

Originals.

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THE MONTH IN 19cBB

Members of the Origins Committee used the 19cBB yahoogroup comparatively little during the month of sweltering month of August

INQUIRIES

1858 baseball question
Priscilla Astifan posted a comment about the baseball field in Brown Square in Rochester which praised its spaciousness. She professed puzzlement about some of the particular elements in the description of the field. David Dyte offered an explanation of what would have made the field desirable to 1858 ballists.

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TOM ALTHERR'S NOTEBOOK

CORNER BALL IN DECEMBER

In mid-December, 1846, some alumni of Haverford College met and took to the playing field. First they played what they called "an old fashioned game of *foot-ball*," after which even with weary and bruised muscles, played a

game of corner ball, a relative of baseball favored by German-heritage Pennsylvanians. *Haverford Revisited: Being a Memento of a Day Spent on the Old Grounds By a Number of Former Pupils, 12th Mo. 29th, 1846*] (Philadelphia: Townsend Ward, 1847), p. 4

CORNER BALL IN A POEM

In 1828 Pennsylvania poet Edwin Augustus Atlee composed a long narrative verse, probably satirical, about a Lancaster lad named Eugenius Laude Watts. At one point Atlee described his youth's recreation with his German neighbors:

And at their various Sports
was oftimes seen;
And many a Fall he got, upon
the Green,
In wrestling, leaping, running,
corner-ball,
Till good proficiency he
made in all.

Although chronological specificity is almost absent, Watts was a child sometime before the American Revolution. Edwin Augustus Atlee, *Essays at Poetry, or a Collections of Fugitive Pieces; with the Life of Eugenius Laude Watts* (Philadelphia: T.E. Manning, Printer, 1828), p. 30

CORNER BALL AND CHRISTIAN MORALIZING IN CINCINNATI IN 1830

The *Sentinel*, or, *Star in the West*, a Cincinnati evangelical newspaper, ran this observation in its April 3, 1830 number: "Sunday morning, a company of these young sprinkled Christians were playing corner ball. I heard the mother of part of them, who was a [M]ethodist, call aloud to them-- 'You boys, you had better quit; the [P]resbyterians will be along to meeting, and you will be fined or sent to jail.' I saw plainly that the good woman thought that her children belonged to the jurisdiction of the magistrate and constable, rather than to the minister and [Sunday school?] class leader:-- so much for the sham Christians, and their sham membership!" *The Sentinel*, or *The Star in the West*, v. 1, n. 26, April 3, 1830, p. 204

BALL PLAY OVER WORK ANY DAY?

Ruminating on colleges in the 1830s, Ohio Judge John W. Campbell worried that play was supplanting manual labor. "The question may be propounded, whether employment at the plough, the hoe, bench or lathe, is not quite as salutary and profitable as

the childish games of cat, bandy, corner ball, or anthony-over?" {Anthony-over, in numerous variant spellings, was a children's game, in which two teams lined up on opposite sides of a building, threw or hit a ball over the roof, and tried to capture the other team over to the victors' side.] John W. Campbell, "Colleges", in *Biographical Sketches; With the Literary Remains of the Late John W. Campbell* (Columbus, Ohio: Scott and Gallagher, 1838), p. 260

ANOTHER REFERENCE TO BASE BALL PLAY AT HARVARD?

In a set of musings about college life published in the February, 1828 *Harvard Register*, the writer imagined what stories the Delta, the site of many athletic contests, could reveal. "It could tell...", he surmised, "of Cricket -- Base-- and Foot-Ball." "Base" may have been prisoner's base, but the way the writer tucked it between two obvious ball games, perhaps we should assume he meant a type of baseball game. "Life in College," *The Harvard Register*, February, 1828, p. 379

BALL PLAY IN THE BOWLING GREEN IN NEW YORK CITY

An 1828 gazetteer for New York City contained these sentences about the Bowling Green at the bottom of Broadway near Battery Walk: "Formerly it was a place of amusement for the citizens, who used to play

here at ball, quoits, and other diversions. These, however, have been prohibited by an act of the Corporation [the City of New York], which extends also to the Battery Walk and Park." *The Picture of New-York, and Stranger's Guide to the Commercial Metropolis of the United States* (New York: A.T. Goodrich, 1828), p. 438

BALL REFERENCES IN AN 1849 POLITICAL SPEECH IN KENTUCKY

In 1849, Benjamin Hardin, a delegate to a convention to revise the state constitution, employed a ball play metaphor to describe his frustration with events. Fearing that the new document was stealing power from the people, Hardin declared, "[L]ike boys playing 'cat or corner ball,' when the ball is lost they stop and cry out 'lost ball.' I, was ready, for one to stop legislating and cry out 'lost ball.'" Apparently Hardin expected that his colleagues had some familiarity with those two boys' baseball-type games. And note the printer --an ancestor of Gil Hodges?! *Report of the Debates and Proceedings of the Convention to Revise the Constitution of the State of Kentucky* (Frankfort, Kentucky: A. G. Hodges, 1849), p. 199

