rules prevented one being arranged. Sheffield had offered to play matches under the rules of whoever was the home team, but this was declined by the London Association who felt that, perhaps quite rightly, since they had been formed with the object of creating a universal code it would be ill advised to have a team playing to rules set by another club. Lack of enthusiasm for the FA reached its lowest ebb by early 1867 when only six representatives, including Chesterman, attended one of their meetings on 12 February. At this point 15 clubs were playing the game in Sheffield, compared to the ten teams who were affiliated to the FA. The members of the FA seemed content to have formulated a code by which diverse teams could play one another and, with this task

completed, there was a suggestion that the FA might willingly disband. Yet Sheffield still appeared subordinate to the FA and this was particularly evident when Chesterman, still representing Sheffield FC, attempted but failed to amend four FA laws – two concerning use of the rouge (a differential scoring method), one regarding offside and another relating to the use of hands. All of Chesterman's motions were defeated, but the next three proposals, all put forward by C. W. Alcock representing Wanderers, were all carried (Football Association minutes).

It was five years after the first game between Sheffield and London that the next fixture between the two associations was played. The FA's Honorary Secretary, C. W. Alcock, captained a team of London-based players which travelled to South Yorkshire. Unfortunately, Alcock had managed to bring only ten men on the journey north, but John Charles Shaw, then President of the Sheffield Association, offered to help make up the numbers by playing for the visitors. The game took place at Bramall Lane, Sheffield, and the local XI reversed the previous game's outcome by winning 3-1. By this time the team was truly representative, comprising players from several different clubs from across the city. After the contest, a reporter writing for the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* (4 December 1871) commented on how successful football in the city had become:

> This healthy and exhilarating game has gradually advanced in public favour since the introduction of it into this neighbourhood by the Sheffield Club some years ago. Until at the present time it is quite as popular in the winter as cricket is in the summer with the sport-loving population of Sheffield.

Matches between Sheffield and London continued, with 15 taking place between the two teams over the next four years (Curry, 2013b). As the two associations competed against one another on the field, friendships between individuals – and undoubtedly enmities, too –developed. One noteworthy example of this was when the Wanderers Football Club of London, five times winners of the FA Cup in the 1870s, were struggling to find a goalkeeper for the long trip north to face Queen's Park in Glasgow. Harry Waters Chambers came forward to assist his friend C. W. Alcock, captain of the London team. Unfortunately, it turned out to be an instantly forgettable experience for the Sheffield man. A correspondent for the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* (11 October 1875) related: 'Three goals were got in the first 40 minutes by the Scotch eleven, after which Chambers, the English goalkeeper, was supplanted by Geaves, who acted more efficiently.' The reporter confirmed in the team list that it was indeed H. W. Chambers of Sheffield. Chambers had proved in the past to be something of a footballing missionary as he was also noted as taking part in a practice match in Nottingham to usher in the 1866–7 season for the Notts. Club – later Notts. County – at Bramcote, near Nottingham (Brown, 1996: 9).

Table 4.1 Sheffield v. London inter-association matches, 1866–77

31.3.1866	London (2 goals, 4 touchdowns)		Sheffield 0 (played under London rules)		
2.12.1871	Sheffield	3	London	1	(Sheffield rules)
27.1.1872	London	1	Sheffield	0	(London rules)
2.3.1872	Sheffield	2	London	1	(Mixed rules)
2.11.1872	Sheffield	4	London	1	(Sheffield rules)
4.1.1873	London	1	Sheffield	0	(London rules)[a]
15.3.1873	Sheffield	2	London	1	(Mixed rules)
1.11.1873	Sheffield	8	London	2	(Sheffield rules)
3.1.1874	London	1	Sheffield	1	(London rules)
4.4.1874	Sheffield	4	London	2	(Mixed rules)[b]
7.11.1874	Sheffield	2	London	0	(Sheffield rules)
16.1.1875	London	3	Sheffield	1	(London rules)
29.3.1875	Sheffield	0	London	2	(Mixed rules)
1.1.1876	London	4	Sheffield	0	(London rules)
25.3.1876	Sheffield	6	London	1	(Sheffield rules)
11.11.1876	Sheffield	5	London	1	(Sheffield rules)
30.12.1876	London	3	Sheffield	1	(London rules)
17.11.1877	Sheffield	0	London	6	(Association rules)
29.12.1877	London	2	Sheffield	1	(Association rules)

[a] Young (1962: 28) says the score was 0–0.
[b] Young (1962: 29) says this game took place on 4 February 1874.

Sheffield and Glasgow

In this period, each association tested themselves against others across Britain. One close rivalry, particularly in the early years, was between Sheffield and Glasgow. The initial encounter between these Football Associations took place on 14 March 1874 at Bramall Lane, Sheffield, with the game ending in a 2-2 draw and being witnessed by 5,000–6,000 spectators. It was initially announced as being a match between Sheffield and Scotland, and the Glasgow side was so strong that the reporter stated that 'nine of the eleven' were thought capable of playing for the national side. All but one player from Glasgow played for the Queen's Park club. The Scottish XI wore their national colours of 'blue jerseys with the lion of Scotland on the left breast, white knickerbockers and various coloured stockings'. The teams were as follows:

> **SHEFFIELD**: J. Marsh (Captain), J. C. Clegg, J. Houseley, H. E. Dixon, W. H. Carr, J. R. B. Owen, W. H. Stacey, R. Gregory, J. Hunter, T. Buttery, W. Wilkinson.
> **GLASGOW AND DISTRICT**: J. J. Thompson (Captain), C. Campbell, J. B. Weir, W. Mackinnon, A. Mackinnon, H. McNeill, J. Taylor, R. Gardner (Goal, Clydesdale), F. Anderson, J. H. Wilson, D. Wotherspoon.

Table 4.2 Sheffield v. Glasgow inter-association matches, 1874–87

14.3.1874	Sheffield	2	Glasgow	2	Bramall Lane
27.2.1875	Glasgow	2	Sheffield	0	West of Scotland Cricket Ground
19.2.1876	Sheffield	0	Glasgow	2	Bramall Lane
10.2.1877	Glasgow	1	Sheffield	0	First Hampden Park
09.2.1878	Sheffield	2	Glasgow	4	Bramall Lane
15.2.1879	Glasgow	4	Sheffield	1	First Hampden Park
14.2.1880	Sheffield	0	Glasgow	1	Sheaf Field Grounds
12.2.1881	Glasgow	3	Sheffield	0	First Hampden Park
11.2.1882	Sheffield	3	Glasgow	1	Bramall Lane
17.2.1883	Glasgow	4	Sheffield	2	First Hampden Park
16.2.1884	Sheffield	1	Glasgow	2	Bramall Lane
14.2.1885	Glasgow	9	Sheffield	1	Second Hampden Park
23.1.1886	Sheffield	2	Glasgow	2	Bramall Lane
05.2.1887	Glasgow	10	Sheffield	3	Second Hampden Park

Two years later, in February 1876, Glasgow again visited Sheffield, this time winning 2–0. The match was noteworthy because of the appearance for the Scottish XI of James Joseph Lang – who would subsequently come to reside in Sheffield and represent, in the main, the Wednesday club. He was also almost certainly the first professional football player – receiving payment from Wednesday to turn out for them over several seasons. Incidentally, although he represented his adopted association a number of times, he never played against Glasgow. It appears to have been no coincidence that Lang never faced Glasgow and it may have been because of the fact that he had journeyed south to play for money and may have believed that his Glasgow opponents would have been uncomfortable if they were forced to face him. Peter Andrews, who some have erroneously claimed to have also been a professional player, conversely represented both associations against the other – in 1875 and 1876 for Glasgow v. Sheffield; and in 1877 for Sheffield v. Glasgow. This may be further evidence to indicate that Andrews had not come to Sheffield to earn a living through football, but simply because he had moved because of his job.

The Scots generally dominated the fixture, winning 11 of the first 14 matches. Sheffield's solitary victory in this particular series came in February 1882, when, playing at home, they beat Glasgow 3-1. Spectators were generally of the opinion that the football played that day was of the highest calibre ever seen in the city. Included in the Sheffield team were the great Billy Mosforth and future FA Cup winner John (Jack) Hunter, along with future England international and Sheffield FC player, John Hudson.

The fixture continued until 1938, with a break for the 1914–18 First World War, and did not resume until a single fixture was played in 1949. The series recommenced under floodlights in 1954, but the curtain finally came down on the contest in 1960.

Loss of independence

Though the late 1870s marked something of a high point in Sheffield football, the year 1877 was a watershed in terms of the Sheffield Association's independence. Despite being longstanding members of the Football Association, the players of the Sheffield Association still competed under their own rules. It is an interesting point of conjecture to wonder why the Sheffield Association – or Sheffield FC as it was in the early 1860s – even bothered to join the FA. It is difficult to think of any real advantages for them in being linked to an (albeit like-minded) body some 160 miles distant. Even as early as 1863 Sheffield possessed a relatively thriving football scene and had no obvious need of support from its London counterparts.

However, it appears that Sheffield eventually came under pressure to accept a nationally recognised code through a debate by letter in a London-based periodical, *The Field* (10 March 1877: 281). Stuart G. Smith, Captain of the Manchester Association Football Club, bemoaned:

> I think that I may safely say that there is not any district in which the inconvenience of having two different codes of Association rules is felt more than here, where if a club adopt one, no matter which, it is obliged to get matches with clubs playing the other, and has to play different rules, when away, from those which it plays on its own ground. Look at the results of the two London and Sheffield matches this season, each side having it their own way at their own rules. Had there been only one code of rules, and both sides accustomed to them, what would have been the results? No one, I think, will deny that it is more enjoyable to play a closely contested game than to gain an easy victory or suffer a hollow defeat. A meeting is to be held this summer at Stoke-on-Trent to form a Midland Counties Association and, had the meeting last Wednesday week met the northern proposition favourably, they would, of course, adopt the same rules. But now, I am afraid they will adopt the Sheffield code or, perhaps, worse still, they will draw up some of their own. Cannot this subject be re-considered at a meeting, as with three codes of rules, what unison will there be amongst Association players. On the other hand, should we be all playing the same rules, the time could not be far distant when we might have a North and South and also county matches in the north at Association rules.

In the same edition of *The Field*, William Samuel Bambridge[8] of Marlborough School, which had become a Rugby-playing establishment, added:

> The Sheffield Association numbers some thousands of players, and their rules differ from ours, the Football Association, in two important particulars. Firstly, they have practically no offside, as all players are on side

> that have their opposing Goal Keeper between them and their opponents' goal-line….Secondly, the Sheffielders exact a penalty for playing the ball into touch. This is in the form of a kick in, in any direction, by a player of the opposite side….The question is a simple one, 'Is it desirable that all Association clubs in England and Scotland should play the same code of rules?'

The discussion had echoes of the rules debate in the late 1850s and early 1860s which, in large part, led to the formation of the Football Association. The two letters to *The Field* were precipitated by a one-sided match in February 1876 between teams from Sheffield and Manchester at the home of the former. The game was played under Sheffield rules and was an overwhelming victory for the hosts by 14–0.

Was it at this point that the footballers of Sheffield finally accepted the hegemony of the London-based FA and agreed to recognise the latter's rules? It would superficially appear to be the case, but a brief glance at the Sheffield press gives a slightly different impression. First, Sheffield footballers viewed their cup competition as being every bit as important as that of the FA. When referring to the 'national' contest, the Sheffield press invariably called it the London Association Cup, quite clearly giving the impression that the FA Cup was simply another trophy being contested by clubs of a local association. Interestingly, as late as April 1877, the North Staffordshire FA indicated that, for the next season, they would employ Sheffield rules (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 20 April 1877). At the Sheffield body's meeting of that month it was reported that they had accepted 'the Clydesdale amendment and the London rules' (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 24 April 1877). This proposal sought to legitimise the one-handed throw in any direction, instead of at right angles to the touchline. Clydesdale, despite being a Scottish club, were at that time members of the FA. Finally, on 28 April 1877, a Sheffield newspaper noted that:

> The Sheffield Association has decided to join with the FA in the adoption of the Clydesdale amendment with regard to the throw from touch. This union makes one code for Association players in England, so that, at last, after many attempts, the FA and Sheffield have amalgamated; a step that will be greatly conducive to the advancement of the dribbling game.
>
> (Sheffield and Rotherham Independent, 28 April 1877).

There is no mention in this report of Sheffield accepting the hegemony of London, and great stress appears to have been placed on an equitable *amalgamation*! This argument is in stark contrast to Geoffrey Green's account which argued that the Sheffield Association adopted the FA Laws 'completely' (Green, 1953: 61).

Professionalism

As the footballing sub-culture in Sheffield developed, it might come as no surprise to find evidence of early professionalism or 'shamateurism' in the city. It has been argued by some historians that the first professional player plied his trade in Sheffield. Indeed, in James Joseph Lang, a native of Glasgow, there is a viable candidate for this title. It would probably be impossible to trace the first person to play football for financial reward, though Lang could certainly be described as the first importation from another country enticed by monetary gain to play the game. He represented several teams in and around Sheffield, though for the vast majority of his career there he played for the Wednesday club, at times being imported for special one-off cup ties (Curry, 2004; 2007).

Indeed, the late 1870s were halcyon days for football in Sheffield, with the city producing a rash of excellent players, a very competitive inter-association representative side, and two exponents in particular who were able to compete with the best the country had to offer. William (Billy) Mosforth was not only lauded as one of the most brilliant wingers ever to have played the game up until that time, but he was also something of a character. The general suspicion was that he earned a fairly substantial income from football. Mosforth had been born in Sheffield on 2 January 1858 and died there on 11 July 1929, having played successfully in the area for many years. He probably earned a good deal of money from various sources in the game but never appears to have been consistently or openly rewarded for his efforts. Although, like many others, he represented a number of different clubs, his first regular appearances were made for the Albion club in the city, before joining Wednesday, for whom he played for the majority of his career. Mosforth transferred his allegiance quite publicly to the Wednesday club during October and November 1880. In failing to represent Albion in the Wharncliffe Cup tie against Hallam on Saturday 20 October 1880, he was ensuring that he was available to play for Wednesday in subsequent rounds of the competition. The matter was covered in the local press, as no doubt feelings ran high concerning the sudden switch. One report in the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent* (4 November 1880), noted that the Albion club committee was unanimous in 'condemning the action of Mr. W. Mosforth in relation to the cup tie and resolving to strike his name from its list of members'. However, further information attempting to clarify Mosforth's position appeared in the press two days later. The report read as follows:

> On Thursday we announced that at a meeting of the Albion Club held on Tuesday night, the members had decided to strike off the name of the player named on account of the alleged non-fulfilment of an appointment with the club in its cup tie. Mr. Mosforth now writes us that, on the 13th October, he withdrew his name from the roll of members of the Albion Club. This being the case, Mosforth fails to see any sensible

> motive in holding a meeting on the 2nd November for the purpose of striking him off the rolls. As the statement, if allowed to go forth uncontradicted, might be detrimental to his reputation as a football player, he wishes to have this plain statement of the facts laid before the public.
>
> (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 6 November 1880)

No reasons for this parting of the ways were given and we are left to speculate on the motives involved. Mosforth was by trade an engraver, though he is recorded in the 1881 Sheffield census as an unmarried publican, keeping the Royal Oak public house at 29 King Street in the centre of the city. Later, he played football for Lockwood Brothers, a successful works team formed by disaffected Wednesday players unhappy at the latter club's stance against professionalism. During the same dispute, Mosforth was instrumental in forming the Sheffield Rovers club, an openly professional organisation. An outstanding athlete, he gained nine international caps for England at football, the first of which came when he was aged 19. On his debut he was the only player in the team not to have attended a university or public school. Whilst Mosforth was almost certainly involved in selling his considerable football skills for money, he never transferred his allegiances to other geographical areas. He was not, therefore, a part of another form of emergent professionalism, that based on importation.

Jack Hunter was another Sheffield footballer with attitudes similar to those of Mosforth. Hunter was born in Sheffield in 1851 and played his initial football in the city, following the common career of a footballer at the time in representing multiple clubs. He was involved with the Crookes, Exchange, Wednesday and Heeley clubs, representing the latter on a more regular basis and becoming heavily embroiled in activities linked with early football professionalism – he was, for example, closely involved with the Sheffield Zulus phenomenon that saw him suspended and in dispute with the Sheffield FA. The Sheffield Zulus operated between the years 1879–82 after a set of enterprising individuals formed a team and began playing football matches dressed as members of the South African tribe. The organisers took advantage of interest in the Anglo–Zulu conflict in southern Africa which was taking place at the time and, in their first high profile meeting at least, the proceeds were donated to survivors and relatives of those killed in the conflict. As the novelty became more popular, they continued to charge entrance fees from which they seemingly rewarded themselves. The practice was cut short by the local association, however, and a good number of players were banned, though they were quickly reinstated following appropriate apologies (Curry, 2009). Hunter's situation became increasingly untenable and he appears to have deliberately moved to Lancashire in a conscious attempt to gain remuneration for playing football. That was something which, at the time, he could not have *openly* achieved in Sheffield. He was also almost certainly engaged professionally by Blackburn Olympic, with whom he won the FA Cup in 1882–3. He moved, it would seem, to an area with a more lenient view of

payment for playing football or, at least, where the administrators of clubs had found and accepted ways and means of facilitating the practice. Hunter seemingly settled in East Lancashire as he was noted as still resident there in the Blackburn census of 1891, when he described himself as a 'professional footballer/turner'. At 49 years old, it is doubtful that he was still playing the game for money, but it is surely of interest that he should have been depicting himself as a wage earner from football even at such an advanced age. However, following the legalisation of professionalism by the FA in 1885, this declaration would have been perfectly legal.

When meetings to discuss the possible approval of professionalism were held in London in the early 1880s, attitudes from representatives of Sheffield, especially those of Sheffield FC, became apparent. William Beardshaw, the club's Secretary in 1885, penned several letters in an attempt to rally support for the campaign against the practice. He even procured proxy votes from clubs not intending to attend the FA gathering (Sheffield Football Club Records: 7). These 'proxies' were handed to some of Beardshaw's like-minded friends in a deliberate effort to ensure a favourable decision on professionalism. One such letter to Edwin Browne, Honorary Secretary of Notts. County, requesting proxy votes read as follows:

22 August 1883

Dear Sir,

> Are you going up to the Football Association meeting on Monday next; or are you sending representatives? If not I wish you would allow me to procure one or even two voters on your behalf.
>
> There are certain northern clubs with whom neither Sheffield Club nor Notts. County have much sympathy that will probably make themselves objectionable.

Beardshaw then rallied support for the idea of issuing the proxy votes to people of similar opinions to ensure that Sheffield FC's stance against professionalism gained as much support as possible. This particular letter had been written to H. W. Chambers, the noted Sheffield FC stalwart. It read as follows:

14 January 1885

Dear Chambers,

> Monday next, Freemason's Tavern at 6.30 pm is the Football Association meeting re: professionalism. Let me know if you can go as Atkinson wants to go if you are unable.
>
> If anyone you know would like to go up to this meeting, I have plenty of proxies to give on condition that they pledge themselves to support Dix's resolution.

Yours Faithfully
Wm. F. Beardshaw

Later, Beardshaw outlined to Chambers his preferred tactics in the debate:

17 January 1885

Dear Chambers,

I enclose your admission ticket for Monday's meeting.

The lines we shall have to fight on are – that professionalism is an evil and should be repressed; that the Football Association should refuse to countenance professional football; and if professionalism cannot be put down (which is probable) that it should be completely…[text missing] like athletics; this last clause means of course the second.

The discussion will be long and exciting, and the arguments clever on both sides. I am sorry I have not duplicate copies of the various resolutions to send you; but if you go by the 1.45 GNR on Monday you can read them on the way.

If you are going earlier have time to call on Peirce [sic] Dix at the Tavistock, he would assist you to get copies.

Yours Faithfully
Wm. F. Beardshaw

I am entrusted with vouchers from Brigg, Southport and Rotherham and have found Sheffielders to take them up.

Though the FA accepted football professionalism in July 1885, the Sheffield Association refused to do so until two years later, continuing to stand aloof from happenings in the rest of the country.

Why did modern club football begin in Sheffield?

The amount of influence that Sheffield footballers have had on the development of the game in England was, especially during the sport's early years, quite remarkable. As well as boasting the world's oldest football club, in 1871 Sheffield hosted the first inter-city match – their opponents being London. Its legislators subsequently introduced a fixed crossbar, together with rules governing the corner kick and the free kick, whilst, in 1876, they established the first provincial cup competition.

One of the most intriguing questions that sociologists and historians concerned with the diffusion of football frequently ask is one regarding the adoption of a particular form of the game; whether it be a kicking and dribbling code or one involving handling, carrying and hacking by the players of a specific geographical area (Russell, 1988). Our hypothesis for the Sheffield area involves three main strands or avenues of diffusion. It would be incorrect to attempt an interpretation that is suggestive of the influence of a single person, as such complex social processes cannot be properly explained simply in terms of the actions of an individual. Whilst such men as John Marsh, Nathaniel Creswick, William Prest, the Clegg brothers and John Charles Shaw all played important parts in the development of Sheffield football, they remained part

of a broader process of influence from several differing directions. The effects of changing work patterns and the demography of the Industrial Revolution on the city constitute a rudimentary and reified explanation, being suggestive of mono-causality and lacking the ability to examine and interpret even the most basic human interactions. Our interpretation runs as follows:

First, the type of football played by the boys at Sheffield Collegiate School was significant and those members of the club would have transferred these preferences when deciding on a code for Sheffield FC in 1857. Whilst it remains unclear what precisely constituted their favoured form of the game, it is noteworthy that the school was still playing under Association rules until at least 1880, and probably beyond. The views of Nathaniel Creswick, in his prominent position as Honorary Secretary/Treasurer, would have been especially influential in this regard. The club also supported the Association faction at the early meetings of the FA, noting that the London Association's initial set of draft laws which included running with the ball and hacking 'were directly opposed to football and were more suggestive of wrestling' (Green, 1953: 28). We accordingly feel able to propose the considerable influence of a local social elite – largely, though not totally, free of major public school influence but rather chiefly reliant on what had become in the Sheffield area, deeply established parochial football practices. In terms of a wider social elite, this hypothesis would apply not only to the Sheffield football figuration but also to those, for instance, in Nottingham, London and Crewe. The likes of Nathaniel Creswick and William Prest were mirrored in other cities by the likes of Richard Daft at Notts. County and Walter Roe Lymbery at Nottingham Forest; the Alcock brothers at the forest club in Essex; and Arnold Frank Hills – the founder of Thames Ironworks (1898), now known as West Ham United (1900) (Korr, 1978) – in the metropolis; together with Francis William Webb, Chief Mechanical Engineer at Crewe railway works, influential in the founding of Crewe Alexandra (1877) and known locally as the 'King of Crewe' (Redfern, 1983). It appears highly significant that even in later years clubs such as these should have been formed by members of the upper or middle classes. However, we feel that the closest example to Creswick's role in Sheffield is Lymbery in Nottingham – the most prominent figure in the founding of Nottingham Forest, and a man who had few connections to the public school system and was educated locally.

Second, the officers of Sheffield FC almost certainly wrote to certain of the major public schools for their football rules, or were at least familiar with elements of their codes. The eventual adoption of the Eton Field Game practice of the 'rouge' provides evidence for this diffusion. Third, the exponents of local forms of folk or mob football – in this case, particularly those living in the nearby thriving football enclave of Thurlstone/Penistone, the home of Marsh, Shaw, Dransfield and a kicking and dribbling form of the game – would probably have helped to shape the final code of rules to their liking. Individuals or groups from that area may even have influenced the type of football being employed at Sheffield Collegiate School. This latter suggestion

links to repeated statements in both primary and secondary sources that, despite football falling relatively out of favour during the early Victorian era, the players of Yorkshire appear to have bucked the trend and, to a certain extent, continued the pastime. When the revival began in the late 1850s, the region was well-placed to take its place at the forefront of that resurgence. However, the mere existence of a thriving local football sub-culture did not guarantee that early club formation would take place in a specific area. This can only be one aspect of the story as, if this is the sole explanation, then we should expect to have seen an exceptional number of early clubs in the Derby area where there was a flourishing folk football history. The game there was played in the city as street football until it was forcibly suppressed in 1847 (Marples, 1954: 98–100) and, in the same county and only a few miles distant, the Ashbourne Shrovetide game continues to prosper to this day.

Finally, in our attempts to explain why the modern game of football flourished at such an early stage in Sheffield rather than other large towns or cities in Britain, we have recently pursued an additional strand of our hypothesis. More particularly, we tentatively believe that the sport's beginnings primarily in that city were additionally influenced by the fact that Sheffield was already the major centre of cricket in the county of Yorkshire, certainly during cricket's formative years in the late eighteenth century and also in the late 1850s when the modern form of football began to develop in that region. Nottingham and Sheffield were playing each other at cricket as early as 1771 (Birley, 1999: 44), though by the 1830s these centres were still arguably thought of as inferior in cricketing terms to the likes of Sussex, Hampshire, Surrey and Middlesex. Interestingly, however, in 1827 Sheffield had been chosen as one of the three venues for experimental matches to test the new round arm style of bowling; whilst Nottingham's status as a cricketing hotbed had much to do with the fact that William Clarke, who organised an All England XI which toured the country for considerable financial gain, was a native of the city.[9] Indeed, the sporting link between the two cities would probably have been established before players, often cricketers seeking a winter pastime, had formed football clubs. In particular, the emergence of the multi-talented Tom Marsden in Sheffield provided the area with a local cricketing hero to compare with anyone the south and midlands could produce. In terms of institutions, Sheffield Cricket Club was essentially the forerunner of the Yorkshire club, with the former being founded as early as the mid-eighteenth century, while the county club did not make its appearance until 1863. Interestingly, the latter's inception took place at the Adelphi Hotel in Sheffield, the very place that saw the Wednesday Football Club begin life in 1867.

But surely the strongest hint that cricketers played an important part in these early developments of football was the fact that two leading members of the nascent Sheffield FC were clearly linked with the evolution of the summer game in the city and, supporting a further part of our hypothesis, belonged to Sheffield's sporting elite. One of Sheffield FC's founders, William Prest, was a keen and successful cricketer, being described as an outstanding left-handed

batsman and the quickest and most brilliant fielder in local cricket. He was present at the meeting which formed Sheffield United Cricket Club in 1854 and played for Yorkshire 16 times between 1852–62, captaining the team as well as being selected for an All England XI. *Wisden* records Prest playing 28 innings, scoring 280 runs at an average of 10.21, with his best bowling figures being three wickets for 69 runs. On 30 April 1855 he also took part in the first public event at Bramall Lane – a cricket match made up of players from six leading local cricket clubs (Curry *et al*., 2007: 24). Second, another early Sheffield FC member, Michael John Ellison, was also heavily involved in Sheffield cricket, being linked closely to the beginning of the use of Bramall Lane as a more general sporting venue. Ellison had been born in Worksop in 1817, worked for the Duke of Norfolk – who owned considerable lands in and around Sheffield – and leased the land for Bramall Lane from the Duke. The ground itself officially opened for cricket in 1855, with football following seven years later. In football terms, Ellison played full back for the club and served on its first committee – though he was 40 years of age by 1857, the year of Sheffield FC's formation, and would probably have been more influential in administration rather than for his on-field abilities (Walters, 1957: 34; Young, 1962: 62; Curry *et al*., 2007: 13).

We have sympathy with other writers when they claim that the influence of Sheffield footballers and administrators on the development of the modern game has been underplayed. However, we feel that there was little likelihood of a national organisation such as the FA ever locating itself in the city. We also find it difficult to support any thinking involving the question of 'inevitability', but the probability was that any governing body of the sport was almost certain to be positioned in London. The historical fact – the Football Association was formed in 1863 and still governs the game in England in 2014 – appears to support our case. Despite the encouragement given to London by Sheffield during the middle to late 1860s, and the fact that, in 1877, independence was reluctantly ceded, the South Yorkshire city's position in Victorian football circles was likely to be that of loyal supporter to a Football Association based in the southern metropolis of the capital city. It may be a little difficult for some individuals to accept, but, what one might call 'London-centricity' was again triumphant and continues to be so to this day.

Notes

1 The phrase 'under any circumstances' was a correction to the original but has also been ultimately deleted.

2 Thomas Austin Sorby (born 6 August 1823, died 12 August 1885) was educated at the local Collegiate School and worked in the family cutlery business in Sheffield until his death at the age of 63. In his obituary notice in a local newspaper (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 15 August 1885) he was described as being 'connected with one of the oldest and most respected of Sheffield families'. Sorby, himself a Justice of the Peace, had lived all his life at the family home in Park Grange and devoted his energies not only to the business but also to the Church.

3 Our thanks go to Geoffrey Norton, the great, great nephew of Nathaniel Creswick, for this information.
4 Edward Prest played cricket for Cambridge against Oxford in 1850 (Abrahams and Bruce-Kerr, 1931: 180).
5 Thring is listed as having two tutors, Hymers and Mr Merivale (Venn, 1940). With thanks to Fiona Colbert, biographical librarian at St John's College, Cambridge.
6 Our thanks go to Kevin Neill, who unearthed these letters.
7 Marsh was not the only sportsperson of small but effective stature to be nicknamed 'the Little Wonder' (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 30 October 1875). Another Sheffield footballer, Billy Mosforth, also received the epithet (Farnsworth, 1995: 36), as did John Wisden, cricketer and producer of the *Wisden Cricketers' Almanack* (2014) and tennis player Lottie Dod (Holt, 1989: 128).
8 William Samuel Bambridge was born in New Zealand in 1843 and became Director of Music at Marlborough College in 1864 (*Marlborough College Register: 1843–1904*).
9 Our thanks go to Dominic Malcolm for these thoughts. See Malcolm, *Globalising Cricket*, 2012: 41.

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5 The emergence of the Football Association

Starting in the 1850s, the embryonic Association and Rugby forms of football spread into the wider society. Two more general social developments underpinned this process: an expansion of the middle classes, which occurred correlatively with continuing industrialisation, urbanisation, state-formation and 'civilisation'; and an educational transformation usually referred to as the shift towards the 'public school games cult' (Marples, 1954: 119). There is no need for us to analyse these wider developments at this point. It is enough to note that the games cult helped to establish social conditions conducive to the spread of football in its embryonic modern forms, above all playing a part in transforming what were destined to become Association Football and Rugby into status-enhancing activities for adult 'gentlemen'.

Initially, members of clubs were able to function quite adequately among themselves, organising matches between selected groups and gaining some measure of variety by pitting opponents such as 'married versus single' or 'first half of the alphabet versus second half' against each other (Steele, 1986: 4). The desire to look further afield, however, was strong and as a result competitive fixtures against other clubs were soon actively being sought. Changes in other sections of society – seemingly unconnected yet nevertheless interlinked with sport – facilitated such ambitions, as transport in general and railways in particular were improved beyond all recognition.

The effects of the transport 'revolution' on sport in Britain can best be understood as follows: longer and more complex chains of interdependence between individuals and groups of people were unintentionally created as a result of rapid and accelerating change in industrial practices, demography, urban living, attitudes and politics – transforming the whole social structure of the country and affecting all aspects of life, including sport (Elias and Dunning, 1986: 205–23). The game of football had previously been confined to villages and towns, being played at festival times within these restricted areas of population and against like-minded individuals representing the nearest village, or, as Goulstone and Harvey have shown, in pub-related matches linked closely to gambling. The public schools, possessing as they did their own unique forms of the game – many of which were only playable in their own special environment – added to this sense of isolation and localism. The

occurrence of such a fundamental social process, taking place over a series of years, provided football with a proto-national framework; an infrastructure within which its administrators and players could develop the game. The improved nature of transport banished, in large part, any feelings of regional isolation and introduced cosmopolitan and more intensely competitive attitudes to the new game. Inter-city and international matches, together with the growth of the FA Cup, would have been very difficult to implement without the introduction of fast and relatively reliable means of transport. Moreover, the motivation for holding such competitions probably stemmed, at least in part, from the increasing competitiveness that such developments entailed.

The decade of the 1840s is generally agreed by social historians to have been one of rapid expansion in the railway industry. Between 1844 and 1847, no fewer than 442 railway-related acts were passed by Parliament, with more than 2,000 miles of new track being laid (Briggs, 1959: 296). Private companies linked London with places such as Dover, York, Brighton, Birmingham and Bristol, and 'railway mania', as it came to be known, had been launched in earnest (Hill, 1957: 76). This sudden outburst of promotion and speculation enabled people of every class – with the possible exception of the very poorest – to travel at a much faster rate, sometimes as much as 50 miles an hour instead of the more sedentary 12 achieved by the horse and carriage (Briggs, 1959: 298). Football teams might travel, for example, from Sheffield to Glasgow overnight on a Friday, play the following day, and return home on Sunday. As well as transforming inter-club fixtures, faster forms of transport hastened the postal services and newspapers, thus further dissolving any sense of isolation being suffered by certain parts of the country. Such was the transformation that some scholars have gone so far as to suggest that the transport revolution should perhaps be seen as the most important event of the whole nineteenth century (Hill, 1957: 73).

However, although improvements in the means of transport and communication made inter-club and inter-city matches increasingly viable, as far as football was concerned there still existed the significant problem that stemmed from there being no nationally accepted set of written rules. As long as local rules were used, not only was it very difficult if not impossible for successful exponents of the game to gain a national reputation, but the participants exposed themselves to danger and possible injury in being asked to play against opponents unfamiliar with a form of the game different from their own.

This process of diffusion involved the spread of these newer football forms – in the first instance especially Rugby – to the new public schools which were being founded. It also involved the formation of clubs specifically for playing one or another form of football. However, in the absence of unified national rules, inter-school and inter-club matches were difficult if not entirely impossible to play. Differences over the uniqueness of each school's football rules should have mitigated against matches between such establishments. However, as the following table illustrates, this was not entirely the

Table 5.1 Early football matches between boys representing major public schools

Westminster v. Harrow	1852 (Goulstone, 2001: 46)
Westminster v. Winchester	1858 (Goulstone, 2001: 46)
Harrow v. Winchester	December 1859 (*Bell's Life*, 4 December 1859)
Westminster v. Harrow	December 1859 (*Bell's Life*, 11 December 1859)
Westminster v. Harrow (1–0)	December 1860 (Money, 1997: 109–10)
Westminster v. Harrow (1–1)	1861 at Vincent Square[a] (Money, 1997: 110)
Westminster v. Eton (0–2)	1861 (Goulstone, 2001: 46; Money, 1997: 110)[b]
Eton v. Harrow	December 1862 (*Bell's Life*, 21 December 1862)
Westminster v. Eton (Draw)	1862 (Lubbock, 1899: 155)[c]
Eton v. Harrow	November 1863 (*The Field*, 7 November 1863)
Westminster v. Eton (0–2)	December 1863 (*Bell's Life*, 26 December 1863)
Westminster v. Charterhouse	1863 (Goulstone, 2001: 46; Money, 1997: 110)
Westminster v. Harrow	December 1863 (*Bell's Life*, 12 December 1863)
Charterhouse v. Westminster	November 1866 (*The Field*, 24 November 1866)

[a] Vincent Square remains a greenfield site in the centre of London and is home to the playing fields of Westminster School. Westminster home games would have been played there.

[b] 'Etonensis', quoted in *The Times*, 5 October 1863: 8, notes the score as being 0–1.

[c] Abandoned due to injury. Lubbock (1899: 155) says the injury came 'during a scrimmage, N. Lyttleton broke his arm'.

case and a good number of inter-school matches actually took place – most of them involving Westminster School.

An example of the sorts of difficulties that were faced by would-be footballers is provided by the following letter which was written in 1861. It is supportive of the view that Eton–Rugby rivalry constituted *a*, if not *the*, major axis of tension in this regard:

> What happens when a game of football is proposed at Christmas among a party of young men assembled from different schools?….The Eton man is enamoured of his own rules, and turns up his nose at Rugby as not sufficiently aristocratic; while the Rugbeian retorts that 'bullying' and 'sneaking' are not to his taste, and that *he* is not afraid of his shins, or of a 'maul' or 'scrimmage'.
>
> (*The Field*, 14 December 1861: 525)

Just over a year later a flurry of correspondence on the football rules debate appeared in the *Sporting Gazette*. *Rugbiensis* described the deadlock as 'the greatest impediment to the popularity of football' (*Sporting Gazette*, 31 January 1863), while another correspondent expressed the opinion that

> until we have a universally acknowledged and accepted code of laws for the regulation of both public and private matches, Football can never attain the proud position among the national sports of England which its admirers so fondly look forward to – the 'cricket of the winter months'.
>
> (*Sporting Gazette*, 10 October 1863)

In such a situation, pressure began to grow for the establishment of common, national rules. John Charles (J. C.) Thring, an Old Salopian assistant master at Uppingham – one of the new public schools – issued a compromise code in 1862 which he entitled *The Simplest Game*.[1] In his preface to these rules, he stated clearly his preference for a kicking form and openly admitted that he had published them 'as an antidote to the Rugby game' (Thring, 1862: iii). In 1863 a veritable flood of forthright opinions championing the various school games was expressed in letters to *The Times* by representatives of a number of public schools. We have briefly alluded to these letters in Chapter 2, but it is, we think, important to note the writers' opinions in greater detail. The Etonian we quoted previously further stated that 'all these annoyances might be prevented by the framing of [a] set of rules for the game of football to be played everywhere' (*The Times*, 5 October 1863); whilst, in reply, *Harroviensis* concurred about 'the advantage of having some universally acknowledged rule [sic] for the game of football' (*The Times*, 6 October 1863). A writer representing Westminster School also suggested 'that each school and well-known football club should send a copy of their rules to a committee appointed for the purpose' (*The Times*, 7 October 1863). But although agreement seemed to have been reached as regards the need for universal rules, the problem – as articulated in the final communication, this time penned by *Rugbiensis* – was that it was highly unlikely that any public school 'would ever lay aside their old rules' (*The Times*, 10 October 1863).

What one might call 'public school particularism' was great in that period, and this flurry of correspondence seems to have served only to accentuate the differences between the rival codes. Any practical initiative to break the impasse appeared destined to emanate from outside the public schools or from public school old boys who would have been able to approach the issue of football rules in a relatively detached manner.

In a letter published in the *Daily Telegraph* on 24 September 1863, a correspondent suggested that a 'Football Parliament' should be established. The communication was signed 'J. C. T.' – almost certainly John Charles Thring, the author of the previously mentioned *The Simplest Game*. It read as follows:

> SIR – You have lately advocated 'A Cricket Parliament'; the more ancient and thoroughly English game of football infinitely more requires settlement. The season is now setting in – football can be played by greater numbers than cricket, affords capital exercise and is not so dependent on the weather. But its laws are so conflicting that no two clubs can play a match; yet it is a very simple matter, if the ordinary requirements of the game are only considered, and no peculiarities are allowed. There are a few first principles which are of vital importance. These I consider to be: To maintain the game as at the commencement, that is each side keeping behind the ball as much as possible. To effect this there must be a good 'out of play' or 'offside' rule; rules to prevent shinning, unfair hand

> play, and tripping up; rules respecting bounds and goals. If a parliament could sit with sufficient authority to issue a new code of laws, a great step towards re-establishing the popularity of this old national game would have been taken.
>
> I am Sir yours, etc. Sept. 23 J. C. T.

The same newspaper received a reply four days later:

> SIR – I entirely concur with the views of 'J. C. T.' expressed in his letter to you of Thursday's date. If 'JCT' will call a meeting of the captains and secretaries of the various football clubs in and round London, there would probably be no difficulty in agreeing on a set of rules to be called the 'London rules', as distinguished from Rugby, Harrow etc. rules. I for one should be happy to attend such a meeting.
>
> Etc. CAPTAIN OF THE BARNES FOOTBALL CLUB Sept. 26

The composer of this letter was undoubtedly Ebenezer Cobb Morley – a founding member of the Football Association in 1863, its first Secretary (1863–6) and its second President (1867–74). The debate in the press continued and shortly afterwards, more particularly starting on 24 October 1863, the sporting journalist John Dyer Cartwright published a series of ten articles on this specific subject in *The Field* dealing with 'The value of the Game, its present position, and the discussion concerning the rules' (*The Field*, 24 October 1863: 413; Curry, 2003). Two days after the publication of Cartwright's first article, the inaugural meetings of what was to become 'The Football Association' began.[2] It is, we think, best to assume that these meetings were held not in response to the suggestions of particular individuals such as Cartwright, Thring or the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent, but rather in response to the general climate of opinion to which they contributed. It was, therefore, on 26 October 1863 that a meeting of captains (*Bell's Life*, 31 October 1863, Supplement, 1) took place at the Freemason's Tavern, Lincoln's Inn Fields, whose purpose was 'the regulation of the game of football' (Green, 1953: 1).[3] A proposition that those present should form a group dedicated to this process was carried and the Football Association was formed.

There were a number of observers present at this inaugural meeting, one of whom was Bertram Fulke Hartshorne (1844–1921) who only had just over a mile to travel (Money, 1997: 114). He was captain of football at Charterhouse School, the only representative of the public schools at the meeting. He accordingly felt unable to commit his school to joining before the attitudes of other educational establishments had been sought. Pember noted that 'their silence probably arose from no one in particular liking to take the initiative and put himself prominently forward' (*Bell's Life*, 31 October 1863).

Table 5.2 Information on attendees at the inaugural meeting of the Football Association

Name (dates of birth and death)	*Place of birth*	*Club/Establishment*	*School/University*	*Football preference/profession*
John Forster Alcock (1841–1910)	County Durham	Forest, Leytonstone	Harrow	Kicker/Insurance broker
Theodore Bell (1840–1923) *	Uppingham	Surbiton	Uppingham	Kicker/Solicitor
Francis Maule Campbell (1843–1920)	Blackheath	Blackheath	Blackheath Proprietary	Handler/Wine merchant
Francis Day (1838–86)	Westerham, Kent	Crystal Palace		Kicker/Brewery owner
William Henry Gordon (1845–1929)	Edinburgh	Blackheath Proprietory School	Edinburgh Academy/ Trinity, Cambridge	Handler/Barrister
Thomas Dyson Gregory (1835–1908) *	Wakefield	Barnes		Kicker/Corn merchant
Alfred Westwood Mackenzie (1840–1924)	Leytonstone	Forest, Leytonstone	Walthamstow House	Kicker/Insurance broker
William John Mackintosh (1845–1923)	India	Kensington School	Edinburgh Academy	Handler/Soldier
Frederick Henry Moore (1839–1934)	Australia	Blackheath		Handler/Trader
Ebenezer Cobb Morley (1831–1924) *	Hull	Barnes	Christ Church, Oxford	Kicker/Solicitor
Arthur Pember (1835–86)	Lambeth	No Names, Kilburn		Kicker/Journalist
George William Shillingford (1844–96)	India	Perceval House, Blackheath		Handler/Plantation owner
Herbert Thomas Steward (1838–1915) *	London	Crusaders	Westminster	Kicker/Architect
George Twizell Wawn (1840–1914) *	County Durham	War Office	Durham University	Kicker/Clerk

* Indicates keen interest in rowing.

Regrettably, far too many historians have claimed that the group consisted of ex-public school men, a fact which, if true, would have had enormous influence on any analysis of their subsequent pronouncements regarding the laws governing football. As recently as 2006, Melvyn Bragg, in his much-publicised *12 Books that Changed the World*, erroneously describes the above gathering as 'public school men still' (Bragg, 2006: 16). On closer examination it is possible to refute such claims. Geoffrey Green notes that the President, Alfred Pember, representing No Names, Kilburn, mentioned at the fifth meeting that he had not attended a public school (Green, 1953: 29), whilst Bryon Butler comments that Ebenezer Cobb Morley, the Honorary Secretary, representing the Barnes club, had not received a public school education (Butler, 1991: X). Indeed, of the 14 men present, there seem to have been only two who had probably attended a major public school. For our purposes a 'major public school' at the time was one of the seven most important Clarendon Schools of 1864 – Eton, Charterhouse, Harrow, Rugby, Shrewsbury, Westminster and Winchester – but excluding the day schools, Merchant Taylors' and St Paul's, whose old boys seemingly had very little impact on the forming of early football rules. John Forster Alcock – his more well-known brother Charles William was not present at the first meeting – was indisputably an Old Harrovian, and both Alcocks were instrumental in the organisation of the Forest Club which subsequently became The Wanderers. Rob Cavallini observes that Alfred Westwood Mackenzie, the other Forest representative, had been educated at Walthamstow House School in Wood Street, Walthamstow.[4] The only other gentleman present who had been educated at one of the seven most prestigious schools was Herbert Thomas Steward, who had attended Westminster. Although he was a sportsman – more a rower rather than a footballer, President of Leander in 1891 and Chairman of the committee of the Amateur Rowing Association – no data from his school life confirm that he played the game. He was, however, the correct age, being 24 years old when the meeting took place.[5] A later report in *Bell's Life* of a meeting of the FA in February 1866 notes that the Chairman, Pember, thanked a Herbert T. Stewart – probably the aforementioned Steward – for his services to the association and bemoaned his premature retirement from the committee due to injury/illness. None of the other names appear on the registers of the Clarendon Schools, though Theodore Bell, another rower and keen cricketer, had been educated at Uppingham School – a second tier school with a noted reputation for football. Significantly, Bell was captain of football there in 1857–8.