BALL PLAY IN NORWICH, CONNECTICUT

Discussing the post-Revolutionary War years in her 1845 history of Norwich, Conn. Frances Caulkins wrote, "The sports of

men and boys were of a rougher character than at present. Wrestling, horse-racing, shooting at marks, , and ball-playing were favorite amusements." Frances M. Caulkins, *History of Norwich, Conn.* (Norwich, Connecticut: Thomas Robinson, 1845), p. 302

MORE CRICKET IN ILLINOIS IN 1820: AN ADDITION TO PROTOBALL 1818.c5

In Protoball we already have recorded Britisher John Woods' regret that on October 2, 1820 there was no cricket match at Wanborough, Illinois, but "only a game of trap-ball." But then Woods went on to write, "There have been several cricket-matches this summer, both at Wanborough and Birk Prairie; the Americans seem much pleased at the sight of the game, as it new to them." John Woods, *Two Years' Residence in the Settlement on the English Prairie, in the Illinois Country, United States* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1822), pp. 295-296

THE HUTCHINSON FAMILY SINGERS PLAY BALL

In the 1840s, the Hutchinson Family was a very popular singing group. Occasionally one of the family, Asa Hutchinson also played and observed some ball. On April 13, 1844, he penned in his journal, "Had a game of ball with James Buffum." It is unclear whether just those two played some rudimentary ball game or

joined a group. Sometime later that April, he wrote, "We had a game of Bat Ball which we enjoyed." That took place at a communal experiment in Florence, Massachusetts near Northampton. That April 28th, Hutchinson observed another game, but objected mildly because it was a Sunday: "Many of the boys went to playing ball, which I did not like. But we went to the woods and talked and laughed and I suppose were just as wicked as they." Dale Cockrell, ed., *Excelsior: Journals of the Hutchinson Family Singers, 1842-1846* (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press, 1989), pp. 255, 267, and 268

AN ANTEBELLUM TOMBOY PLAYED BALL

In 1848, *The Child's Friend*, a periodical geared to children, printed a story called "The Errand Boy." During a discussion in the piece between a boy called George and his mother, she revealed to him her childhood tomboy proclivities. She had abandoned her dolls because she "liked boy's playthings best." According to her, she "could drive hoop, spin top, bat ball, run, jump, and climb as well as my brothers could," as well as skate and ride sleds. Was she a rare example of female athleticism or a representative of a larger group of young women whose ball play and other recreation has gone unrecorded and unnoticed? Assuming she was a mother in her twenties or thirties, counting back from the publication date

of 1848 would place her exploits in the 1820s or 1830s at the latest. "The Errand Boy," *The Child's Friend*, v. 9, no. 4 (January, 1848), p. 168

A 1796 REFERENCE TO TRAP BALL IN GEORGIA

In April, 1796, Pennsylvanian George Clymer, twenty years earlier a signer of the Declaration of Independence, accompanied a team of negotiators to Georgia to negotiate treaties with the Cherokees and other tribes. While in St. Mary's, a rather desolate location according to Clymer, he speculated that the officer corps must have been miserable stationed there. As for the troops, it was a different story: "They have enough relaxation in leap-frog, driving the bull to market, trap-ball, &c." George Clymer, quoted in John Sanderson, et al., *Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: R.W. Pomeroy, 1823), v. 4, p. 222
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150 YEARS AGO

*from the pages of the New
York Sunday Mercury*

September 29, 1861:

THE FIELD MATCH AT HOBOKEN: -- The single game arranged between the players on the East and West fields of Hoboken, which came off on the Gotham ground on Monday last, did not realize general expectation. For the most part, it was very

tame and uninteresting, and the playing generally was of an ordinary character. There was some fine batting, and occasionally a good catch ; but there was also much missing, wild throwing, and overpitching, especially on the side of the West Field, which included five players from the Empire Club and four from the Eagle Club, while the players of the East Field consisted of five from the Mutual and four from the Gotham Club. The following is the score of the game:

EAST FIELD.	O	R
Brown (2d b.)	5	1
A.B.Taylor (1st b.)	3	3
Hunt (s.s.)	3	3
Turner (r.f.)	2	3
Van Cott (3d. b.)	3	2
McKeever (P.)	1	4
Cohen (C.)	1	1
Harris (c.f.)	4	1
McMahon (l.f.)	2	2
WEST FIELD.	O	R
Miller (3d.b.)	4	1
Yates (1st.b.)	1	2
Benson (C.)	5	0
Brinckerhoff (c.f.)	1	3
Moore (s.s.)	2	2
Howe (2d.b.)	2	0
Thorne (P.)	3	0
Smith (r.f.)	3	0
Culyer (l.f.)	2	1

INNINGS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
EAST F. 4 1 2 4 2 2 3 1-19
WEST F. 3 1 2 2 0 1 0 0-9

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