Of the Blackheath contingent, despite playing a Rugby-style game, Shillingford, Moore, Campbell and Gordon were certainly not Old Rugbeians. Shillingford represented the cramming establishment of Perceval House ('Perceval' rather than 'Percival'); Gordon the local Proprietary School in Blackheath; whilst Campbell (Francis Maule Campbell or F. M. and *not* F. W. as is often used in historical accounts)[6] and Moore the newly formed (in 1862) Blackheath Football Club. George William Shillingford had been born

in India but educated in England. He returned to Bengal, where he ran an indigo plantation for the latter part of the nineteenth century. William Henry Gordon had been born in Edinburgh and, as well as attending Blackheath Proprietary was also educated at Cheltenham College and, interestingly, Trinity College, Cambridge. He eventually emigrated to Canada. Frederick Henry Moore had been born in Guildford, Perth, Western Australia in 1839 and educated in England, later earning his living in mercantile trading in New Zealand and Sydney. A Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in London and of the Royal Society, he died in Hobart, Tasmania, in 1934 (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 April 1934). What is known about his educational career is uncertain, though he did not attend Blackheath Proprietary School (BPS) where Campbell was present from 1851–9. The latter's three cousins – Lorne, Duncan and Edmund Campbell – all attended BPS, though, more particularly, they were also all pupils at Rugby School, providing an interesting link to and possible diffusion from that institution.

One of the more interesting characters present – if only for the fact that so little has been written about him by football historians – was George Twizell Wawn. He is recorded as playing for the Civil Service Football Club (CSFC) in the 1860s under various sets of initials for his first name, and this may account for some sources on the initial meeting of the FA referring to him as E. Wawn. His affiliation to the War Office is explained by the fact that it was, apparently, then as now, not uncommon for CSFC players to use their work address or department when describing themselves. G. T. Wawn is duly recorded in the War Office staff lists from 1863–1905. He had graduated from Durham University and entered the War Office in June 1860 as a temporary clerk, and worked there until June 1871, before serving in Africa with the commissary service.[7] Of the other representatives, Gregory was another rower who was friendly with Morley, Day was a talented cricketer and proprietor of the Black Eagle Brewery in Bermondsey,[8] whilst Mackintosh had also been born in India and educated at Edinburgh Academy as well as Kensington School, before becoming a career soldier.[9] They could be described as a curious cosmopolitan mixture of upper middle class males with active interests in sports other than football – notably rowing. There were influences from major public schools and also lesser educational establishments, and even from that renowned institution of sporting diffusion – Trinity College, Cambridge. But, while the 'kickers' outnumbered the 'handlers' by nine to four at the initial meeting, the Blackheath contingent represented an obvious and, with hindsight, ominously distinct faction.

On the surface, the first three meetings of the new association proceeded smoothly. Draft rules of the game were agreed and printed. However, they embodied significant elements of Rugby and, had they been accepted, would have legitimised the practices of 'hacking' and 'carrying' in the new game over which the nascent FA was hoping to preside.[10] It was decided to contact the major public schools in order to assess their opinions on co-operation with the newly formed body. However, by the second meeting on 10 November, just

four replies had been received – two from Harrow alone – and these were read out to the assembled representatives (Green, 1953, 21–2):

The Rev. F. Rendalls, Harrow, NW
Saturday, October 31

Sir,

I am directed by the Harrow Philathletic Club to ask you for further particulars as to the objects of the Football Association, and the advantages to be gained from joining it. I should therefore be glad if you would send me the printed prospectus of the Association, if such exists, or if otherwise, to communicate with me by writing on the subject. I shall be most happy to forward you a copy of the rules of the Harrow game if they are of any use to the Committee. The headmaster directs me to say that under no circumstance could he allow the representative of Harrow to attend the annual meeting if such meeting were held during the Harrow School term.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,
CHARLES GORDON BROWNE,
Captain of Harrow School

Sir,

I should have answered your note before, but was prevented, and you will therefore allow me to apologise. At present Harrow is not willing to join the Football Association. We cling to our present rules, and should be very sorry to alter them in any respect. Therefore we will remain at present as lookers on till we can judge what appears best to be done.

I am, etc.,
CHARLES GORDON BROWNE

Foundation Charterhouse
October 29th, 1863

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your communication yesterday, and to inform you that I am directed to state that Charterhouse cannot as yet be included amongst the clubs who form The Football Association.

Believe me to be, yours faithfully,
B. F. HARTSHORN
Captain of Charterhouse Eleven

St. Peter's College, Westminster
November 6th

Sir,

I beg to thank you for your communication with regard to the Football Association, but I have also received a letter from the Secretary of the Public Schools Club, in which a meeting of the Public School Elevens

> is proposed. I think, therefore, that it would be more desirable for me to wait till after that meeting before I return you any definite answer.
>
> I am, etc,
> W. W. C. LANE

Harrow footballers quite clearly wished to retain their own unique rules, perhaps feeling threatened by the intrusion of a fledgling association which may have been about to suggest that the school should abandon its treasured practices and embrace the new doctrines being drawn up by relatively unknown individuals in London, some of whom had never experienced the 'benefit' of a public school education. Hartshorne at Charterhouse, who, judging by his letter and attendance at the inaugural meeting may have been a sympathiser, remained non-committal. Lane, from Westminster, brought a new element into the proceedings. Having received a letter from the Secretary of the Public Schools Club, it appeared that this body – possibly as a direct reaction to the formation of an association proposing to represent the adult footballers of London and its surrounds, and hoping perhaps to be influential further afield – was suggesting to its members that the time had arrived to discuss recent events, close ranks, and decide how best the schools could, as a united voice, have an influence on the ongoing rules debate. This meeting had apparently not taken place by mid-December 1863, though, by then, other voices were advocating such a step. An 'Ex-Captain of Football' wrote in *The Field*: 'What should prevent the Captains of school elevens meeting at some central place and deciding at once upon some course which would settle the matter?' (*The Field*, 12 December 1863, 581). To which the editor replied: 'The suggestion has, however, been repeatedly made, and once or twice this season, without any result.'

By the third meeting of the embryonic Football Association, however, on 17 November 1863, at least one positive reply had been received from a public school. J. C. Thring, a man we have continually encountered in the rules debate, again wrote from Uppingham expressing a desire to enrol his school in the new venture (Green, 1953: 24).[11] But perhaps the best indicator of attitudes towards the embryonic body around this time was provided by an Oxford undergraduate in his letter to *Sporting Life* in November 1863 (Green, 1953: 27).

> Sir,
>
> > I think, after all, the first step towards making a universal set of laws must come from the two Universities. If a meeting were called in Oxford, and each college were to send a representative, a code might be drawn up and sent to the London Committee for approval. I do not think the meetings in London are attended by people or clubs of sufficient influence to cause their suggestions to be generally acted upon. I dare say the Barnes Club, the Blackheath Club, and others are composed of very estimable individuals, but are they to dictate rules to Eton, Harrow, Winchester, etc., each of whom consider their rules perfection. Of course, it may be said that anybody who chose might have attended; but I think some well-known public school men should have called the meeting in the first place. What

> I propose is, that the captain of each University eleven should call a meeting and draw up rules; that there should be a football club in Oxford and Cambridge. The adoption of a universal code must be a gradual matter, and I think this would be one step towards it.
>
> I am, etc,
> NON NOBIS SOLUM

Not only was *Non Nobis Solum* (translated from the Latin as 'Not up to us alone'), like John Dyer Cartwright (*The Field*, 7 November 1863: 451), championing the cause of the universities to be the prime movers in the decision-making process of football development, but he also seemed to be introducing an element of status-exclusiveness and rivalry into the debate when he cast doubt upon the prestige of those attending the initial meetings of the Football Association. This may be a comment on their lack of general footballing knowledge or, more likely, on the fact that few of them had attended a public school. There may also have been an element of rivalry between Oxford and Cambridge, with an Oxford man showing scepticism over a debate in which Cambridge, through their recently published football rules, had already effected considerable influence.

A possible suggestion in this connection is that, in all probability, a crucial precondition for the eventual success of the FA in gaining the prestige, power and authority worthy of being seen as the only body for formulating nationally acceptable rules for the Association form of football, was the fact that it was composed primarily of 'gentlemen' who had *not* attended public schools. Only in that way, for example, would they have been able to avoid the tension/conflict-producing consequences of public school particularism. In short, a mix of public school/university, non-public school/non-university gentlemen was probably required.

The fourth meeting of the newly formed FA was held on 24 November and the conflict inherent in the incipient bifurcation of Association Football and Rugby broke into the open. Until that point the conflict had remained dormant, at least as far as officially recorded business was concerned. What happened between the third and fourth meetings was that the 1863 Cambridge rules came to the notice of supporters of the embryo Association game – and they were impressed, especially by the rules which prohibited 'hacking' opposing players and 'carrying' the ball. Encouraged by backing from such a prestigious quarter, they went on the offensive. Support also came from William Chesterman of Sheffield FC, who contributed the following letter:

> Dear Sir,
>
> Our committee have read with great interest the late discussions respecting the laws of football and believing the association now formed likely to promote the game, they are anxious to enroll the club amongst the list of members and I herewith enclose the amount of subscription. We think it very desirable [that] a general code of laws should be established

> and heartily wish you success in the undertaking. I enclose a copy of our rules and perhaps you will excuse a few remarks on them. I am very much in favour of a crossbar, without one it is sometimes very difficult for an umpire to decide and whatever his decision he generally displeases someone. In your Rule 5 I think the ball, when thrown or kicked back into play, should be not less than six yards [Chesterman was referring to the distance at which an opposing player should be allowed to stand]. If thrown less, it is very liable to go out again at first kick. We have no printed rule at all like your No. 6 [Offside], but I have written in the book a rule which is always played by us. Nos. 9 and 10 [running with the ball and, amongst other robust, rugby-like actions, hacking] are, I think, directly opposed to football, the latter especially being more like wrestling. I cannot see any science in taking a run-kick at a player at the risk of laming him for life. Your No. 14 will be altogether new to our players; I suppose the idea is that nails are dangerous. We strictly prohibit spikes, but though it is the general custom in this neighbourhood to wear nails, I never yet heard of an accident resulting from the use of them. I think our No. 15 (which we have only had about two years) a very useful and desirable rule and worth your consideration. [This was the rouge, a differential scoring method in the Eton Field Game.] Doubtless the foregoing are all old arguments but I thought that perhaps they would not be uninteresting on showing how the game is played in this neighbourhood. On hearing that we are accepted as members, I shall be glad to appoint representatives to attend your meetings.
>
> Yours Truly W. Chesterman Hon. Sec.
> Sheffield Football Club, Sheffield, Nov. 30 [1863]

Shortly after the opening of this fourth meeting, John Forster Alcock, one of the two Old Harrovian brothers, proposed 'that the Cambridge rules appear to be the most desirable for the Association to adopt'. His motion was defeated. So was one by Francis Maule (F. M.) Campbell of Blackheath Football Club to the effect that the Cambridge rules were merely 'worthy of consideration'. Eventually an amendment was passed stipulating

> that the rules of the Cambridge University embrace the true principles of the game with greatest simplicity, and therefore, that a committee be appointed to enter into communication with the committee of the University to endeavour to induce them to modify some of their rules.

Before the close, however, a motion was carried by a majority of one instructing the Association Committee 'to insist upon hacking' in its negotiations with the university (Green, 1953: 26). This suggests that, at that stage, some people attending the inaugural FA meetings were still striving to negotiate a truly composite football game. It also suggests that, for the moment, neither those in favour of the embryonic Association code nor those in favour of its Rugby rival enjoyed a decisive advantage.

It was thus the fourth meeting of the fledgling FA which witnessed the first open clash between the advocates of what were shortly to become the rival national football codes. On 1 December 1863, at the fifth meeting, this conflict was completely revealed. Discussion centred again on the contentious draft rules regarding 'hacking' and 'carrying'. The Secretary-elect, Ebenezer Cobb Morley, said that he did not personally object too strongly to 'hacking', but felt that to retain these rules would seriously inhibit the development of football as an adult game. The President-elect, Arthur Pember, supported him, referring to a 'fifteen' he had organised for a match: 'I was the only one who had not been at a public school,' he said, 'and we were all dead against "hacking" ' (Green, 1953: 29). F. M. Campbell of Blackheath FC, the principal advocate at the meetings of the Rugby code, replied that, in his opinion, 'hacking' was essential if an element of pluck was to be retained in football. He threatened that, if 'carrying' and 'hacking' were excluded from the Association game, his club would withdraw. The supporters of the Rugby code were heavily defeated in a vote and the contentious rules were struck out.

Close examination of the lists of those present at each meeting suggests that adherents to the embryo Association game had plotted to ensure that they would be in a majority when the critical vote was taken. Cutting through the legalistic wrangling of voting procedures and arguments over terminology which took place at the fourth and fifth meetings in particular, it seems that the crux of the disagreement lay over Rules 9 and 10 of the FA Draft laws. Alcock initiated the attack, whilst Morley carried it further and noted:

> As far as either hacking and running is concerned, I do not mind it myself, personally, but my object in the matter is that, if we carry those two rules it will be seriously detrimental to the great majority of the football clubs. I do not say that they would not play with us, but it is more probable that they would not; and Mr. Campbell himself knows well that the Blackheath clubs cannot get any three in London to play with them, whose members are for the most part men in business, and to whom it is of importance to take care of themselves. For my own part, I confess I think that the 'hacking' is more dreadful in name and on paper than in reality; but I object to it because I think that its being disallowed will promote the game of football, and therefore I cordially agree with Mr. Alcock. If we have 'hacking', no one who has arrived at the years of discretion will play at football, and it will be entirely relinquished to schoolboys.
>
> (Green, 1953: 28–9)

F. M. Campbell from the Blackheath Club, then embarked upon an emotional defence of 'hacking' in particular, appealing to nationalistic sentiment and even likening it to manliness.

> As to not liking 'hacking' as at present carried on, I say that they had no right to draw up such a rule at Cambridge and that it savours far more

> of the feelings of those who like their pipes and grog or schnaps far more than the manly game of football….I will be bound to bring over a lot of Frenchmen who would beat you with a week's practice.
>
> (Green, 1953: 29)

Campbell even hinted at Morley's lack of social status because of the fact that he had not attended public school, saying:

> I think that the reason they object to 'hacking' is because too many of the members of clubs began late in life, and were too old for that spirit of the game which was so fully entered into at the public schools and by public school men in after life.
>
> (Green, 1953: 29)

Campbell, interestingly, also commented: 'We have been willing to meet you half way' (Green, 1953: 30), surely hinting that the initial debate had been lively, though compromise had been the overriding factor. Additionally, in his use of the plural 'we', it appears that voting and opinion had been factionalised into two distinct groups.

However, was there dubious practice used by the dribblers on the handlers? Campbell certainly believed so, feeling that the Cambridge Rules were not put to a vote at the fourth meeting as the former believed they would be defeated. Now, at the fifth gathering, finding themselves in the majority, men such as Alcock and Morley were quite willing to press their case against hacking and carrying, in the knowledge that they would be left with a game closer to their liking. As Campbell pertinently observed: 'I think that this proposition to expunge Rules 9 and 10 would not now be gone on with, but that you see that we who are the advocates of 'running' and 'hacking' are in a minority' (Green, 1953: 30). It seems appropriate to consider in detail whether the dribblers – those favouring the 1863 Cambridge Rules – did actually deliberately engineer a clear majority at the fifth meeting of the FA.

There had been 19 representatives of various clubs present at the fourth meeting on 24 November 1863. When they were asked to vote on the question of whether the committee should insist on hacking in any subsequent communication with Cambridge University's football representatives, they voted in the affirmative, the result being particularly close: ten votes to nine. This seems to indicate that the 'Rugby' party was narrowly in the majority and, with the aid of the exact list of names of those present that evening, it might be possible to hazard an educated guess at probable voting intentions (see list below):

Against hacking and in favour of a kicking and dribbling form of football (*The Field*, 28 November 1863):

> Pember (NN Kilburn)
> Lloyd and Turner (Crystal Palace)
> Morley (Barnes)

Wawn (War Office)
Gregory (Barnes)
Lawton (NN Kilburn)
Alcock and Mackenzie (Forest)

All these clubs went on to play the Association game and remained in the Football Association after the defection of the Rugby adherents. Pember, Morley, Alcock, Mackenzie and Lawson all spoke against Campbell of Blackheath at various meetings (Green, 1953: 27–31).

For hacking and a Rugby form of football **(***The Field*, 28 November, 1863):

Campbell and Cooper (Blackheath)
Redgrave and Powell (Kensington School)
Tauke and Shillingford (Perceval House, Blackheath)
Gordon and Fox (Blackheath Proprietory)
Cruickshank and Daltry (Wimbledon School)

All except the Blackheath pair were drawn from schools and tended to favour more violent forms of play such as hacking, whilst the more adult clubs were less enamoured with what they considered was dangerous behaviour and play. Indeed, the report of the fourth meeting – which appeared in *The Field* on 28 November 1863 – contained evidence of a direct dichotomy of opinion between the adult players and those representing the schools. Part of the meeting was reported as follows:

> The representatives of the school clubs differing from the other members of the Association with regard to rules 9 and 10 of the proposed new code…. The schools desired that these should be enforced. On the other side it was contended with great force, that these were the rules which Cambridge had specially avoided, and that it was not desirable to enforce them.
>
> (*The Field*, 28 November 1863: 523)

The rules in question – those numbered 9 and 10 – referred, of course, to carrying and running with the ball, together with hacking. However, what is perhaps more interesting in this connection is the comparison between those present at the fourth and those at the fifth meetings of the FA. Pember, Morley, Gregory, Alcock, Mackenzie and Lawson attended as usual at the latter gathering for the dribblers; whilst Campbell and his namesake, together with Gordon and Fox were in attendance for the hacking party. A representative of Wimbledon School – recorded as Duthy – was also in attendance, and might have been expected, because of general leanings in school circles towards hacking, to vote with the Rugby-supporting group. However, no one at the fifth gathering was registered from either Kensington School or Perceval House, Blackheath and, when the votes were cast over the expunging of Laws 9 and 10, their retention was heavily rejected by 13 to 4. This, of course, indicates 17 members as having

been present, though *The Field* only names 15 (*The Field*, 5 December 1863). If we accept that the Blackheath and Blackheath Proprietory representatives voted to retain carrying and hacking, then perhaps Wimbledon School, and Duthy, changed sides. However, what is most significant is that four names were mentioned at the fifth meeting who failed to appear at any of the first four gatherings. They were: Morgan and Bouch (Forest School), possibly acquaintances of Alcock and Mackenzie of the Forest Club; and Nenich and Surdet, whose allegiance was not listed. Did the dribblers bring with them significant reinforcements to assist them in swaying the vote in their favour? It certainly appears so. What remains uncertain, however, is why did the regular adherents to hacking and carrying not attend?

On 8 December, at the sixth and final inaugural meeting, Campbell rose to say that although his club approved of the FA and its aims, the rules adopted would emasculate football. Blackheath was unwilling to be party to such a game and Campbell said they wished to withdraw. By this action the Blackheath club paved the way for the final and irrevocable parting of the ways between Association Football and Rugby. Laws 9 and 10 of the rules adopted by the newly formed FA in 1863 marked the decisive development of Association Football away from the Rugby practices of 'hacking' and 'carrying'. They were:

9. No player shall carry the ball.
10. Neither tripping nor hacking shall be allowed.

The civilising intent of the drafters of these rules emerges further from Law 14 which read:

14. No player shall be allowed to wear projecting nails, iron plates, or gutta-percha on the soles or heels of his boots.

That the game at this stage continued to involve a handling component emerges from Law 8, the start of which read:

8. If a player makes a fair catch, he shall be entitled to a free kick, providing he claims it by making a mark with his heel at once.

As Dunning and Sheard (1979, 100–1; 2005: 87–8) maintained, 'the bifurcation into Rugby and soccer set in motion by the Rugby-Eton rivalry in the 1840s was perpetuated on a national level and marked the formation of separate ruling bodies'.

Notes

1 J. C. Thring – he was normally addressed as Charles – was the younger brother of Edward Thring, the Old Etonian Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, who became headmaster of Uppingham School in 1853. J. C Thring was initially educated at Shrewsbury School and subsequently attended St John's College, Cambridge, where

he was involved in developing a compromise set of football rules in 1846. He went on to be an assistant master at Uppingham from 1859–69.

2 *Sporting Gazette* also published a series of football-related articles which dealt with the rules debate under the pseudonym, 'A Lover of Football'. These were similar to Cartwright's, though with a distinct rugby bias as illustrated in the contribution of 12 December 1863 when the writer, in noting his disagreement with the views of J. C. Thring – Thring supported an embryo Association code – championed the act of 'carrying' the ball as long as it was caught or taken on the first bound.

3 It is interesting to note that, of the 11 attendees, eight represented clubs formed for the sole purpose of playing football, whilst three were present on behalf of minor educational establishments.

4 Personal communication with Graham Curry dated 26 June 2006.

5 Personal communication between Graham Curry and Eddie Smith of Westminster School dated 28 November 2002.

6 Of the Blackheath contingent, most is known about F. M. Campbell. He attended Blackheath Proprietary School from 1851–9, whilst his three cousins – Lorne, Duncan and Edmund Campbell – all attended Rugby School, which in itself provides an interesting connection and may explain his preference for a handling and hacking style of football. Campbell died in 1920 in Surrey. Many thanks to Neil Rhind for this information.

7 Personal communication between Graham Curry and Neil Ward of the Civil Service FC, dated 1 February 2012.

8 Day's father, Robert, had established the Westerham Brewery in Kent in 1841 whilst still brewing in Bermondsey. Eventually the Black Eagle Brewery was taken over by Courage in 1930, and Westerham ceased production in 1964.

9 Information on Gregory, Shillingford, Day, Gordon, Mackintosh and Bell, together with the births and deaths of all attendees, has been gleaned from Andy Mitchell's excellent blog on the Scottish Sport History website for October 2013 (www.scottishsporthistory.com).

10 Timothy J. L. Chandler presents a useful definition of hacking (Chandler, 1996: 19, in Nauright and Chandler (eds), 1996). He notes the difference between hacking – 'kicking opponents on the shins…a fairly violent practice' – and hacking over – 'a form of tripping' of an opponent who is running with the ball.

11 This application was submitted without the knowledge of J. C. Thring's brother, Edward, who was headmaster of Uppingham. He disagreed with the application as he did not wish to play against teams using other rules – and caused it to be withdrawn. The two men are said to have quarrelled (Money, 1997: 120).

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6 The advent of professionalism

The time has now arrived for us to switch the focus of our attention, at least geographically, to a more detailed examination of events involved in the emergence of professional football. We shall start with a discussion of happenings in East Lancashire. The FA Cup competition, instigated in the 1871–2 season and only gradually becoming an accepted test of national footballing prowess, initially remained the domain, in terms of success and numbers of entry, of the southern amateur clubs. In the first six seasons, out of a total of 157 entries, only 14 were received from clubs outside the London area (Smailes, 1991: 180–1). However, the 1877–8 draw saw two teams from Lancashire enter: Darwen and Manchester. In the first round, with the ties still regionalised, they were paired together and Darwen opened with a 3-0 victory against their county rivals. They were, however, defeated in the next round by a single goal at Sheffield FC.

Darwen, a town situated some ten miles south of Blackburn, might have looked forward to the following year's competition with some confidence. The first round of the 1878–9 competition saw them awarded a bye after their opponents, Birch from Manchester, withdrew. Birch appeared undecided as to which code of football they should play. *Athletic News* (30 March 1878) reported as follows: 'The Birch Club, not content with its achievements in the Rugby Football line, has had the hardihood to throw down the gauntlet to the renowned Queen's Park.' The heavy defeat that Birch suffered in this friendly match played in the previous season (6-0) may have hastened their subsequent withdrawal from the 1878–9 FA Cup. In the second round they disposed of their local rivals, Eagley, 4-1, following a 0-0 draw.

In the third round, Darwen were forced to travel to play Remnants, a side based in Slough and containing public school old boys. Despite the away fixture, the Darwen combination prevailed 3-2, the winning goal being scored in extra time (Gibson and Pickford, 1906: 58). A visit to London, however, probably cost the club upwards of £30 – a substantial sum in those years – and so, when the draw for the quarter-finals paired Darwen with Old Etonians, a powerful southern amateur combination, the Lancashire side seriously considered withdrawal. Not for the last time, however, the townspeople rallied and various donations secured the finance required to fulfil the fixture.

The Darwen side of 1878–9 has generally been described by football historians as containing players drawn exclusively from the working class. Here is a selection of the descriptions that they have offered. Darwen's football team is variously described as 'a team of Lancashire mill workers' (Butler, 1982: 14); 'a team composed almost entirely of working lads and young men employed in the mills of that small Lancashire town' (Green, 1960: 25); 'comprised almost entirely of working lads and young men from the mills of that typical Lancashire town' (Gibson and Pickford, 1906: 58); 'a humble local team of mill workers' (Marples, 1954: 170).

Even 'Free Kick' (27 November 1880), the football columnist of the *Blackburn Standard* in the 1880s, noted that the Darwen players 'belong entirely to the working class'. Such comments, though, appear to us to have been over-simplifications. Though the exact occupations of most members of the Darwen team are unknown to us today, there is evidence to suggest that James Gledhill, a particularly effective forward, was a medical doctor who lived in Manchester and travelled by train to each match (Butler, 1982: 17). It is also strongly suspected that two Scotsmen, Fergus (Fergie) Suter and James (Jimmy) Love, may well have been among the first professional footballers. They were tenuously employed in the town but received the bulk of their income from football earnings. Tommy Marshall and William Henry Moorhouse did fit the working class stereotyping, working as loomers in local mills.[1] The Darwen team for the first match against Old Etonians was: John Duxbury, Fergie Suter, Tom Brindle, William Henry Moorhouse, James Knowles, Tommy Marshall, Jimmy Love, James Gledhill, William Kirkham, Thomas Bury and Robert Kirkham (*The Darwen Cricket & Football Times*, 14 February 1879).[2]

That Darwen were only defeated after three matches with Old Etonians is well-recorded: the first was drawn 5-5, the second 2-2, before the northerners finally succumbed 6-2. The match, however, highlights a number of interesting social and historical issues. We have already noted two of them, namely the over-simplified notion that northern teams were necessarily composed of men employed in mundane occupations in the locality; and second, that the Lancashire side may well have been issuing monetary rewards for playing to certain players. A further controversy at that time concerned the practice of playing all ties in the final three rounds of the FA Cup at the Kennington Oval in London, a rule which applied even if a provincial team was fortunate enough to force a draw and therefore earn a replay (Butler, 1982: 25). This, of course, Darwen managed not once but twice, both times having to return to the Kennington Oval. This practice favoured teams from the capital in football terms, since most London-based players had experience of playing at the Oval and were spared the rigours of long-distance travel. It also had an effect on club finances. For Darwen's first encounter with the Old Etonians, local donations secured the visit. However, between this match and the first replay, the Darwen club raised a sum of £175, a figure which, in those days, no doubt covered expenses for the second and third matches. In addition,

the team received £10 from the Football Association and £5 from the Old Etonians (Green, 1953: 66). Were the FA and the Old Etonians beginning to recognise the injustice of forcing provincial teams to return again and again to London?[3]

Following the first match, Darwen had asked the Old Boys to play extra time, a request which had, within the laws, been refused. A number of reasons existed for this decision. First, with Darwen reducing the arrears from 5-1 to the southerners at half-time, to 5-5 at the final whistle, the Lancashire side had clearly gained the ascendancy and momentum. Second, Old Etonians were without three of their regular players – Lyttelton, Bury and Novelli; and third, two comments in a contemporary newspaper report (*The Sportsman*, in *The Darwen Cricket & Football Times*, 14 February 1879: No. 1, 8) lead us to suggest that the northern team would have utilised their superior fitness in extra time to tip the balance. Here are some examples: 'The Etonians…were much the heavier team'; 'The Lancashire team, indeed, seemed to be in better condition than their opponents.'

The *Blackburn Standard* (22 March 1879) summed up the match indignantly as follows:

> From the start the Darwen men have had the greatest disadvantages to contend with, for, after having made a draw in their first encounter, the Eton men refused to play an extra half-hour, thus entailing in the Lancashire team another journey to London. Their second essay was quite as unproductive, but on that occasion an extra thirty minutes was indulged in.

The *Darwen Cricket and Football Times* (14 February 1879: Nos. 1, 2) also recorded the following proposed rule change for consideration at the annual general meeting of the FA to be held on 27 February:

> CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITION
> PROPOSED BY OLD HARROVIANS
>
> That no club which does not consist entirely of amateurs, as defined by rules to be drawn up by the committee, be entitled to compete in the Challenge Cup Competition.
>
> That no club which does not exact some qualification for membership be entitled to compete in the Challenge Cup Competition. The sufficiency of such qualification to be determined by the committee.
>
> That no player be allowed to take part in any of the cup ties otherwise than on behalf of his regiment, university, school or local club, unless he shall have been duly elected a member of, and paid his subscriptions to such club [sic] in the preceding or some earlier season.

The timing of these proposals is of particular significance. The first Old Etonians v. Darwen match was played on 13 February 1879, whilst the

proposed rule amendments appeared in a Darwen newspaper the day afterwards. Whilst they cannot, therefore, be seen as a direct reaction to the first FA Cup encounter, we must remind ourselves that the Darwen club had already visited the south and defeated Remnants FC of Slough and incurred heavy expenses even before the Old Etonians tie. Southern footballers may indeed have been shaken by this challenge to their playing superiority, together with the threat now being posed to their dearly held amateur values. There is perhaps little doubt that the Old Harrovians' proposals were a tilt at strong rumours circulating at the time concerning the payment and importation of players to Association clubs based in Lancashire. Whilst the initial proposal was an attempt to deal with the issue of payment, the second and third sought to eradicate the practice of northern clubs importing players simply for vital cup ties, a practice which, in many cases, ended in the player – quite often a Scot – taking up permanent residence in the region.

These pleas can be perceived as the first indications of a growing southern fear of northern dominance in the game of football. Players and administrators from the south were coming increasingly to believe that *their* game was coming under threat from a section of British society who would be unable or unwilling, largely because of their lack of a public school education and, accordingly, a lack of any exposure to the supposedly superior value system present in those institutions, to uphold existing standards (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 146; 2005: 125–6). Some questions, however, remained for the time being, unanswered. We have seen how two Scotsmen played in the Darwen team, but what were two Scotsmen – Fergie Suter and Jimmy Love – doing in East Lancashire in the first place? In order to move towards an answer to this question, an examination of the footballing relationship between Scotland and Lancashire in the late nineteenth century will, we think, be of help.

Queen's Park dominated football in Scotland during the 1870s and even beyond. Other clubs also enjoyed a measure of success, one of these being Partick FC of Glasgow. (It is important not to confuse Partick FC with Partick Thistle FC. The former was the older club, although when it became extinct in 1885, Thistle took over the disused facilities. Archer, 1976: 21.) The *Glasgow Herald* (5 February 1877) noted that Suter represented Partick in a fixture against Alexandra Athletic in that year, and the club no doubt pursued fixtures against other local sides as well as venturing to Lancashire at New Year to fraternise and play football against the likes of Darwen and Blackburn Rovers. There is, though, some dispute as to their initial visit. Archer (1976: 19) claimed that this took place in early 1876, whilst 'Bedouin' – football correspondent of the *Scottish Weekly Record* (29 August 1908) – insisted:

> It was to Partick the Lancashire clubs first turned when the folds of Scotland were exploited for players. The old Partick club, whose secretary was Mr Peter McColl – at the time the youngest match secretary in Scotland, and today one of the heads of The Anchor Line – was the first

> Scottish club to meet Blackburn Rovers in Lancashire. That occurred on a New Year holiday tour in 1878.

A contributor to *Athletic News* (5 January 1878) concurred with the latter date and also added that Darwen defeated 'Patrick' (this must be a spelling error and should read 'Partick') 4-2, the Scottish team containing two players named Suter and two called Love. The *Scottish Weekly Record* (4 July 1914), looking back on 1880s Glasgow football, recalled Fergie Suter and a player named Jerry Suter, perhaps a relative – the latter representing both Partick and Partick Thistle.

However, the first indication that Lancashire clubs – motivated by local pride and a desire for success – were actively engaging the better players involved in these Anglo-Scottish New Year encounters, is given by the appearance of Fergie Suter for Turton FC in the final of the Turton Challenge Cup of 1878. The Turton team won that cup and, along with it, a financial reward, generating the instruction that 'the second prize money, £3 won by the Turton First Team, be handed over to C. Toothill, that he pay Suter out of it' (Dixon, 1909, in Mason, 1980: 69).

It seems probable that it was as a result of his performances over the previous New Year's fixtures that Suter was invited down to Turton for the Challenge Cup. However, an extensive trawl of local newspapers in the Blackburn area, together with *Athletic News* – a Manchester-based publication – yielded no further mention of either him or Love until the beginning of the 1878–9 season. Love is identified as representing Darwen FC in two matches in that period, more particularly against Attercliffe and Blackburn Rovers in November 1878 (*Athletic News*, 13 November 1878). Although Suter's name fails to appear that year until December, a fact which has great significance when the opponents are examined, Suter, who had rarely played for the club prior to this date, appears to have been imported specifically for the FA Cup tie with local rivals Eagley, a tie that Darwen won after a replay.

In this period, Scottish sides continued with their New Year tradition of Lancashire tours and even extended them to other areas. Partick played both Darwen and Blackburn Rovers in 1879 with Fergie Suter guesting for the Scottish side in the latter fixture (*Athletic News*, 8 January 1879). At the same time, Third Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers – more commonly referred to as simply Third Lanark – paid a visit to Sheffield and included in their 'ranks' for that match against Heeley one James Lang, back temporarily in Glasgow between his spells with the Wednesday (*Glasgow Herald*, 2 January 1879). No doubt this particular visit had been instigated by Lang's connection with Sheffield, although there was no flood of Scots to the city itself as there was to be to East Lancashire. Perhaps rates of pay were greater west of the Pennines or, more likely, administrators of the game in the Yorkshire steel capital – such as the Cleggs and Pierce-Dix – were far less prepared to sanction not only the importation but also the payment of a flood of such players.

So frequent had these Scottish sojourns become that a contributor in the *Blackburn Standard* (5 January 1884) commented: 'Football matches have been the rage everywhere….Scotchmen have been in scores, and seem to have a great partiality for Lancashire at New Year.' It seems that Jimmy Love was appearing for Darwen on a fairly regular basis in the early half of the 1878–9 season, whereas Suter's contributions had, initially, been more sporadic. This changed in the New Year as we even find Suter representing the county of Lancashire against North Wales. As it was expressed in the *Blackburn Standard* (11 January 1879): 'The splendid play of Suter crushed many hopes…the indomitable and scientific back play of Suter, who is undoubtedly the best back in the county, contributing very materially.' Suter was also heavily involved in Darwen's ultimately futile struggles against the Old Etonians in the FA Cup that year, although, in the defeat during the second replay he had the pleasure of scoring. We are told that: 'Suter, one of the Darwen backs… met the leather mid-field, and, greatly to the elation of his side the ball passed between the posts' (*Blackburn Standard*, 22 March 1879). Suter now became a centre of controversy in the Blackburn area, when, at the beginning of the 1880–1 season, he decided to throw in his lot with Blackburn Rovers. Rumour had been rife in the previous campaign that he had received payment to play for Darwen and that his job as a stonemason was a mere front for his football activities. The club itself had passed no comment. Nor did they pass one when he transferred his loyalty to Rovers, though the accepted explanation for this swift *volte-face* was that he had simply received a better offer for his talents. Tension between the two communities was raised to a high level and it boiled over on 27 November 1880, when Darwen visited Blackburn for a 'friendly' match. The match began amicably enough and had just restarted following the half-time break when the Darwen captain, Tommy Marshall clashed with Fergie Suter near the touchline. Marshall played twice for England at outside right and would probably have been in direct opposition to Suter, who played left back (Freddi, 1991: 190). The ground at Alexandra Meadows was full to capacity, and so enormous was the interest created that the crowd of over 10,000 had to be accommodated on 20 lorries positioned behind the initial rank of spectators. No doubt the clash, occurring as it did in close proximity to the crowd, inflamed passions – particularly among the Darwen following for whom considerable animosity still existed towards Suter. The crowd invaded the pitch and Suter himself was kicked by spectators, leading to the abandonment of the game by the referee. The bad behaviour did not end there. The Darwen changing tent was ransacked, presumably by the Darwen team, with one mirror being stolen and another broken (*Blackburn Standard*, 4 December 1880; Berry, 1976; Francis, 1925: 24–7; Jackman, 1990: 10).

Life continued to be complicated for Suter. In January 1882 his selection, along with those of Hugh McIntyre and Jimmy Douglas – fellow Scots residing in Lancashire – to represent their adopted county against Glasgow, caused the latter's administrators to withdraw their team if it meant opposing a Lancashire XI which included three Scots strongly suspected of migrating

to England to play as professional footballers. Both McIntyre and Douglas had represented Scotland in a match against Wales in 1880, whilst McIntyre was playing for Rangers and Douglas for Renfrew. McIntyre gave his services to Blackburn Rovers sporadically in the 1879–80 season, mainly for cup ties, before finally moving on a more permanent basis during the following campaign. Douglas soon followed, with both eventually becoming licensees in the Blackburn area (Jackman, 1990: 10; Berry, 1976; Lewis, 1997: 29–30).

A debate followed in which Tom Hindle, then Secretary of the Lancashire FA, claimed that Suter had learned his footballing trade in the county, having only played for Partick in Scotland – which was viewed by Hindle as a lesser Scottish club. This is partially correct. Suter had received little recognition in his native land before arriving in Lancashire and had not, unlike McIntyre and Douglas, been capped by Scotland at the time of his move. As an 'Anglo' – a Scot playing football in England – he was now ignored by the Scottish selectors and never received international recognition. The Scottish FA only relaxed this restriction in 1896. As for Suter, he played his last game for Blackburn Rovers in the 1888–9 season. In common with many ex-footballers he became a publican and returned to playing the game of Rugby.[4]

It is also true that Partick tended to play against the lesser lights of Scottish football at that time. These included the likes of Alexandra Athletic, John Elder, Our Boys and Govan Union, rather than Queen's Park and Vale of Leven – though this may well have been for geographical or even, more pertinently, social class reasons than for footballing considerations (Archer, 1976: 18; *Glasgow Herald*, 12 February 1877). Several writers, however, give testimony to Partick's prestige in Glasgow's footballing hierarchy. Archer (1976: 19) stated, for example: 'They were good and strong enough already to challenge some of the top English teams.' 'Bedouin', football correspondent of the *Scottish Weekly Record* (4 July 1914), echoed this importance, writing: 'My earliest recollections of Partick football date from the time when the old Partick FC was the leading organisation in the district.' Indeed, any club which had the inclination and financial viability to be the first to undertake tours of England must have been a relatively prestigious organisation. Accordingly, despite Hindle's pleas, all three Scotsmen were replaced before the Lancashire v. Glasgow fixture took place. Suter had enjoyed a highly successful career – along with McIntyre and Douglas he gained three consecutive FA Cup winners' medals in the years 1884–6. The fate of Jimmy Love is less clear. Tony Mason (1980: 78) writes that he was killed during the bombardment of Alexandria in Egypt in July 1882; Dewshurst (2012: 247), however, casts doubt on this claim, noting that Love's name does not appear on any casualty lists. He comments further that a seaman by the name of 'Jas. Love' died aboard the battleship HMS *Triumph* in 1883. Dewhurst claims that the *Triumph* had been at Alexandria but moved on to be part of the Pacific fleet and this may well be where the confusion over Love's fate began. However, we have been unable to find any evidence that the *Triumph* was present at

Alexandria. We suspect both explanations may, at the present time, prove to be incomplete and more research is required in this particular area.

The game of Association Football was beginning at this stage to emerge as a professional sport. External influences led the organisers and administrators of the football clubs representing the tightly knit communities of East Lancashire to seek outside playing help, often from north of the border. These influences included, on a national scale, the FA Cup competition; and, on a local level, the intense rivalry created by the expectations and wish for success of the populations inhabiting those towns. Such rivalries appear to have been particularly prevalent in the industrial north and seem to have provided the local factory workers with an exciting, out-of-work focus for their lives. This was in direct contrast to their repetitive, production line jobs during the week. A major unintended consequence of the accidental harnessing of local energies and pride – in the form of regular and mass spectatorship at football matches – was that each successful club became the recipient of large amounts of cash taken at the gate. The controversial Blackburn Rovers v. Darwen match of November 1880, for example, had taken over £250 in gate receipts (*Blackburn Standard*, 4 December 1880) – a huge sum for those times when one considers that a one-way trip to Australia cost but 14 guineas, and a country estate could be obtained for as little as £800! (Butler, 1982: 17)

The practice of gate-taking in this period was not restricted to Lancashire clubs. The Football Association registered receipts of £144 14s 0d for the match against Scotland in April 1879 (Green, 1953: 65), the difference being that, whilst this august body spent such takings on printing, stationery and refreshments, the likes of Blackburn Rovers and Darwen were covertly paying their players. So great was the revenue generated by the semi-final and subsequent replay of 1882, that £35 each was given by the Football Association to the Mayors of Sheffield and Blackburn to divide between local charities (Green, 1953: 66). Any attempt by individual clubs to lift themselves morally above what amateur devotees called the 'professional mire' simply led to self-inflicted ruin. The public, ever discriminating, was only interested in watching winners, and winners were only produced by engaging the best exponents of the game, those exponents 'moving with the money'. In short, the best players journeyed to the clubs which paid the highest wages. An administrator representing Burnley FC commented in 1885: 'The fact of it is, the public will not go to see inferior players. During the first year we did not pay a single player, and nobody came to see us' (*Athletic News*, 10 February 1885: 3).

Blackburn Rovers became the first club outside the southern amateurs to reach an FA Cup Final, losing by the only goal to Old Etonians. In their semi-final, the Blackburn side had disposed of Sheffield Wednesday after a replay. These two matches would have made interesting viewing, since, on one side was Fergie Suter of Rovers, while opposing him was James Lang of Wednesday. Both these men had claims of being the first ever professional player (*Athletic News*, 22 March 1882). The year 1882, however, was to prove to be the Old Boys' swansong – no club from the amateur south ever again

lifted the trophy. It was the following campaign, in 1882–3, which provided provincial clubs with their first success. Strangely, it was not to be Blackburn Rovers, Darwen, Nottingham Forest or a club from Sheffield that was to earn this honour. Blackburn Olympic, in only their third tilt at the trophy – they had lost in the first round in both of their previous attempts – were the slightly surprising winners (Smailes, 1991: 183). Scoring 35 goals and conceding just five, they were worthy victors, though it is interesting how a club which had only been in existence since 1878 could have managed to win England's most prestigious trophy. The key, as in many a club's swift rise, lay in importation and surreptitious payment, though in this case the impetus came from Sheffield rather than Scotland. The Olympic signed Jack Hunter and George Wilson, both driven from their native city under a cloud of allegations concerning professionalism – moving, it would seem, to an area with a more lenient view of payment for playing football or, at least, where the administrators of clubs had found and accepted ways and means of facilitating the practice (Gibson and Pickford, 1906: 73).

Hunter was by this time an England international, having made his debut in 1878 against Scotland, though interestingly he was never capped following his move to Blackburn Olympic – perhaps by then being perceived as an undesirable professional importation. Hunter might be described as the first 'player/manager', a man who began to apply training and fitness regimes to football. The Olympic trained for each cup tie and not just the final. They were supported by employers who even allowed employees time off for fitness preparation, and whole Saturdays off when the team were involved in away fixtures. Most famously, the side trained for a whole week on the sands of Blackpool, the trip being financed out of collections in local mills and factories. They even dined on the following special daily diet and training regime:

> 6 am: Port, two raw eggs, three mile walk
> Breakfast: Porridge, haddock
> Dinner: Two legs of mutton between the team
> Tea: Porridge, one pint of milk each
> Supper: Six oysters each
>
> (Kay, 1948: 36)

The occupations of the players were, unlike those of their neighbours Darwen, unmistakably working and lower middle class: Hacking was a dental assistant; Warburton, the captain, a master plumber; Ward, a cotton operative; Astley, Dewhurst and Yates, weavers; Matthews, a picture-framer; Gibson an iron-moulder; and Costley, who scored the winning goal in the Cup Final, a spinner; the remaining two members were Hunter and Wilson, the probable professionals (Gibson and Pickford, 1906: 73).

Observations of the match itself make for interesting reading. *The Eton College Chronicle* (8 May 1883) wrote:

The…match was decided at the Oval on March 31, between the Old Etonians and the Blackburn Olympic Club from Lancashire. The latter had made a considerable reputation by defeating Church, another Lancashire club who had previously beaten Darwen (the conquerors in the first round of Blackburn Rovers), and by extinguishing the chance of the Old Carthusians at Manchester in the other semi-final tie. So great was their ambition to wrest the cup from the holders, that they introduced into football play a practice which has excited the greatest disapprobation in the South.

For three weeks before the final match they went into a strict course of training, spending, so reports say, a considerable time at Blackpool, and some days at Bournemouth and Richmond. Though it may seem strange that a football eleven composed of mill-hands and working men should be able to sacrifice three weeks to train for one match, and to find the means to do so, too, yet when we reflect on the thousands who attend and watch matches in Lancashire, and so swell the revenues of the Clubs, and on the enthusiasm of the employers of labour in the pursuits of successes of their countrymen, it is not so surprising.

To be brief, the Blackburn men were in splendid condition for the match, and had spared no pains to gain victory. The Old Etonians played the same eleven as in the last previous matches, and had they only played in form approaching that which they displayed against Notts. would have won easily.

No one will deny that they were the better team of the two, but it was their very confidence in this fact which probably lost them the match. Had they only been non-favourites, the result would have been different, for their play during the first part of the game was too casual, and they certainly should have gained more than one goal while fresh. As it was, this was the only point scored till half-time, when a most unfortunate accident occurred: Dunn was severely injured and had to leave the field, and shortly afterwards Goodhart was seized with cramp in both legs, and Macaulay received a nasty kick on the knee. This completed the 'rot' which had by this time set in, and the Northerners were not long in making matters even.

After an hour and a half the score was equal, one goal to either side. Now came the turning point. The Association Committee had decided before the commencement of the match that an extra half hour should be played if the result was a draw. Neither side should have agreed to this, as there is no rule to force a club to play an extra half hour when only one day is fixed for a match; but the Northerners naturally did not object, knowing that their course of training would stand them in good stead, while the Old Etonians did not care to rebel against the decision of the superior body. In this fatal half hour the Olympic scored 1, the crowning point, and so gained the honour of being the first Northern Club to win the cup.

It is important to challenge several myths that have arisen in connection with the Old Etonians v. Blackburn Olympic match. First, there is the question of southern amateur teams objecting to the methods used by Olympic in preparing for the final. There must be some truth in this: the fact is that *The Eton College Chronicle* voices it clearly in the extract above. However some writers, in their discriminatory use of only parts of the report, seem to cloud the issue. Rippon (1983: 33–4), for example, writes, '*The Eton College Chronicle* said darkly, "It may seem strange that a football eleven composed of mill-hands and working men should be able to sacrifice three weeks to train for one match, and to find the means to do so" '; whilst according to Smailes (1991: 183) '*The Eton Chronicle* hinted darkly that they [Olympic] were professionals.' Deeper analysis of the report in *The Eton College Chronicle*, however, shows an almost grudging respect and admiration for the northern club, in particular for the direct financial support of the community in the form of paying spectators and benevolent employers.

Rippon (1983: 34) is also incorrect to suggest: 'The game went into extra-time, though there was no obligation on the part of Old Etonians to agree, especially since they had only ten men and were missing two other regular players. It was a magnanimous gesture.' This was no 'magnanimous gesture' on the part of the Old Boys for, as *The Eton College Chronicle* rightly states, both teams had agreed before kick-off upon an extra half an hour. One is also reminded in a report from the time of the Old Etonians' refusal to play extra time against Darwen during their first encounter in 1879: 'Darwen, anxious to have the tie settled, made strong representations to play an extra half-hour; as on the former occasion, this was positively declined by the Etonians' (*The Darwen Cricket and Football Times*, 14 February 1879).

Finally, *The Eton College Chronicle* hinted at over-confidence on the part of the Old Etonians, something which, because of the excellent past record of southern teams and their status as holders, is not particularly hard to understand. Perhaps, too, there was a hint of social superiority involved, leading to the belief that artisans could never beat aristocrats. The *Athletic News* (21 March 1883), a Manchester-based newspaper, was left to poke fun at the southerners' accents and at the latter's invention of excuses for defeat, writing sarcastically about the 'beastly professional twaining those Owimpian few-wows had gone through that won the match'.

The Cup remained in Blackburn for a further three years following Olympic's triumph, with Rovers recording a hat-trick of victories, the first two against Queen's Park. The classic Anglo-Scottish encounters were made possible by the fact that Queen's Park, already a member of the Scottish FA, were also affiliated to the Football Association. Sides from north of the border continued to enter the FA Cup until the 1886–7 season, when the Scottish FA, perhaps concerned about matters of jurisdiction in the event of a dispute between clubs, decided that there would be no further entries into the English competition from sides under their control (Green, 1953: 130–1).

During the early 1880s, however, Scottish footballing migrants to East Lancashire turned, as we have seen, from a trickle into what many have called a flood. Among the incessant flow was John (Jock) Inglis. His story was told by his granddaughter, Eve Clucas, in the transcript of an interview from the BBC Television series, *Kicking and Screaming*:

> as far as I know he [John Inglis] first played for Glasgow Rangers in the early 1880s and he was known as a good dribbler, graceful player.…(H)e came down to Blackburn Rovers in about 1883–84 and he played for them in the FA Cup Final. He also played two international matches for Scotland, one against England – the score was 3–2 – and the other one was against Wales, and the score was 3-nothing….(T)hen he left Blackburn Rovers and went back up to Glasgow again and then he came back again and started for Preston North End…When he wasn't playing football he earned his living as a mechanic and also as a coachman to sort of eke out the pay that he wanted….He had eight children to keep and of course the wages up in Scotland then, particularly in the Clyde area where he lived, weren't very good so he came down to Blackburn Rovers because the pay was better at football than it was in Scotland….Blackburn Rovers won the FA Cup, they had a big banquet and….(I)t was that that started my grandfather on his drinking….(W)hen he started his football career he started drinking and he kept on drinking…and then after a painful illness he died at the age of 61 in August, 1920.

Inglis did indeed represent his country against both England and Wales, whilst playing for Rangers in Glasgow (Rollin, 1998: 315). A year later, at the end of the 1883–4 season, he was to be found in Blackburn Rovers' FA Cup winning side alongside three other Scots – Fergie Suter, Hugh McIntyre and Jimmy Douglas – as they triumphed 2-1 against Queen's Park. Eve Clucas's reminiscences provide us with additional evidence in our quest to understand the motivations of Scots migrating south at that time. It appears that football earnings alone were insufficient to sustain Inglis, though with eight children to provide for there is little wonder that he felt obliged to find additional work. He was, however, fairly typical of industrial workers around Glasgow in the early 1880s – work was available, though payment for their labour seemingly never approached the rates to be found in East Lancashire.

Men like Inglis continued to rush south. William Struthers and John Devlin (1880), and James Mckernon, Jimmy Brogan and Willie Cox[5] (1882) all came to play for Bolton Wanderers. Nicholas Ross, Geordie Drummond, Sandy Robertson, David Russell, Jack Gordon and Sam Thomson were all Scotsmen playing for Preston North End by 1883. Others included Dan Friel of Burnley, James Richmond of Darwen and the net even extended itself as wide as Wales, whence came John Powell, Jackie Vaughan, Bob Roberts and Di Jones to represent Bolton Wanderers (Lewis, 1997: 27–34).

By December 1884, the *Football Field* (13 December 1884) revealed that no fewer than 60 Scottish-born players were registered with just 11 major East Lancashire sides. Similar developments were taking place in and around Sheffield, though these did not include the wholesale importation of players from other geographical regions. Players were still in the habit of turning out for several sides, even in the early 1880s – initially to secure regular competition, though later to link themselves with a successful club and, no doubt, for financial reward. This practice led to a plethora of official complaints to the local association regarding the eligibility of certain players.

At the centre of much of this veiled professionalism was Billy Mosforth. An England international since 1877, when he won his first cap at the age of 19, he was undoubtedly one of the leading players of his day. Locally, he was regarded as an amateur, though coming from a working class background and perhaps welcoming a fairly regular supplement to his everyday wage, he appears to have exploited his situation; first because he possessed a special talent which was much in demand, and second, because it was then still possible to represent several clubs. He operated, consequently, largely as a 'free agent', profiting from the relations between supply and demand. On 11 October 1884, just prior to a Sheffield Association Challenge Cup match between Hallam and Wednesday, he appeared wearing the former's colours, only to go back to the changing room and reappear in Wednesday's strip following a plea – backed by a monetary offer – from a spectator. He was also not averse to placing bets on himself to score, though there is no direct evidence that he ever backed his own team to lose (Steele, 1986: 15–16; Farnsworth, 1995: 36).

Not only did clubs make such complaints to their local associations, grievances also became relatively commonplace following FA Cup encounters, when offended sides sought judgement from the parent body: the Football Association. Even before their FA Cup third round tie with Sheffield Wednesday in the 1882–3 season, Nottingham Forest lodged a protest that a Wednesday player, Arthur Malpass, had received payment for assisting another local club, Sheffield Wanderers, in a match played at Bolton. Furthermore, following the initial encounter, which ended in a 2-2 draw, Forest officials were found in Sheffield offering a substantial reward for information which confirmed that several Wednesday players had only become members of the club immediately prior to the cup tie. Forest not only lost the replay 3-2, they were also unsuccessful in their subsequent appeal to the FA (Farnsworth, 1995: 37–8).

Also in 1882, in response to the growing number of complaints and the rumours which were rife concerning veiled professionalism, the FA introduced Rule 16 which stated:

> Any member of a club receiving remuneration or consideration of any sort above his actual expenses and any wages actually lost by any such player taking part in any match, shall be debarred from taking part in

> either cup, inter-Association, or International contests, and any club employing such a player shall be excluded from this Association.
>
> (Green, 1953: 97)

Writing in 1953, however, Geoffrey Green (1953: 97) felt that the 'wages lost' clause was so abused as to make the rule utterly worthless. Secretaries of clubs that were paying players were not suddenly about to reveal all. Nor were they likely to be discovered, since no written evidence was kept; and players and managers – the principal beneficiaries of the system – would have been unlikely to turn themselves in. To the Football Association importation was no longer the central issue. It was quite clear that the practice existed and that it would be difficult to reverse the trend. However, it certainly was an issue to the rest of the community, particularly those who resided in the East Lancashire mill towns. The football correspondent of *Athletic News* (25 January 1882) summed up the feelings of local communities there, who, despite perhaps possessing a successful team, felt that victories gained by a side largely made up of Scotsmen had a hollow ring to them:

> I understood when I gave my mite towards purchasing the handsome cup [The Lancashire Football Association's trophy] that it was for Lancashire lads, and they alone. If the richer clubs can afford to pay professionals, let them do so, but when they compete for our grand trophy, let the true Lancashire lads have equal chance of winning it.

It appeared that, initially, the amateur members of the FA committee were either unwilling or unable to grasp the problematic nettle that was professionalism. However, in November 1883 they finally acted. Strangely enough it was Darwen, much maligned several years previously for 'employing' Fergie Suter, who complained to the FA that both Church and Accrington had paid a man called James Beresford to play for them. Darwen had eliminated Church from that season's FA Cup competition in the first round and, despite not directly opposing Accrington in the competition, were, nevertheless, near neighbours and rivals. Beresford had only played one game for Accrington, but the evidence that condemned the club appeared straightforward. The player received a sum of money to continue his relationship with Accrington from a member of the public not directly connected with the club. This, in itself, was not evidence enough. However, the fact that the Treasurer and Secretary were both aware that this action had taken place was deemed sufficient by the FA to sanction Accrington's disqualification from that season's competition (Jackman and Dykes, 1991: 14–15).

Did there exist behind these machinations an element of class prejudice, or perhaps status rivalry between the previously dominant southern amateurs and the increasingly successful northern 'professionals'? One might have believed that such a rivalry was impossible, given the extent of the social

gap between the two groups. This was no doubt the case off the field but, on the field of play, a relatively level battleground had been created and, in terms of performance and results – though perhaps not in terms of values and behaviour – membership of a particular class grouping was largely irrelevant except insofar as class values affected footballing effectiveness and skill. Contributors to *The Athlete* (30 January 1884) were in no doubt as to their attitude towards the new arrivals, saying, 'none but gentlemen should play at the game [football], as they are the only personages who can afford to lose time and spend money on travelling'.

Another writer to the newspaper complained that 'employment of the scum of the Scottish villages has tended, in no small degree, to brutalise the game [of football]' (*The Athlete*, 29 September 1884). Yet perhaps the former correspondent was unable to comprehend that working men, especially those that still laboured six days per week, did not possess the leisure time during which to participate in the sport, let alone train for it – an advantage which upper class amateurs had always enjoyed. It was financially difficult for someone from the working class to challenge the football pre-eminence of the Old Boys of the south and retain his position as a pure amateur. The steady nationalisation of the game that resulted from the introduction of the FA Cup, the consequent undertaking of long distance travel to away ties, the growing seriousness of competition provoked by such tournaments, together with the intense rivalries between growing, tightly knit communities in the north, and the unplanned growth of spectatorism which allowed clubs to afford to reward their players, all contributed to the march of professionalism in Association Football. Perhaps the strongest motivation, at least from an individual player's viewpoint, was that the chance to become a professional footballer offered working class men an opportunity to experience a more rewarding – and in many ways healthier environment – albeit one that exposed them to the hazards of playing football itself. When seen in those terms, it is perhaps less difficult to understand why many of them chose professional football.

To have referred to the imported Scottish professionals as 'scum' was strong language indeed, though it perhaps helps us to comprehend why so many ex-public school men abandoned the Association game in favour of the Rugby form following the legalisation of professionalism by the FA in July 1885. However, from that date onwards the administrators of the game had accepted that players should be allowed, under stringent conditions, to profit from their ability at football. They had solved one problem and perhaps saved the game from any kind of split. But in legitimising over-competitiveness and an overemphasis on winning, the FA may well have created other monsters.

Notes

1 Dewhurst, 2012: 80. Interestingly, a photograph of the Darwen team of the 1879–80 season shows another doctor, J. C. Holden, in the team line-up (Sutcliffe and Hargreaves, 1928: 26).

2 Our thanks go to Andy Mitchell for the Christian names of Moorhouse and W. Kirkham.
3 The story of Darwen football at this time, and the events of their matches against the Old Etonians, is entertainingly told in Keith Dewhurst's *Underdogs: The Unlikely Story of Football's First FA Cup Heroes* (2012).
4 Many thanks to Graham Phythian for information regarding Suter. However, there appears to be no information as yet on his Rugby exploits.
5 Willie Cox played for Hibernian from 1879–82 and again from 1884–6. He also represented the Edinburgh representative side and made his debut for Bolton on 23 September 1882. Our thanks go to Andy Mitchell for this information.

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7 The origins of football debate

Anyone researching the history of British football towards the end of the twentieth century would have been presented with a series of accounts relating a similar tale. Geoffrey Green[1] (1953), Francis Peabody Magoun[2] (1938), Morris Marples[3] (1954), Montague Shearman[4] (1888, 1889) and Percy Young[5] (1968) all stressed the overwhelming influence of boys from the major public schools on the development of the game. These five authors represented a group who unwittingly – they were writing with reference to the extant evidence – portrayed the initial origins of the modern game as having been almost solely in the public schools. However, more recent times have seen the publication of a plethora of books and articles which have stressed an alternative history. John Goulstone (1974, 2000, 2001), Adrian Harvey (1999, 2001, 2002, 2004a, 2005, 2013) and Peter Swain (2008, 2014 online), supported by an academic historical community seemingly frantic for evidence of working class influence at the detriment of the public schools, have all produced books or articles of a similar tone; that is, seeking to propose a reduction of public schoolboy influence. Examples of what one might term 'over-hasty recognition' of the Goulstone and Harvey hypothesis include Lanfranchi *et al*. (2004: Chapter 1), Hay (2010: 954–5), Sanders (2009) and Hornby (2008). We suspect that, at times, some have addressed the issues as part of a grander design and in each case they have over-emphasised the involvement of the lower classes. They would argue that their texts do not exclude the public schools altogether and would still, we tentatively believe, largely accept the pre-eminent influence of boys from those institutions. As a group they are guilty, however, of overstating what is essentially Goulstone's and Harvey's original case and, in subsequent years, scholars may invoke their hypotheses as presenting a somewhat jaundiced view of football's past. In their search for working class involvement they have lacked detachment and have prompted others – ourselves included – to remain objective in following the facts, regardless of class-consciousness. We are consequently unable to agree with Matthew Taylor, in his otherwise excellent summation of the current standing of the 'origins' debate (2008: 20–31), when he says that these sophisticated and organised forms of popular football 'were arguably equally as influential [as public schoolboys]' (2008: 31). We would certainly not go

that far, and even Taylor, swiftly accepts that 'Aspects of the revisionist case are certainly overstated' (2008: 31). What is most encouraging is the fact that this area of the sociology of sport has become almost overcrowded, when one thinks that, not long ago, the debate on the origins of football was suffering a relative dearth of literature. In this chapter we intend, accordingly, to restate and offer evidence to support the powerful influence of ex-public schoolboys, whilst accepting the contributions of others – ultimately providing an original hypothesis for the origins of the Association game.

John Goulstone

It was in 1974 that John Goulstone became the first historian to begin to challenge – at least in writing – the traditional version of modern football's origins when he published his *Modern Sport: Its Origin and Development through Two Centuries*. In a further work which initially appeared as a small pamphlet in 1997, and later as an article dated 2000 in *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Goulstone stressed the complexity of many 'folk games' and presented evidence to support this argument. However, his title, 'The Working-Class Origins of Modern Football', appears to us to have betrayed not only newly uncovered evidence, but preconceived intentions as well. According to Goulstone (2001),

> in 1999, Dr. A. Harvey of Oxford University cited much of this material, along with some additional items obtained by re-examining the same newspaper sources in an essay entitled "Football's Missing Link: The Real Story of the Evolution of Modern Football", in the *European Sports History Review*. This broadly repeated the conclusions presented [by Goulstone] twenty-five years earlier in *Modern Sport*.

Goulstone's work on the subject culminated in 2001 with the publication of a small book entitled, *Football's Secret History*, and he has continued robustly to defend the originality of his evidence – though Adrian Harvey has also attempted a spirited critique (2001: endnote 14, 81–2). Harvey submitted similar data as part of his MA thesis in Victorian Studies at Birkbeck College, London, in September 1990[6] and, although he criticised Goulstone for a lack of footnotes and references in *Modern Sport*, Harvey accepted that it was clear that Goulstone must have been utilising *Bell's Life* for his information.[7] It is not our intention to become entwined in this private misunderstanding, though it might be of some interest to the reader to examine what one might call 'the mechanics of their gathering of data'. We also feel that it may be helpful to make one further point which we think illustrates not only football's lack of social prestige prior to 1850 but also the obscurity of the data themselves. Both historians should, we think, be congratulated for unearthing such information. Indeed, many of the references to these matches appear in the most remote places in *Bell's Life*, usually as one carefully concealed

Table 7.1 Matches and challenges noted by John Goulstone (2001)[a]

Matches

Page	*Date played*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference/Date*
23	1772	Hitchin v. Cosmore, Hitchin	R. L. Hines, *History of Hitchin* (1927–9)
23	1876	Pitsmoor v. Ecclesfield, Sheffield	None
23	?	Beverley	G. Oliver, *History of Beverley* (1829)
23–4	?	Hornsea v. Sigglesthorpe	E. W. Bedell, *An Account of Hornsea* (1848)
24	1802	Sedgefield	*The Sporting Magazine* (1802)
24	1845	Countrymen/Tradesmen Sedgefield	None
24	13 July 1795	Osbournby v. Billingborough, Lincolnshire	*The Sporting Magazine*
24	1789	Cumberland v. Westmorland (London) [1,000 guineas]	None
24	**Shrove 1773**	**Married v. Bachelors, Wetherby**	***Leeds Intelligencer* (2 March 1773)**
24	**Shrove 1767**	**Bletchley**	**Diarist**
24	1826	Cobham	None
24–5	**Shrove 1830**	**Horbling v. Swaton, Lincolnshire**	**None**
25	1849	Willington v. Egginton, Derbyshire [£2]	*Bell's Life* (25 February 1849)
25	**Shrove 1827**	**Derby**	***Derby Mercury* (20 February 1827)**
25	1834	Harvest staff, Ingestre, Staffordshire	None
25	1711	Worcestershire	*The Spectator*
25	1752	Hendon	None
26	16 January 1797	Mechanics, Fontwell, Wiltshire	None
26	1860	Chilham, Kent	None
26	1836	Windsor	None
26	1842	Windsor	'A paper'
26	January 1838	Richmond	None
29	May 1595	Armstrongs v. Bewcastle	None
29	25 January 1634	Gainsborough	Henry Burton, *A Divine Tragedie* (1641)
29	1793	Norton v. Sheffield	B. Bird, *Perambulations of Barney* (1854)
29	February 1843	East v. West Isley, Berkshire	*Bell's Life* (26 February 1843)
29	**Easter Monday 1849**	**Staverton v. Flecknoe, Warwickshire**	***Bell's Life***
29	1851	11 single v 22 married, Eton [£10 a side]	None
30	**Shrove 1852**	**Blaby v. Wigston, Leicester [£5 a side]**	**None**

Table 7.1 (*cont.*)

Page	*Date played*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference/Date*
30	15 March 1852	Enderby v. Whetstone	*Bell's Life* (21 March 1852)
30	1843	Thurlstone v. Totties	*Bell's Life* (12 February 1843)
31	17 April 1843	Grandborough v. Flecknoe (Willoughby) [£3 a side]	*Bell's Life*
31	November 1842	Bickenhill v. Hampton [Food and wine]	None
32	17 March 1844	'F' v. 'D' Troop, Light Dragoons	None
32	**Christmas Day 1846**	**Charlestown v. Boston, Ashton**	**None**
32	January 1839	Shoemakers v. Rest, Ulverston	None
33	1 March 1859	3rd v. 2nd Battalion, Grenadier Guards	None
33	1859	3rd Battalion, Light v. Dark Haired	None
33	9 March 1859	3rd v. 2nd return game	None
33	?	Four boys, Kingston Academy	*Book of Games* (1810)
34	**Christmas Day 1841**	**Bodyguards v. Fearnoughts [Beer]**	***Bell's Life* (2 January 1842)**
36	1851	Edinburgh University v. 93rd Highlanders	None
36	1 March 1851	English v. Scottish, Edinburgh University	None
36	21 March 1851	Edinburgh University v. Veterinary College	None

Challenges – No evidence is provided to confirm that the matches actually took place

Page	*Date of challenge*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference/Date*
24	**Whit Monday 1748**	**Bonkridge, near Ipswich**	***Ipswich Journal* (21 May 1748)**
26	**27 December 1858**	**Married v. Single, Newport Pagnell**	**None**
27	1839	Barley Mow v. White Lion, Dudley [£20]	None
27	**3 January 1848**	**Hare and Hounds, Bolton [Cheese]**	**None**
28	**3 January 1841**	**Drover's Inn, Openshaw [Pig]**	**None (12 December 1841)**
28	1845	Moss Inn, Kearsley [£5]	None
28	**1 January 1844**	**Royal Oak, Pendlebury**	**None (31 December 1843)**
29	**Good Friday 1838**	**Leicester printers v. Derby printers, Leicester**	***Bell's Life***
29–30	1852	Winchester v. Southampton	None (4, 11, 14 January 1852)

Table 7.1 (*cont.*)

Page	*Date of challenge*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference/Date*
30	1852	Holmfirth v. Enderby, Sheffield	*Bell's Life* (28 March 1852)
31	1844	Denby v. Thurlstone [£2–£5 a side]	None (March 1844)
31	1844	Penistone v. Thurlstone [£25 a side]	*Bell's Life* (31 March 1844)
31	1844	Foolstone v. Thurlstone [£5] or Bolton [£25–£50]	*Bell's Life* (7 January 1844)
31	1845	Thurlstone v. Southouse or Hepworth [£5–£10]	*Bell's Life* (2 February 1845)
31	1845	Rugby tailors v. any six [£5]	None (21 December 1845)
32	1841	Blackburn v. The World [£20 a side]	None (12 December 1841)
32	1841	Orrell v. any 30 [£10 a side]	None (12 December 1841)
32	1841	Bolton v. Rifle Regiment [£10 a side]	None (December 1841)
33	1845	Northampton 1 v. 1 [£1]	None (9 February 1845)
35	1844	King's Guards v. 10, Rochdale [£5–£10 a side]	None (15 December 1844)
35	1842	Whitford lads v. Fieldhead lads	None (20 November 1842)

Notes:

[a] Goulstone provides few references for his research in *Football's Secret History* (2001), though he is far more generous in 'The Working Class Origins of Modern Football' (2000).

Games in bold indicate matches played on a holiday and hardly representative of a 'new' footballing sub-culture; rather they would appear to be the remnants of 'folk' games. Festivals such as Shrovetide are included in this category.

Square brackets indicate prize at stake.

Goulstone's findings refer to 44 matches. Their dates range from 1595–1876, that is 281 years – one every six years.

The data still note one match in a school context and three in university settings. Again, not a 'new' sub-culture.

paragraph at the bottom of a broadsheet covering other sports in much more detail. For instance, one large broadsheet page of *Bell's Life* dated 4 March 1849 was divided as follows: pedestrianism – four columns; boxing – one column; rabbit coursing – eight paragraphs; canine – four paragraphs; cricket – two paragraphs; pigeon shooting – five paragraphs; wrestling, knurr and spell (a game played in the north of England on extensive moorland using a wooden bat to propel a small ball the greatest possible distance), bird fancying, quoits and football – one paragraph each.[8] The positioning of the reports on football in newspapers around that time, and the general paucity of reporting on the subject, may indicate either the low position of the game

generally or the lack of prestige accorded to it by the sporting public and contemporary journalists.

Adrian Harvey

Following on from his articles published in various sporting journals, Adrian Harvey produced *Football: the First Hundred Years*, a book full of interesting data on the game as played outside the public schools from 1750–1850. The work initially required, to repeat Eric Dunning's words, 'a fairly substantial alteration in the standard histories of the game' (Dunning, 2001, 88). Harvey undoubtedly deserves great credit in essentially reopening the debate on the origins of the game of football in England – John Goulstone's work has never been as widely read – and his data appear to call into question the previously accepted view that the tradition of 'folk' football had gradually waned in England during the course of the nineteenth century. Harvey also feels that the thriving footballing sub-culture of the city of Sheffield and its surrounds should be allotted far more recognition for establishing the game in its early days. Let us say immediately that we concur with this latter view. However, there are many parts of Harvey's book, especially some of his ultimate conclusions, with which we think it is possible to take issue.

First, we would like to comment on Harvey's misleading title. It is unclear which 100 years the book covers. Could it be from 1314 – when football was banned by the Lord Mayor of London in the name of Edward II – to 1414, or perhaps from 1845 – when the first printed Rugby School rules were issued – to 1945? More likely, Harvey meant from 1750–1850, the years from which he drew much of his original data. However, there is so much more in the text which relates to the period following 1850 that it appears that Harvey thought of a working title and then extended the scope of the book. His title, although misleading, is ultimately revealing, as it seems to us to indicate that the author's original intention was to concern himself with this period only and not to attempt to tread into relatively unfamiliar and sometimes empirically unsupported territory after 1850.

Harvey is convinced that the role of the major public schools in the development of the modern Association form of football should not be accorded the prestige it has been allotted in the past. In this he may be partially correct, though he places himself on less secure ground when he suggests that 'an organised football culture would have emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century even if there had been no public school model' (Harvey, 1999: 93). Such a presumption can hardly be substantiated. However, as his book progresses, he strangely continues to credit the former pupils of the major public schools with diffusing and influencing the game's growth. There are several examples of this. The following clubs are said by Harvey to have been influenced by former public schoolboys: Liverpool by Old Rugbeians (*ibid.*: 61); Forest (*ibid.*: 73), Turton (*ibid.*: 173) and Bolton (*ibid.*: 207) by Old Harrovians. There are also further public school connections which Harvey

tends to ignore. The influence of Charles Alcock, an Old Harrovian – he is referred to by Keith Booth as 'The Father of Modern Sport' (2002) – at the early Football Association (FA) is especially noteworthy. Finally, the FA based the second set of laws that its originators developed on the 1863 Cambridge rules, a code which was framed by former public schoolboys who were largely influenced by Old Etonians. Harvey almost concedes defeat of his own hypothesis when he states that the Association variety of the game was represented by 'the codes used by the public schools such as Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Westminster and Winchester' (*ibid*: 155); and that '[t]he public schools were extremely important nuclei for teams' (*ibid*.:127).

Despite certain demonstrable inaccuracies in his accounts, what one might call 'the football history community' has Adrian Harvey to thank not only for challenging the received wisdom of football's early history, but also for reinvigorating a somewhat stifled debate. However, the problem with supporting Harvey is that his findings, whilst irrefutable, are still somewhat sparse. The truth is that in documenting the number of football games played outside a public school context between the years 1815–52, Harvey only mentions 28 matches over a 37-year period – less than one match per year – and notes later in relation to these fixtures that it is 'important not to exaggerate the extent of our findings' (2005: 91).

That Goulstone and Harvey present certain irrefutable pieces of evidence is beyond dispute. However the data, when closely examined, are in fact incredibly slim (See Table 7.1, Table 7.2 and Table 7.3), and it remains a moot point whether or not the people involved had any notable effect on football's development outside their particular localities. A further word of caution is necessary, we think, in this context. A substantial number of matches – 23 in all – were announced as challenges in the press of the day, though no further proof exists to confirm that they actually took place (See Table 7.1, Table 7.2 and Table 7.3). Further to this, we shall also vigorously argue that the conclusions which each of these writers draw are ultimately overstated and misleading.

There can be no doubt that the original evidence which has been produced and offered for examination by Goulstone and Harvey is more than valuable, perhaps even ground-breaking. Goulstone presents enough evidence to substantiate thoroughly that some sort of footballing sub-culture existed outside the public schools in England before 1860. This evidence, we think, can be divided into three categories. First, he clearly establishes that, in this period, matches between sides of equal numbers were being played in the wider community. Second, he proves that matches were taking place that involved, unlike 'folk' football, more skilful and less brutish playing practices and techniques. And last, he shows that a number of clubs were formed at that time specifically for the sole purpose of playing a game called 'football'. However, it is pertinent to note that at least eight of Goulstone's matches took place on festival dates (See Table 7.1) – Shrove Tuesday, Christmas Day and Easter Monday – which may well suggest that they had some connection to

Table 7.2 Matches and challenges noted by Adrian Harvey (2005)
Matches

Page	*Date played*	*Teams / Location*	*Reference/Date*
56	12 June 1815	Ranworth, Norfolk	*The Sporting Magazine* (June 1815)
56	August 1822	Ranworth, Norfolk	*The Sporting Magazine* (November 1831)
56	1831	Norfolk v. Blofield	*The Sporting Magazine* (November 1831)
57	To Easter 1820	Bury Championships	B. Barton, *History of the Borough of Bury* (1874)
57	Early nineteenth century	Howarth	Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Bronte* (1857)
57	January 1816	Penningham v. Minnigaff, Newton Stewart	*The Sporting Magazine* (February 1816)
57	1825	Festival – Huntingdonshire	*Sporting and Fancy Gazette'* (July 1825)
57	1826	Cobham *	*Bell's Life* (19 February 1826)
59	1834	Harvest Home Festival, Ingestre, Staffs *	*Bell's Life* (7 September 1834)
59	1834	Windsor rural sports	*Bell's Life* (28 August 1834)
59	1842	Windsor rural sports *	*Bell's Life* (28 August 1842)
59	1838	Richmond; frozen Thames – ice fair? *	*Bell's Life* (28 January 1838)
59	1841	North Tweed v. South Tweed	*Bell's Life* (22 August 1841)
59	1849	Dundee sports	*Bell's Life* (14 January 1849)
67	**Shrove 1849**	**Willington v. Egginton [£2] ***	***Bell's Life* (4 March 1849)**
72	1839	Two public houses, Dudley *	*Bell's Life* (31 March 1839)
77	1848	Holmfirth [£5]	S. Chadwick, *The Claret and Gold* (1945)
77	17 April 1843	Flecknoe v. Grandborough [£3 a side] *	*Bell's Life* (7 May 1843)
77	**Shrove 1852**	**Blaby Youth v. Wigston Youth [£5 a side] ***	***Bell's Life* (29 February 1852)**
77	1851	Edinburgh *	*Bell's Life* (9 March 1851)
79	1846	Ashton under Lyne *	*Bell's Life* (20 December 1846)
80	1851	Edinburgh University v. 53rd Highlanders	*Bell's Life* (9 March 1851)
80	**Christmas Day 1841**	**Fearnoughts v. Body Guards, Rochdale**	***Bell's Life* (2 January 1842)**

Table 7.2 (*cont.*)

Page	*Date played*	*Teams / Location*	*Reference/Date*
81	1842	Bickenhill v. Hampton in Arden *	*Bell's Life* (13 November 1842)
81	?	Norfolk	*The Sporting Magazine* (June 1815)
83	1851	Edinburgh University v. 93rd Highlanders *	*Bell's Life* (2 February 1851)
84	1820	Irishmen, London	W. Hone, *The Everyday Book* (1827)
85	1851	English v. Scottish Students, Edinburgh University *	*Bell's Life* (9 March 1851)

Challenges – No evidence is provided to confirm that the matches actually took place

Page	*Date of challenge*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference/Date*
75	1852	Holmfirth v. Enderby, Sheffield [£20 a side] *	*Bell's Life* (28 March 1852)
76	1841	Bolton v. Rifle Regiment [£10 a side] *	*Bell's Life* (5 December 1841)

Notes:

Games in bold indicate probable holiday match reminiscent of 'folk' football, as distinct from a separate, organised footballing sub-culture.

Square brackets indicate prize at stake.

Matches marked with an asterisk (*) are also mentioned by Goulstone (2001). There are 15 of them and as replications they fail to represent new data.

Harvey's findings refer to 28 matches. They span the period 1815–52, that is 37 years – fewer than one match per year.

The data still note three matches involving university teams playing in educational settings. Again, not a 'new' sub-culture.

'folk' football and hardly followed the profile of representing a vibrant and previously undiscovered footballing sub-culture which some might describe as a 'secret history'.

In terms of the formation of early clubs, we think it is significant that, like Harvey, Goulstone should emphasise the codified rules of Surrey Football Club. These support their broader argument regarding the early organisation of football outside the public schools, but, as Goulstone himself admits in the text, 'three of the six sections covered club regulations rather than actual laws of the game' (Goulstone, 2001: 40). Furthermore, Goulstone rather unintentionally hinders any positive hypothesis from the Surrey FC data when he comments that 'their rules were merely designed for "internal" matches

between the members' (Goulstone, 2001: 40). This may be one of the difficulties with Goulstone's and Harvey's data – it has a limited amount of relevance beyond its specific area, which, interestingly, was listed as the fifteenth of Eric Dunning and Ken Sheard's structural properties of 'folk' games when they noted that such activities consist of 'locally meaningful contests only' (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 34; 2005: 31). It is of substantially less importance when compared to the football played, and the influence exerted, by the boys who had attended the major public schools and the undergraduates – particularly of Cambridge and to a lesser extent Oxford University. Additionally, is it not true that two of the world's major football codes take their names from a public school in Warwickshire, England? We are referring, of course, to Rugby Union and Rugby League.

Peter Swain

In December 2008 Peter Swain produced an article supporting the idea of working class influence on the development of football in the journal *Sport in History*. Swain's contribution is almost a carbon copy of Adrian Harvey's and John Goulstone's, though, in Swain's case, the supporting data are particularly sparse.

Only the matches in Table 7.3 are used as evidence of what Swain calls an 'endemic' (Swain, 2008: 568) footballing sub-culture in East Lancashire. The author repeats Goulstone's and Harvey's mistake of citing newspaper reports of challenges for matches for which no evidence that they actually took place is provided.

Swain (2008: 570) also claims: 'This then suggests the existence of a localised cultural practice in Lancashire which, continuing into the 1880s, at the very least counterbalances and probably outweighs the influence of the public school educated gentleman amateur.' We might agree with this statement on a local scale – though even that is problematic because of the meagre evidence – but we could not concur with this view when expressed in national terms. Swain is probably correct to observe that it may have been the mass, disorganised football matches which were under attack in mid-to-late Victorian England, rather than the more structured forms which revolved around public houses and wagering and, of course, public schools and universities.

As added criticism of the revisionist cause, Rob Lewis (2010) takes Swain to task in a number of ways. Whilst Lewis's main focus is the suggestion by Swain of a link between the public house-based form of football and the professionalisation of the game in East Lancashire, he also appears sceptical regarding revisionist evidence in general. He describes Swain's 'endemic' football sub-culture as simply 'ad hoc [sic] arrangements by a publican seeking to increase his takings by instigating a "pub football" match with some scanty organisation', and likens these matches to 'pig races, greasy pole climbing or ploughmen wrestling for a new smock' (Lewis, 2010: 477). We would concur wholeheartedly with Lewis when he adds that 'Swain's attempt to ally himself

Table 7.3 Matches and challenges noted by Peter Swain (2008)
Matches

Page	*Date played*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference/Date*
567–8	**Collop Monday[a] 1830**	**Darwen v. Tottington; Edgworth [£2.50 a side]**	***Darwen News***
567–8	1830	Darwen v. Tottington; Turton [£5 a side]	*Darwen News* (9 March 1878)

Challenges – No evidence is provided to confirm that the matches actually took place

Page	*Date of challenge*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference/Date*
569	1841	Boltonians v. Rifle Regiment [£10 a side] **	Goulstone, 2001
570	1841	Blackburn *	Goulstone, 2001
570	1844	Thurlstone v. Bolton [£5–£50] *	Goulstone, 2001

Notes:
[a] The day before Shrove Tuesday when collops and eggs were eaten. A 'collop' was a slice of meat.
Matches marked with an asterisk (*) are also mentioned by Goulstone (2001) and as such do not represent new evidence.
Match marked with a double asterisk (**) is also mentioned by Goulstone (2001) and Harvey (2005) and as such does not represent new evidence.
Bold indicates holiday game.
Square brackets indicate prize at stake.

with Harvey and Goulstone as a revisionist football historian rests on very shaky foundations' (Lewis, 2010: 486).

Additional contributions to the 'origins of football debate'

Research and writing on the origins of football has never been more lively or productive. Several new contributors have joined the debate and original areas are being opened up in each article. Consequently we feel bound to continue the discussion in these pages and have attempted to reply to each one in turn. Let us begin with Gavin Kitching's offering.

The Kitching article (2011)

We would like to begin by considering Gavin Kitching's article in *The International Journal of the History of Sport* which, though at times full of suppositions – one paragraph contains three 'ifs', for example, whilst another

features four 'perhapses' – has not only attempted a summation of the origins of football debate but also tried to suggest alternative avenues of research. On a positive note, we would agree with Kitching on several points:

(1) The origins of the game are complex. Figurational sociologists would describe them as being 'men-made' rather than 'man-made' to accentuate the intricate interdependency chains created by many human beings.
(2) A family of games termed 'football' or 'foot-ball' had existed in Britain and Ireland for centuries. However, we would date the extant evidence for their initial appearance as being 1314.
(3) A footballing sub-culture of pub-related matches and challenges heavily influenced by wagering existed in Victorian Britain outside public school settings.
(4) Goulstone's and Harvey's data are sparse.
(5) Public school football matches were an amalgam of existing forms brought from the boys' home environments and codified for organisational or disciplinary reasons, and that status rivalry at first existed principally – but not solely – between the institutions of Eton and Rugby.

It is difficult, however, not to form an impression of negativity with regard to Kitching's writing, as the author notes too often the problems of research in the mid-Victorian era and almost admits defeat as he bemoans the difficulties involved in finding much new information regarding the past, only 'lapsing' into positivity in his last paragraph. Had researchers adopted this approach decades ago Eric Dunning would not have unearthed the 1845 Rugby School rules, Graham Curry would never have rediscovered the 1847 Eton Field Games rules, and Goulstone and Harvey would not have located the data they have collected from *Bell's Life*. Surely academics have a responsibility to encourage the next generation of researchers rather than deter them?

Kitching, Visiting Professor at the International Centre for Sports History and Culture at De Montfort University, Leicester – an institution of academics with sympathy for the Goulstone/Harvey hypothesis – places great stress on the need for further research to centre on forms of play as opposed to concentrating on additional analyses of the various sets of rules. Rules appear relatively unimportant to Kitching, but his dismissal of them fails to take into account the fact that the young men involved would have been bound by crucial generalities such as, for instance, adhering to a virtual kicking form of the game as expressed in challenges in the press for games of 'foot ball' not 'hand ball' (*Bell's Life*, 2 February 1845, in Goulstone, 2000: 138). Furthermore, it would seem fair to suggest that the variant of football we recognise today as 'Association Football' only began to resemble the modern form when something akin to the present offside law – a compromise between strict offside in a Rugby sense and the total absence of offside in Australian Rules – was adopted in 1867. Replacing the stringent offside law with one ruling that three defenders between the attacker and the goal line – it was, of course, to be

reduced to two – immediately allowed the possibility of making a forward pass. No doubt, patterns of play did not change overnight, but the opportunity for change was created and participants, responding to this especially important rule, developed the game accordingly.

Kitching also fails to appreciate that the two forms of football were diverging but had not split completely by the 1850s and early 1860s, and that the study of rules is just one aspect – as is forms of play – of the complexity of the debate. Indeed, any rules analysis tends to show the extent of the civilising processes taking place at that time as well as almost providing a window into men's minds. Without deliberately polarising the positions of the sociologist and the historian, each would seek different types of evidence which the other may regard as not being centrally relevant. The rules which governed human behaviour within a particular context – in our case, the football figuration – and the people involved in forming and maintaining the governing bodies which upheld those rules, for instance the Football Association, could be described as a normal area of study for the sociologist. The reader should note that we have deliberately stressed the involvement of human beings in this process and not allowed the rules themselves, as if they had an existence all of their own, to appear reified. We would also wish to note at this point that it is not our intention to search for the exact origin or origins of football. However, what we have attempted is to create a realisation that the game developed over a lengthy period of time, perhaps beginning with its first extant mention in 1314 (Marples, 1954: 24), and is still developing. Our own particular story ends in 1885 with the acceptance of professionalism by the FA, but, in the interim, the game underwent many changes which, as students of Elias, we would term a long term, sociological process.

In what might be described as an unfortunate but extensive diminishing of the revisionist case, Kitching (2011, note 24: 1748) writes as follows:

> despite his strenuous efforts, Adrian Harvey is not, in the end, able to overturn the older view that football was an overwhelmingly middle-class, or even upper-middle-class sport, at least up until the 1880s. Indeed, he effectively admits this….This does not mean that all, or even most, early soccer and rugby players were ex-public schoolboys, but it does mean, I think, that the public school codes played an important part, albeit alongside other more 'informal' and localised influences, on both the Sheffield Association [Kitching is probably referring to the Sheffield FC codification of 1858. The Sheffield FA was not formed until 1867] and FA codifications. And they did so because, even when club officials and players were not themselves public-school boys, they knew people who were, and heard of the public-school codes through these elite social contacts. This aspect of the 'traditional' history of football, then, emerges largely unscathed from the revisionist critique. It is possible that, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, football was a predominantly plebeian game (a 'peoples [sic] game') in which public-school boys were just

occasional minority participants. But to date I do not think that either Harvey or Goulstone have established this unambiguously.

Gavin Kitching is a relative newcomer to the origins debate, though he has written briefly on the Alnwick Shrovetide match and early football in the north east of England. However, this inexperience has led to unfortunate errors and we take issue with him in several areas:

(1) Kitching's references reveal a lack of wider reading and, perhaps, understanding. Only noting a single article by Eric Dunning as being representative of the views of the advocates of the public school case is woefully inadequate. It would seem reasonable to have at least acknowledged the existence and confirmed his reading of the classic text, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players* (1979; 2005) by Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard. This lack of recognition, together with the extensive use of revisionist literature – out of 17 book or journal references in Kitching's text, six broadly support Goulstone's and Harvey's hypothesis, whilst Dunning's lone contribution puts the case for the public schools – is largely disappointing and points to unbalanced scholarship. The omissions of Morris Marples's, *History of Football* and Percy Young's, *Football in Sheffield* are also difficult to comprehend. If this is the result of the 'house style' of the journal, then an attempt should have been made to override the editor's insistence on this particular form of referencing, or it should have been clearly stated by the author to prevent criticism of a lack of wider reading.
(2) Despite Kitching's presumed familiarity with Alnwick and its 'straight ahead' style of play, he appears unfamiliar with Ashbourne football's 'runners', who wait outside the main seething mass in order to collect the ball and evasively – not 'straight ahead' – make towards their particular goal (Hornby, 2008: 78).
(3) The author needs to be clear about rules on handling in all football varieties. The Eton Field Game allowed players to stop the ball with their hands in the mid-nineteenth century, whilst, even today, Association Football retains such instances in the case of goalkeepers and for throw-ins. It would be more appropriate to refer to most Victorian football forms as *minimal*-handling, with a *virtual* taboo on the use of hands.
(4) Kitching is also incorrect to state that the football played in the Sheffield area in the early 1860s was of the 'Association' variety. Not only is this untrue, it would surely be anachronistic to talk of Association Football as existing before the initial meetings of the FA in the autumn of 1863. In any case, Sheffield possessed its own unique set of rules until 1877.
(5) Kitching's narrow knowledge base in this area leads to several avoidable factual errors. The Sheffield suburb of 'Stumperlowe' was spelt with an 'e' at the end in 1860 and remains the same in 2014. Kitching (2011: 1737, 1743) omits the 'e' and this appears to be a direct consequence

of failing to check present-day primary sources and repeating Adrian Harvey's original mistake in *Football: The First Hundred Years* (pp. 102, 103). Additionally, the author is under the illusion that the 1858 Sheffield football rules were issued by the Sheffield FA, which would have been difficult since this body was only formed in 1867 (Kitching, 2011: 1736, 1737, 1738, 1742). This is important because, if nothing else, it shows the hegemony of Sheffield FC, the actual issuers, in football-related matters in the city. Unfortunately, he commits a straightforward reading and copying blunder by noting Magoun's example of a football game at 'Couston', near Newark, Nottinghamshire. This should, of course, be 'Caunton' (Kitching, 2011: note 11). And, last, we are unable to find reference to endnotes 28, 29 and 30.

(6) Finally, the old chestnut of accusing figurational sociologists of putting forward teleological arguments of linear progress and reading the present into the past is dragged up again. Whilst we accept that other forms of football could have become predominant and that they are worthy of study, what is surely more interesting is why the Association and Rugby varieties were ultimately successful. After all, this and other examples are surely undisputed historical facts.

Kitching betrays the dismay in the pro-Goulstone/Harvey camp, and not only accepts the sparse nature of their data but also highlights other weaknesses in their efforts to rewrite the history of football. What probably began as a further attempt to support the revisionist cause has ultimately proved to be its undoing. We feel, accordingly, fully justified in our protracted quest to maintain the primacy of the public school influence on the game, which appears to have yielded a significant recent softening in the stance of the revisionists.

Further revisionist offerings (Harvey and Swain)

In 2013 Adrian Harvey compiled a historiography of football's development in nineteenth century England. Predictably, it diverged significantly from one that we might have produced and, accordingly, we propose to produce an alternative in this text. However, at this point we feel bound to offer our comments on the article in general.

In his article, Harvey (2013) demonstrates that he fails to understand the figurational standpoint, and the writings of Norbert Elias in particular. Had Harvey at any point in the last decade even briefly consulted any appropriate texts he may have begun to appreciate that figurational sociologists prefer to promote a multifaceted chain of interdependencies by which societies function, and support the view that human processes are men-made rather than man-made. Therefore we are perfectly comfortable with the fact that football's development was the result of influences from many varied sources, some of which – the public schools and Cambridge University – were more

important than others. Admittedly, there is a general acceptance that Eric Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis' – the belief that competition between the public schools of Eton and Rugby in the middle years of the nineteenth century was expressed, in this and other ways, through the issuing of diametrically opposed football rules – does not, in terms of hard evidence, provide a 'smoking gun' that unquestionably establishes its primacy in this area. It does, however, form a substantial basis for the study of football's development in the public schools and the universities before the founding of the Football Association in 1863.

One reason why we are beginning to feel increasingly uneasy regarding participation in the debate is our increasing lack of confidence in Adrian Harvey's scholarship. He continues to make even the most basic of mistakes, which appear to have bedevilled him as early as the publication of *Football: The First Hundred Years. The Untold Story* (2005: 220), in which he commits the schoolboy error of naming Accrington Stanley and not Accrington FC as founder members of the Football League in 1888. However, he utterly compounds this with a simple reading and copying inaccuracy in his 'historiography' when he claims that Curry and Dunning believe that mob football died out as part of an increase in 'civilising spirit'. This latter phrase should, of course, be 'civilising *spurt'* – an advance in people's 'threshold of repugnance' with regard to engaging in and witnessing violent acts (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 40; 2005: 35). Harvey's article generally gives the impression of being an indulgence of his own work, even to the detriment of fellow revisionists Goulstone and Swain, and concentrates quite markedly on his own misfortune in terms of the failed publication of one of his articles by J. A. Mangan. That Harvey should entrust himself with the compilation and analysis of what one might term a 'history of the history of football' is, in itself, quite remarkable, since he finds it almost impossible to disguise his own prejudices and unashamedly promotes his own hypothesis. Matthew Taylor's (2008: 20–31) summing up of the origins debate is far more readable and well balanced.

We repeat that Harvey's data remain incredibly thin and the discovery of 28 matches in 37 years is not even worthy of recognition as a noticeable trend. The possible numbers involved are dismissed by Harvey as being 'anyone's guess' which hardly inspires confidence in his ability to present a robust empirical approach to the interpretation of data. That so many of those matches were, in fact, only challenges which did not necessarily take place, weakens his case further and is churlishly excused by Harvey – who sees no reason for assuming that they were aborted. Rather than wild speculation, fellow academics would prefer to see hard evidence of their existence. It is difficult not to view Harvey's posturing as a misguided attempt to seek to build some sort of legacy for his ideas in terms of the football origins debate in which the revisionists not only distort the facts but also the final analysis.

Finally, Peter Swain's most recent offering (*Sport in History*, 2014 online), whilst detailing a number of instances of the playing of football in the early nineteenth century, commits the usual revisionist errors. The data are again

Table 7.4 Matches noted by Peter Swain (2014)

Page	*Date played*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference*
Small scale 'kickabouts'			
7	1818	Fourteen boys (Blackburn)	*Lancashire Gazette*
8	1812	Seventeen young men (Brigg)	*Hull Advertiser*
8	1824	One man (Derby)	*Derby Mercury*
9	1824	'People' (Worcestershire)	*York Herald*
10	1824	Thirteen boys (Charlton Kings)	*Hampshire Telegraph*
13	1832	A set of 'fellows'	*The Examiner*
14	1833	'Some boys' (Manchester)	*Blackburn Gazette*
15	1834	Farm workers (Ingestre, Staffordshire) **	*The Standard*
15	1835	Two boys (Huddersfield)	*York Herald*
15–16	1836	Game at Kirton Lindsey (Lincolnshire)	*Sheffield Independent*
16	1838	Games on frozen River Severn	*Worcester Journal*
16–17	1838	'Lads' (Bradford)	*Bradford Observer*
Large scale 'kickabouts'			
10	1828	92nd Regiment (Edinburgh)	*Bell's Life*
10	1826	89th Regiment (Dover)	*Morning Chronicle*
10	1828	Army (Exeter)	*Plymouth Advertiser*
10	1826	Irish labourers (Edinburgh)	*Caledonian Mercury*
11	1829	Group of young gentlemen [A 'dozen of wine']	*Macclesfield Courier*
13	1831	50–100 persons	*Preston Chronicle*
14	1832	89th Regiment (Davenport)	*Morning Post*
19	1840	Irishmen	*Morning Chronicle*
19	1840	12–13 persons (London)	*Morning Chronicle*
Sports events			
8	1821	King's coronation sports (Brighton)	*Morning Post*
8	1821	King's coronation sports (Woolwich)	*Morning Chronicle*
13	1832	Easter Monday sports (Brighton)	*The Morning Post*
16	1837	Earl of Dartmouth's sports	*Ipswich Journal*
16	1838	Queen's coronation sports (Lincoln)	*Morning Post*
16	1838	School opening (Hertfordshire)	*The Standard*
17	1839	Windsor sports	*Oxford Observer*

Table 7.4 (*cont.*)

Page	*Date played*	*Teams/Location*	*Reference*
Shrovetide/Mob/ Folk			
8	1823	Derby Shrovetide football	*Derby Mercury*
10–11	1828	Alnwick Shrovetide football	*Newcastle Courant*
11	1828	Workington Easter football	*Lancashire Gazette*
16	1838	Morpeth Shrovetide football	*Northern Liberator*
17–19	1840	Richmond Shrovetide football	*The Standard*
17–19	1840	Kingston Shrovetide football	*The Standard*
17–19	1840	Twickenham Shrovetide football	*The Standard*
Elements of organisation/ standardisation			
7	1819	Warkworth v. Acklington (8-a-side)	*Newcastle Courant*
11	1828	Wigston v. Blaby (15-a-side) [£6 prize money]	*Leicester Chronicle*
12	1830	Horbling v Swaton (Lincolnshire) Shrovetide football	*Bell's Life*
12	*Collop Monday* 1830	Darwen v. Tottington * At Edgworth [£2.50 a side]	*Darwen News*
12	1830	Darwen v. Tottington * At Turton	*Darwen News*
17	1840	Lane Ends v. Pickup Bank (20-a-side) [£1 a side]	*Blackburn Standard*

Notes:

Matches marked with an asterisk (*) have already been mentioned by Swain (2008) and as such do not represent new evidence.

Matches marked with a double asterisk (**) have already been mentioned by Goulstone (2001) and Harvey (2005) and as such do not represent new evidence.

fairly slim, with 36 matches being identified over the period 1818–40, fewer than two per year. Those mentioned include 12 small scale 'kickabouts', many of which were for breaking the law by playing football on the Sabbath; nine are large scale 'kickabouts' with large numbers of participants; seven are part of general sports festivals; seven are 'mob' or 'folk' games played on the likes of Shrove Tuesday and Easter Monday; whilst four show elements of organisation and standardisation, representing the pub-related matches based

around gambling. Unfortunately, two of the matches contained in the article have already been mentioned by Swain in a previous text (2008), while one has appeared in both Goulstone's and Harvey's investigations. As such, neither of these two represent new evidence. The 'kickabouts', in particular, appear to offer the flimsiest of evidence for the existence of a vibrant footballing subculture or even a 'secret history'. In contrast, public school 'kickabouts' were taking place every day, together with inter-house matches plus artificially organised teams such as 'First half of the Alphabet' v. 'Second half of the Alphabet' which were being played every week.[9] The sheer volume of organised football taking place in these institutions was, by comparison, enormous. Furthermore, Swain fails to aid his argument by rather hopefully relying on supposition as he wishes fervently that his evidence is the 'tip of an iceberg', and that there remain many more as yet undiscovered matches hidden away in newspapers that are now transformed by their appearance 'online'. One might wonder at the possible existence of such games, but, we repeat, the academic community surely prefers verified confirmation of their presence.

To sum up, let us list what *we* believe are the facts:

(1) The modern form of the game of football (Association Football) developed from the matrix of 'folk' and public house-related games that existed in England before the beginning of the nineteenth century.
(2) These games were diffused into the public schools and were regulated there, primarily by the boys.
(3) At Cambridge University in particular, former public schoolboys further codified football as a result of the need for a compromise between players who, although they preferred their own school's form, realised the need for concessions in order to facilitate maximum involvement.
(4) As the game spread to the wider society it was subject to a plethora of influences – former public schoolboys, ex-university students, urban sporting elites and proponents of local variants of the game.

Interestingly, in a recent article on early Manchester football, Gary James and Dave Day have suggested that 'a single paradigm can never explain its [football's] creation and development and that the search for an overarching explanation is ill advised' (James and Day, 2014: 66). To a large extent we would agree with them and support a multifaceted approach which, in figurational terms, stresses the influence of a whole variety of interdependencies. Additionally, Paul Joannou and Alan Candlish (2009) strongly champion the influence of former public schoolboys on the development of football in the north east of England. They cite the three most important factors in the popularising of the game in that region as being: first, diffusion from Sheffield; second, cricket clubs using football as a winter activity; and '[t]hirdly, and probably the biggest influence, was from the old boys of the country's public schools and universities' (Joannou and Candlish, 2009: 38). However, what appears to be happening following the publication of what

one can only call a flood of texts on the 'football origins debate' is that each local study – Sheffield, Newcastle or Manchester – does, ultimately, appear to reach diverse conclusions. The evidence emanating from Sheffield, we feel, is of most interest. Whereas the influence of former public schoolboys in the early stages of club development is clear in Newcastle and Manchester, the power of a significant local sporting elite in Sheffield was considerable. However, it is surely the job of the researcher to tease out trends, and despite, or perhaps because of, some excellent local studies our own conclusion would be that, especially in the decade of the 1860s, public school expertise in club formation was apparent in the vast majority of instances. In order to formulate these opinions we would like to believe, in true Eliasian tradition, that we have taken the required 'detour by detachment' and followed some fairly conclusive evidence.

However, and this remains the crux of the debate, ex-public schoolboys were far more influential in the debates and eventual outcomes which led to the continuing development of football into a modern sport. Goulstone, Harvey and Swain have been guilty of skewing the debate by presenting meagre evidence, and are in danger of leaving an inaccurate reflection of events concerning the early stages of football's story. Others have been initially compliant and offered either little criticism or unprecedented support for an undeserving hypothesis. This gushing phase of acquiescence does, however, appear to be coming to an end. Dave Russell, writing as recently as 2013, places further doubt on revisionist claims when he notes, 'the case made for these games fails fully to convince' and that 'their number, geographical spread and levels of activity are likely to have been modest' (2013: 14–15). Even such an arch-revisionist as Roy Hay (2014: 1048) admits that '[o]nly the public schools preserved and nurtured the game before releasing a more civilised version on another generation. Despite the careful empirical work of Adrian Harvey, this remains the powerful underlying view of the trajectory of football in the metropolitan centre'. Indeed, without the discovery of a whole ream of explicit data supporting the existence of a widespread football sub-culture outside the public schools, together with unambiguous proof that participants in these matches were prominent in the ensuing debates, the revisionist case appears to be hanging by a thread. The credibility of their hypothesis is largely in shreds and the game appears to be well and truly up.

Conclusion: a new proposal

It is not our intention in this chapter to position ourselves as apologists for the public schoolboy influence on the development of modern football. Nor do we seek to be propagandists for the working class. Rather, led by the facts, as Elias proposes, detachment and objectivity are extremely important if one wishes to present and weigh the available evidence in a passionately contested area such as this. Preconceived ideas must be placed to one side and it seems vital to test the facts rather than feel bound to prove or disprove a hypothesis.

It is our belief that it may be possible to suggest a 'third way'; that is, a subtly changed proposition. Let us try to illustrate what we mean.

Most historians, sociologists and other social scientists concerned with this area of study are in agreement that the story of football's beginnings remains complex and not fully understood. Accordingly, it seems to us reasonable to contend that the extant evidence indicates that the game as it developed in the public schools was concurrently evolving in the wider society – both varieties being relatively well organised and, to a large extent, thriving. It may be, however, that the more boisterous forms of the game generally played on festival days were beginning to become marginalised. This would explain why such nineteenth century observers as Joseph Strutt, John Cartwright, William Hone and others were describing a clear cultural marginalisation of 'folk' football. Strutt wrote in 1801 that football was in decline, Cartwright (1864: 247) felt that excessive violence had contributed to a reduction in the game, whilst Tony Money (2000: 3) claimed that only in Yorkshire was football still being played with any regularity. These comments, which we have enlarged upon in Chapter 1, are interesting and may help us to understand, for instance, why the club game effectively began in Sheffield. More specifically, the activities of the footballers in the villages around Penistone and Thurlstone, some 15 miles north west of Sheffield, arguably provide an important clue to the origins of the city's playing preferences and early rules. John Goulstone, in *Football's Secret History*, notes a good deal of football-related activity around that area. He mentions a William Marsh as an organiser of a match in 1844 which had links to the Horns Tavern in Penistone. Interestingly, the *Sheffield Trades Directory* of 1852 listed the inn as being in the charge of Abel Marsh, whilst John Marsh, also from the village, was Sheffield Wednesday's first captain and led the Sheffield FA representative side on many occasions in the early 1870s (Neill and Curry, 2008). A later reference notes a group of Thurlstone men as issuing a challenge for a match in which they were insistent that they would only play 'a game of foot-ball and not hand-ball' – which may further explain why Sheffield became so enamoured with an embryo Association form of the game. Adrian Harvey (2005: 60) observes the existence of 19 teams in the county of Yorkshire during the 1840s and 1850s, ten of which – Thurlstone, Thurstonland, Denby, Hoylandswaine, Thurlstone Upper End, Holmfirth, Totties, Foolstone (probably now known as Fulstone), Penistone and Hepworth – were within relatively few miles of each other to the north west of Sheffield. It is, therefore, crucial to note that the explosion of participation in football from the 1870s onwards, engendered by the issuing of national and local rules, might only have occurred because the game itself was already deeply embedded in the social lives of the people of the United Kingdom. Indeed, this may help to explain why the game initially thrived in such places as Sheffield and East Lancashire, where the 'folk' tradition was more profoundly ingrained than in other areas. Some of the men of Thurlstone and Penistone would almost certainly have had a direct influence on rules-related discussions in nearby Sheffield, though it is unlikely that they

would have been as influential as, for instance, the high status ex-pupils of the city's Collegiate School, one of whom was one of the co-founders of Sheffield Football Club: Nathaniel Creswick.

It is our belief that a process of cultural marginalisation of a number of variations of forms of 'folk' football was taking place in the middle years of the nineteenth century but that Strutt and others may have misrepresented the scope of the transformation. The 'folk' form of the game may have been dying out but the form discovered by Goulstone and Harvey continued to thrive. As Dunning and Sheard (1979: 40; 2005: 35) put it, the period 1780–1850, for example, 'formed a watershed, a stage of rapid transition in which there occurred a "civilising spurt", an advance in people's "threshold of repugnance" with regard to engaging in and witnessing violent acts'. Indeed, referring to East Anglian camp-ball, Morris Marples (1954: 106) noted that in the early part of the nineteenth century, 'there had been a tremendous match between Norfolk and Suffolk, in which nine men had lost their lives, and it may be that the scandal of this had turned public opinion against a game so manifestly dangerous'. It appears that the seeming decline of certain forms of football may well have been to some extent distorted in these accounts, but it is imperative to stress that those commenting that the game was played with less regularity than in previous times must have been basing their judgements on evidence of some sort (Dunning and Sheard, 1979: 40–1; 2005: 34–6).

Continuing to use the Sheffield football sub-culture as an example, it may well be acceptable for us to suggest that the development of the game in that context was influenced more by local elites – in the case of Sheffield, the local elite was represented by ex-pupils of Sheffield Collegiate School – and nearby 'folk' forms, than it was by major public schools. Indeed, 17 of the original 57 members of Sheffield FC had attended Sheffield Collegiate. Most importantly, this number included Nathaniel Creswick, who, as we noted earlier, was one of the co-founders of the club.[10] The form of football practised at Collegiate has been difficult to identify. However, it is, we think, probably indicative of their earlier preference for a kicking and dribbling way of playing that, as mentioned in *The Collegian* (the school magazine) of 1881, they were enthusiastically participating in the Association game as part of a full fixture list – with no mention of the Rugby form. As the sport blossomed in the wider society, the power and prestige of ex-public schoolboys generally subdued the pretensions of outsiders to influence proceedings; essentially what was provided was a platform for the development of the modern game. Quite simply, former public schoolboys influenced the development of the modern game on a national scale far more than local elites from the provinces or participants in 'folk' forms in Penistone or Thurlstone. The proponents of the latter pair were, indeed, part of 'the football figuration' – but they were by no means the most important part. Although the working class provided the bulk of participants, the administration of competitions and the development of national rules remained principally in the hands of former public schoolmen such as Charles Alcock, the Old Harrovian Secretary of the

FA, from 1870–95, during what were perhaps the salient years of the modern game's development. Representatives of local elites such as Charles and William Clegg and William Chesterman (Sheffield FC's Secretary in the early 1860s) could be said to have been next in line in terms of influence. Charles Clegg's eventual succession to the position of Chairman of the FA in 1890, and President of the same body in 1923, serves as an illustration of Sheffield's importance to football's development, though by these dates the direction of the game in England had largely been determined by the southern amateurs who had effectively come to control the FA.

The founders of Sheffield FC, together with a number of influential sporting individuals, were the first, and for some years at least, the most influential local elite in the country. Another interesting example lies 30 miles south of Sheffield, more particularly in Nottingham. We noted in an earlier chapter the formation of two prominent early clubs, Notts. County and Nottingham Forest, yet, although the social elite of Nottingham was relatively influential, it generally deferred to its Sheffield counterparts in matters of football, with the Nottinghamshire club in particular usually playing matches under Sheffield rules (Brown, 1996: 9).

The study of local sporting elites reminds us of the complexity of the development of football in England. The origins of the game were certainly influenced by local sporting elites, but the story of its growth was by no means identical in each provincial city or town. It seems sociologically reasonable to suggest that increasingly complex 'chains of interdependency' were operative in this connection, though subtly different in each area. Most such chains were based on indirect public school links, local grammar school connections, 'folk' form stimuli and, often, a mixture of two or even all three.

Meanwhile, in London, calls for a unified code had eventually led to a 'Meeting of the Captains' – what was to become the first meeting of the fledgling Football Association – on 26 October 1863 (FA minutes; Green, 1953: 19–21). Closer examination of the backgrounds of the delegates at the early meetings of the FA indicates that only two of the 14 men at that initial gathering had been educated at a major public school.[11] These were John Forster Alcock, a former pupil of Harrow School (his more famous brother, Charles Alcock, was not present at the first meeting) and Herbert Thomas Steward who had been a pupil at Westminster. Steward was a keen sportsman, but a more prominent rower than footballer. In the original minutes of the fifth meeting of the FA, the President, Alfred Pember, representing No Names, Kilburn, mentioned that he had not attended public school (Smart, 2003: Chapter 4), whilst Ebenezer Cobb (EC) Morley, the Honorary Secretary, representing the Barnes club, had also not received a public school education (FA minutes; Butler, 1991: X). Additionally, despite playing a Rugby-style game at school, the four attendees from two Blackheath schools – Shillingford and Gordon – were certainly not Old Rugbeians and as such attended as delegates on behalf of minor educational institutions (Rhind, 1985). We want to stress in this connection, though, that we are by no means suggesting that the FA and its rules

immediately found favour with Association Football players around the country. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that the body was regarded by both themselves and others as a collection of representatives of clubs in and around London. Consequently, they regularly challenged other associations to representative matches under the title of the London Football Association. The opening three meetings were unremarkable except, perhaps, for the fact that current representatives of the major public schools were reluctant to become involved. The fourth gathering set the scene for the ultimate split between the adherents of an embryo Association style and those favouring a more Rugby-based game, and, when this came at the fifth meeting of the FA, it was Charles Alcock, the Old Harrovian, supported by E.C. Morley and buoyed by the recent publication of the 1863 Cambridge University Old Etonian-influenced football rules, who led the attack on the Blackheath contingent (Green, 1953: 28). Alcock's high social status, together with the fact that the London Association was made up of representatives from the capital – the centre of government and finance and the largest metropolis in the kingdom – might help to explain why that particular social elite triumphed over the lower status Blackheath delegates and, eventually, those of provincial Sheffield.

The struggle to control football continued and, although men from Sheffield influenced many of the FA's early decisions it is necessary to accept that they also experienced early rejections by the national body. There was to be no surrendering of power by the London amateurs on that occasion to provincial pressure, and to men whom they regarded as their social inferiors. Charles Clegg's chastening experiences in the only international match he played – he later claimed that no one passed the ball or spoke to him – both surprised and angered him, but those events were merely part of the same overall process (Farnsworth, 1995: 51). Sheffield's eventual subjugation in 1877 to the rules and regulations of the London-based FA, whilst never inevitable, was, nonetheless, fairly predictable. However, many people in Sheffield viewed this coming together as a mere amalgamation and perhaps, initially at least, it was.[12] Even as late as 12 March 1877, a local newspaper claimed that the Sheffield Association 'never occupied as high a position in the estimation of football players than now', though the same article accepted the need for 'one general code throughout the country' (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 11 March 1877). At least one Sheffield newspaper was still referring in October 1878 to the FA Cup as the London Association Challenge Cup as old habits became hard to break (*Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 29 October 1878). As the FA grew in importance, and as it became clear that the game of Association Football was about to assume a rising social as well as more narrowly sporting significance, so the men in power at the FA used their positions and prestige to tighten their grip on the sport. They wished to maintain control of a game close to their hearts, a game which they had played or been involved in for most of their lives and an activity that they were anxious to protect from what they saw as the possible excesses of those whom they refused to consider as their social equals.

In many ways, the struggle for prominence of two competing social elites – in our case, those of metropolitan London and provincial Sheffield – mirrored the public school status rivalry identified by Eric Dunning five decades previously (Dunning, 1961) and the split between adherents to Association Football and Rugby at the fifth meeting of the FA. The London/Sheffield struggle could, indeed, be viewed as an ideological battle between ex-public schoolboys aided by other high status individuals in the capital, and former Collegiate School attendees together with others in the local sporting elite in the city of Sheffield. We accept that to some extent our suggestion that this was a case of the higher status group triumphing over one of middle standing appears slightly speculative. However, the fact remains that the London faction succeeded in imposing their dominance over, for instance, the Sheffield party. After all, the governing body of the English game still resides in the metropolis.

The story becomes even more complex when one consults Mangan and Hickey's meticulous, *Soccer's Missing Men: Schoolteachers and the Spread of Association Football* (2009). It might be described as a further challenge to the received view of football's diffusion and an addition to the work of Goulstone and Harvey as an attempt to minimise the influence of public schoolboys on the development of the game. It is, however, highly significant that Mangan and Hickey, like Harvey, so often mention the involvement of former public schoolboys or staff.[13] However, one still might be forgiven for believing that there is some sort of conspiracy in the 'football history community' to somehow discredit this group given the publication of such a plethora of articles and books extolling the virtues of other sections of society.

However, the most salient point that Mangan, Hickey, Goulstone and Harvey appear consistently to overlook is the concept of power. As we argue in other parts of this book, like all other interdependencies, the one between ex-public schoolboys and state school educated individuals is best conceptualised in terms of the balance of power between the parties involved. There is also the issue of timing. Unfortunately for the rest of mid-Victorian society, by 1880 – though it is almost impossible to be precise – the power structures of English football were already dominated by the former pupils of the public schools. The stone had been set, the die had been cast. The game had been codified, the FA was recognised as the national governing body, and the final independence-minded provincial association – Sheffield – had, by 1877, effectively accepted the hegemony of London. Tellingly, Mangan and Hickey barely mention any elementary schoolteacher involvement prior to 1880, so where, before this date, were their representatives in the corridors of power?[14] The FA officers and committee of 1872 consisted of 19 individuals. Seven were former major public schoolboys, nine were southern amateurs and three were representatives from the provinces. The crucial positions of Treasurer and Honorary Secretary were both held by the Old Harrovian C. W. Alcock (Green, 1953: 84). By 1879, the President and Treasurer were Old Etonians and the Honorary Secretary was an Old Harrovian, a situation that bears an uncanny resemblance to the British government of 2014 (Green: 1953: 86).

The other southern amateurs, secure in their high status and comfortable that they controlled the reins of power both in football and in the wider society, could even afford to sanction the legalisation of professionalism in the game in July 1885, whilst still retaining control of the legislative body.

The work of the revisionists has not, in our opinion, been convincing enough to create a substantial shift in the history of football. Despite providing greater depth and breadth to the story, they have neglected the concept of power in their rush to stress middle and working class involvement. Green, Marples and Young were not selecting their arguments merely on the basis of class, but rather, as we hope we are doing, following the evidence and, in figurational terms, taking what Elias called a 'detour by detachment'. They focused on the powerful but, more importantly, on the power of those whom one might call 'influential'. The thoughts of the likes of Green, Marples and Young have, over time, been found to be consumed by errors, inaccuracies and exclusions,[15] but they were merely writing with reference to the extant data and drew their conclusions from those. No one could possibly deny the existence of football outside the public schools – but, we repeat, the influence of the participants in those forms was, in relative terms, minimal.

The story of football's development remains multifaceted – it would be referred to by Elias and other figurational sociologists as 'men-made' rather than 'man-made'. Many were, indeed, part of this figuration, but some were more important than others. Accordingly, it continues to be our contention that public schoolboys, mainly Old Etonians and undergraduates at Cambridge University – especially those at Trinity College – exerted considerably more influence on modern football's early development and eventual outcomes than authors such as Goulstone and Harvey allow. Furthermore, we also propose the existence and influence of local football elites – the two most powerful ones being those of metropolitan London and provincial Sheffield – who employed the resources they had obtained in contexts such as the major public schools, their own local grammar schools, and diverse varieties of 'folk' football, to reach agreement on codes which enabled them to participate in their favourite pastime.

Notes

1 Geoffrey Green (1911–90) was football correspondent of *The Times* for many years. He is regarded as being one of the first journalists to report seriously on the game and developed his own distinctive style of writing. Green attended Shrewsbury School and went on to Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he gained a 'blue' in Association Football. Our thanks go to Mike Morrogh, archivist at Shrewsbury School, for this information.

2 Though born in America, Francis Peabody Magoun Junior (1895–1979) served in the British Royal Flying Corps in the First World War and was awarded the Military Cross. He returned to the United States and began teaching at Harvard University and at the time of the publication of his *History of Football*, Magoun was Professor of Comparative Literature there. However, it is worth considering how difficult it may have been to be able to publish such a book – that is, an English language book – in Nazi Germany in 1938.

3 Morris Marples was educated at St. Bees School, Cumbria, and Exeter College, Oxford, captaining the Rugby teams at each institution. He became a schoolmaster and his published works included such diverse subjects as the sons of George II, university slang, and a study of walking. (Details gleaned from the inner jacket of Marples' *A History of Football*, 1954).

4 Montague Shearman (1857–1930) was educated at Merchant Taylors' School in London and St John's College, Oxford. He was an all-round sportsman, excelling at football, athletics and Rugby. He trained in law and became a king's counsel and a judge. (From Shearman's obituary in *The Times*, 7 January 1930).

5 Percy Marshall Young's (1912–2004) first love was music, and he worked in a teacher training college and as an advisor. His biographies of musicians were prolific but, as well as his *History of British Football*, he also penned works on Sheffield football, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Manchester United. He served as a Labour local councillor in the 1970s. (From Young's obituary in *The Independent*, 15 May 2004).

6 Harvey completed his PhD at Nuffield College, Oxford, in 1996. It was published as a book entitled *The Beginnings of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain 1793–1850*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004b.

7 Whilst Goulstone used *Bell's Life* extensively, he employed other sources including local histories and journals, together with various newspapers (Correspondence from John Goulstone to Graham Curry, dated 7 September 1999).

8 Other reports in *Bell's Life* verified personally by Graham Curry, and presenting similar evidence, are: East v. West Isley, February 1843; Thurlstone *v*. Totties, February 1843; Grandborough v. Flecknoe, April 1843; Bickenhill, *v*. Hampton, November 1842; Fearnoughts v. Bodyguards, December 1841; Willington *v*. Egginton, March 1849.

9 This would be typical of football involvement at Charterhouse around 1850. Our thanks go to Malcolm Bailey, author of *From Cloisters to Cup Finals: A History of Charterhouse Football* (2009), for this information.

10 Interestingly, whilst researching this book we were fortunate to discover that Nathaniel's cousin, Charles James Creswick, attended both Sheffield Collegiate (1839–42) and Trinity College, Cambridge (1847–51). Trinity was a centre of sporting – in particular football – diffusion, and he would surely have experienced the kicking and dribbling form which developed there and no doubt passed this knowledge on to his younger relative. Charles Creswick died in 1852. For Cambridge University football see Curry (2002).

11 The term 'major public school' refers to seven of the nine Clarendon Schools of 1864 – Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Shrewsbury, Westminster and Winchester. This excludes Merchant Taylors' and St Paul's, whose old boys seemingly had very little impact on the forming of early football rules. They were the only Clarendon Schools which were day-schools, i.e. they had no boarders. This may have affected the development of football in two ways. The intake of pupils would have been from the same geographical area and would have meant that no 'melting pot' of differing football rules would have been created. Second, boys in boarding schools required activities to fill their spare time, something which appears to have stimulated the growth of football.

12 Most commentators feel that the final moves towards amalgamation were initiated by letters calling for a national code to *The Field* by Stuart G. Smith and William Samuel Bambridge on 10 March 1877.

13 They mention, for instance, Gover (Shrewsbury and Rugby) (2009: 608) and Weldon (headmaster of Harrow) (2009: 710–11).

14 One exception is the noting of the football that was taking place at St John's College, Battersea, and St Mary's College, Hammersmith, in the 1840s – though no exact reference for this information is provided (Mangan and Hickey: 2009: 622).

15 Green helped to create one of the most common mistakes in football history. Many lazy present day historians still refer to an attendee at the inaugural meetings of the FA as F. W. Campbell when his correct name was F. M. Campbell (Green, 1953: 20, 26, 27, 32). Examples include Young (1968: 89) and Midwinter (2007: 69). Marples (1954: 159–60) barely mentions Sheffield football, devoting merely two paragraphs to it. Young misleads in several areas. He incorrectly dates the first Sheffield FC rules as being written in 1857 – they were not consigned to print until 1858 (Young, 1968: 77); he overplays the influence of Old Etonians at Sheffield Collegiate School (*ibid*.: 78); and wrongly lists dates and scores for Sheffield *v*. London encounters (Young, 1962: 28–9).

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Conclusion

In this brief conclusion, we shall attempt to synthesise our thoughts in several areas by offering some concluding remarks on Eric Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis', presenting additional justification of our reservations regarding the revisionist case and putting forward our final thoughts on the 'history of football' and what we regard as the triumph of the Association form.

'Status rivalry' – a hypothesis for further research

Let us initially state that we welcome wholeheartedly the continuance of the 'origins of football' debate. However, we recognise that the historical development of the game is, in a word, complex. Indeed, that may be one of the reasons why we have been so determined to put our thoughts on paper, together with the fact that we believe that recent texts have distorted the nature and outcomes of the discussion. We have also been driven by Elias's argument that sociologists should see as their primary concern the building up of and adding to bodies of reliable knowledge. However, the original aim of Graham Curry's thesis was to test Eric Dunning's 'status rivalry hypothesis' and, to a large extent, that remains central to this present book. Indeed, the vast majority of Curry's early research involved visits to the archives of the major public schools, notably Eton, and the libraries of the Cambridge Colleges, especially Trinity, where he managed to accumulate vast swathes of primary historical evidence. His rediscovery of the 1847 Eton Field Game rules provided impetus to the strength of Dunning's original hypothesis – that the public schools were, indeed, the initial 'model-making' centres for the first stage of the modernisation of football; and the link between Eton College oppidans and Trinity College, Cambridge, served to create further chains of interdependency within the same social process. The dearth of writing on, and credit accorded to, early football players and administrators from Sheffield was an obvious omission from previous histories and it was a comparatively simple matter to belatedly set the record straight in that area. Primary data were gathered mainly at Sheffield Library and the city's archives, and we were fortunate that most of them were garnered before Sheffield FC sold much of its valuable records. In terms of the early meetings of the Football Association, it became a case of dispelling a number of

myths and issues, foremost of which was the exact social make-up of the first gatherings and the loading by the supporters of an embryo Association-style of like-minded individuals at the fifth meeting. However, it was only around seven years into the research – in 2001 – that both authors became aware of the revisionist case. Let us expand on that part of the story.

Whilst we accept that revisionist evidence has further demonstrated the complexities of football's past, we have always believed that it was vital, on our part, to redress a balance which had become dangerously distorted. Consequently, we feel bound to describe the findings of Goulstone, Harvey and others as, at best, providing a slight modification to the accepted histories of the game, and, at worst, a populist, class-ridden crusade against the influence of the major public schools. However, there does appear to be at least one area of consensus between ourselves and the revisionists. This involves the lack of recognition accorded to the football sub-culture which evolved in and around the city of Sheffield from the 1850s. There is little doubt that the impact of what we have termed the 'sporting elite' of this area – something which itself was complex, and involved elements of the locally educated upper middle class, more rural working class components from Penistone and Thurlstone, plus the use of minor though significant facets of public school influence (the adoption of the 'rouge', at that time a peculiarly Eton Field Game characteristic, in Sheffield for the 1861–2 season is an example) – at least matched, if not surpassed, events in other parts of the country. However, before we become carried away we would like to offer a few words of caution on Sheffield's influence. The indisputable historical fact exists that, ultimately, it was the southern amateurs, many of whom had been educated at one of the major public schools or who held similar social values to those former public schoolboys, who formed and went on to control the legislative body – the Football Association – in England. It would be folly on our part to deny the power exerted by such vaunted Sheffield footballers as Nathaniel Creswick and William Prest in an initial but local sense, and, later, that wielded by Charles Clegg on the national stage. Our advice would be to exercise prudence, restraint and, above all, detachment, when dealing with this part of the narrative; and, without totally buckling under the weight of 'London-centricity', at least remain objective when assessing Sheffield's contribution.

The multifaceted nature of football's development would certainly not be regarded as a revelation by figurational sociologists, who stress a society formed around numerous chains of interdependence. It must come as no surprise, then, that the factors we suggest as influencing the game's development would be many and varied, with some exerting more influence than others. In what we consider to be their order of importance, then, the following appear to be the most significant influences on the early growth of Association Football:

(1) high status Old Etonian oppidans, who subsequently attended Trinity College, Cambridge

(2) former pupils of other major English public schools such as Harrow and Shrewsbury. We are thinking here of such influential individuals as C. W. Alcock and J. C. Thring
(3) members of local sporting elites, the best and most important example being those individuals from Sheffield who founded Sheffield Football Club and the Sheffield Football Association
(4) participants in local, public house-based football sub-cultures connected to gambling
(5) pupils and masters at Rugby School, especially Jem Mackie, Thomas Hughes and, to a lesser extent, Thomas Arnold. It seems important to stress that the development of the modern game of Rugby was entwined with Association Football's story prior to 1863, because in those early years the game was a plethora of forms known simply by the name 'football'.

It may seem simplistic and appear to be tediously restating the public school case, but the evidence clearly points to their overwhelming influence in the five phases of football hyperactivity between 1823–85. These phases were:

(1) prior to 1840, particularly at Rugby School
(2) in the late 1840s at Eton
(3) at Cambridge University in five attempts at codification from 1837–63
(4) in club formation when former undergraduates returned to the wider society
(5) in the form of Old Harrovian Charles W. Alcock and his influence on the development of the FA following its formation in 1863.

We do feel as though the revisionists may have a political agenda, over-emphasising working class influence to the detriment of public schoolboys – almost producing an element of 'status rivalry' in modern day football academia.[1] We also trust that we possess enough detachment to follow the evidence, eschewing political prejudice in this debate, and also remain hopeful that the reader will not judge us to be arrogant in this respect. Our scenario will not be popular amongst many of the current crop of football historians, but it genuinely represents the conclusion of our research over, in Graham Curry's case, the past 20 years – and for Eric Dunning, the previous 50 years.

The 'history of the history of football' and the triumph of the Association form

Finally, although others may have an alternative view of the 'history of the history of football', our contribution, in a single paragraph, would be as follows:

As we noted in our main text, early commentators such as Joseph Strutt, writing in 1801, and William Hone in 1827, noted a clear cultural marginalisation

of 'folk' football – the riotous mob games of public holidays – feeling that they were in effect in decline. Although this decline may well have been distorted, it is imperative to stress that those commenting that the game was played with less regularity than in previous times must have been basing their judgements on evidence of some sort. Strutt and others may have misrepresented the scope of the transformation of football as a whole – with the 'folk' form largely dying out, but the forms discovered by John Goulstone and Adrian Harvey continuing to thrive. Following useful contributions from Montague Shearman (1888, 1889), several texts were written by historians which generally supported the traditional view of the game's development, stressing the influence of public schoolboys. Francis P. Magoun (1938), Morris Marples (1954), Geoffrey Green (1953) and Percy Young (1968) are still well utilised by current researchers but all were, at times, misleading. None of them, for instance, mentioned in any great detail the positive role of Sheffield's footballers and administrators, though Young had previously penned a history of football in the city (1962). More recently, Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard's landmark study, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players* (1979; 2005), set the standard for academic sociological works following the former's MA on the subject as early as 1961. James Walvin (1975), Tony Mason (1980), Tony Collins (2005) and Matthew Taylor (2008) have all been responsible for valuable additions to the debate but it has been the battles between Curry and Dunning (2001, 2002, 2013, 2014 online), who stress the influence of the public schools and Cambridge University, and the revisionists Harvey (1999, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2012 (jointly with Swain), 2013) and Swain (2008, 2012, 2014 online) which, although at times vigorous, have pushed the boundaries of debate ever further. If nothing else, these dynamic critiques and counter critiques have, we think, led to original research by the likes of Joannou and Candlish (2009), McDowell (2013) and James and Day (2014) – who have produced studies of local football sub-cultures in the north east of England, the west of Scotland and Manchester, respectively.

Why, then, is Association Football so important to so many people? And why did it triumph over the Rugby form in a battle for sporting predominance in mid-to-late Victorian Britain? Despite the dichotomy in the game of football in 1863, both the Association and Rugby codes thrived. However, during the latter part of the twentieth century it was to be Association Football which emerged not only as the preferred form of football but also as the world's most popular team sport. The reasons for its comparative success are not difficult to find. We would list them as follows:

(1) Soccer requires little equipment and is comparatively cheap to play.
(2) Its rules – apart perhaps from the offside law – are relatively easy to understand. Above all, these rules regularly make for fast, open and fluid play, and for a game which is finely balanced among a number of interdependent polarities such as force or violence and skill, individual and team play, attack and defence (Elias and Dunning, 1986: 191–204). The

Rugby Union form, in particular, has more laws which tend to create additional stoppages in play, and proponents of both forms of Rugby appear to stress force over skill.

(3) As such, Association Football's structure permits the recurrent generation of levels of excitement which are satisfying for both players and spectators. At the heart of this lies the fact that matches are physical struggles between two groups governed by rules that allow the passions to rise, but at the same time manage to keep them – most of the time – in check.

(4) To the extent that they are enforced and/or voluntarily obeyed, the rules of Association Football also limit the risk of serious injury to players. That is another respect in which it can be said to be a relatively 'civilised' game. Certainly Rugby would seem, even to the untrained eye, to be a more hazardous sport with a greater possibility of incurring injury.

(5) Association Football played at top level also has a 'ballet-like' quality and that, together with the colours of the players' clothing and spectacular modes of presentation, helps further to explain its wide appeal.

Of course, other sports possess some of the characteristics listed here but arguably only Association Football has them all. Indeed, compared to other games the tension-balance in the game makes it more spectator-friendly and popular among sports enthusiasts. That is to say, whilst the actions of the participants take place in a relatively safe environment, the game itself provides adequate excitement for players and watchers alike. Basketball contains too many scoring opportunities, where an attack without a basket is actually a rarity; in handball it is simply too easy to retain possession; whilst Rugby's strict offside law and opportunities to infringe the proliferation of rules generally legislate against free-flowing play. Significantly, in all three of the aforementioned games the hands are used to control and pass the ball, making it easier to starve the opposition of possession but at the same time limit the number of turnovers and, consequently, limit the level of excitement. In football it is difficult, but not impossible, for skilful players to keep possession so changes in 'ownership' of the ball take place at regularly acceptable intervals. Eric Dunning has likened using one's feet as opposed to one's hands in a sporting context as being the 'equivalent to being required to balance peas on the back of one's fork' (Dunning, 1999: 96). Furthermore, at the very top level the highly unpredictable nature of football makes the game additionally attractive. In a one-off match the perceived lesser team may often be victorious through a combination of a breakaway goal, stubborn yet skilful defending, and an inspired performance by the goalkeeper.

Final thoughts

We have no regrets in basing this book around what is, effectively, a hypothesis rather than an array of concrete facts. The hypothesis itself allows us to test Eric Dunning's theory of 'status rivalry'. Some might refer to that theory as

a mere 'hunch'; however, it has nevertheless allowed us to probe deeper into the complex development of the game of football. The discovery of a set of rules for the Eton Field Game, dated 1847 – two years *earlier* than those unearthed by Dunning 50 years ago – made the reaction of the Etonians to the Rugbeians' codification of 1845 that much swifter and, therefore, that much more significant. Principally, 'status rivalry' motivated Graham Curry to visit Cambridge University and develop his own hypothesis involving Old Etonian oppidans – specifically those attending Trinity College – and their influence on compromise football rules at the university. This strengthened the evidence for Eton as being at the centre of an embryonic Association form of football and for Trinity being at the heart of sporting diffusion and innovation.

Our somewhat inadvertent entrance into the 'origins of football' debate in the late 1990s bore significant fruit in that our academic jousts with the revisionists have, we hope, subsequently added to the body of knowledge and, perhaps, motivated others to pursue their own avenues of research. Though at times our critiques and counter critiques have bordered on the tempestuous, our own musings have at least stated the case for the generally accepted history of football, and the influence of former public schoolboys upon it– in the face of the robust and, we feel, at times erroneous offerings of the revisionists. If nothing else, it has provided an empirically sound balance to proceedings, and our research has, we believe, reaffirmed the view that public schoolboys *did* have the greatest influence in the game's development. These recent differences have highlighted the disputes between sociologists and historians and their interpretations of the past, but while we accept that myths or long-held beliefs ought to come under increased scrutiny, it should not be assumed that their narratives and conclusions are wholly or even partly incorrect. Our 'detour by detachment' throughout this study has led us to conclude that the likes of Geoffrey Green, Morris Marples and Percy Young were largely correct to stress the impact of former public schoolboys. But though we would 'follow Elias' and support the notion that football has been subject to a whole plethora of influences, we would like to note that some individuals were more important than others. For present purposes, however, the debate between sociologists and historians must be carried on elsewhere, but, if our disagreements with the 'football revisionists' are any indication of present positions, then congruence of opinion appears some way off. Nevertheless, whether we agree or not, it appears reasonable to say that we have at least provided additional information and analysis which future generations can utilise in this complex area of study.

Notes

1 Our thanks go to Katie Liston for this observation.

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