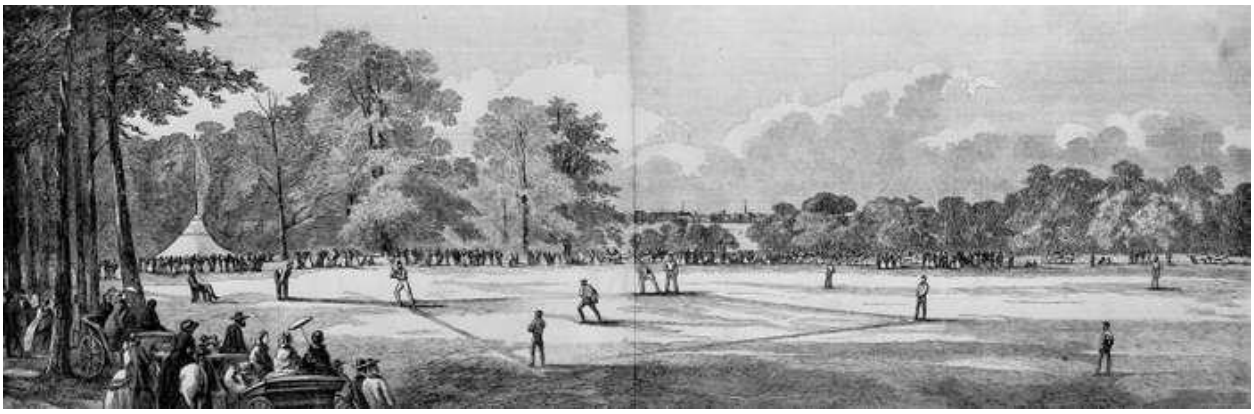


Baseball Origins Newsletter

Volume Three, Number 3 **August 2023**

In this issue:

The baseball origins newsletter is put out by members of SABR's Origins Committee, and the website for baseball's origins, www.protoball.org, It is intended to foster research and discussion of the origins of the game of baseball, baseball's predecessor bat-ball games, and the growth of baseball prior to 1871 (when professional, league baseball was founded).

Comments, suggestions and articles should be submitted to Bruce Allardice, editor, at bsa1861@att.net or Larry McCray at lmccray@mit.edu.

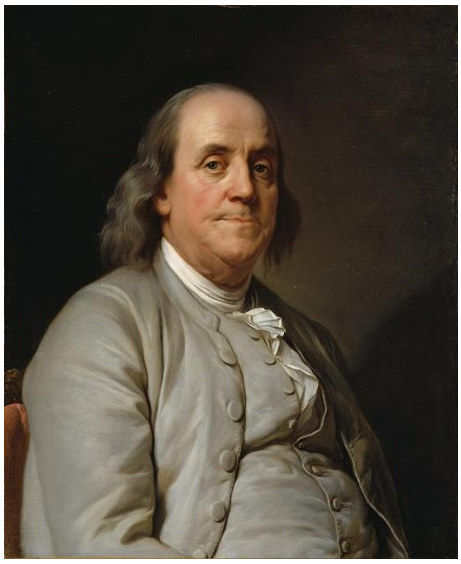
Newark--"Tapped at Both Ends"

By John Zinn

Editor's Note: *This long article explores the social dimension of the beginnings of baseball in Newark, New Jersey, revealing how baseball grew up in Newark alongside the more publicized New York City and Brooklyn growth. It also notes the first recorded instance of African-Americans organizing baseball clubs.*

John Zinn

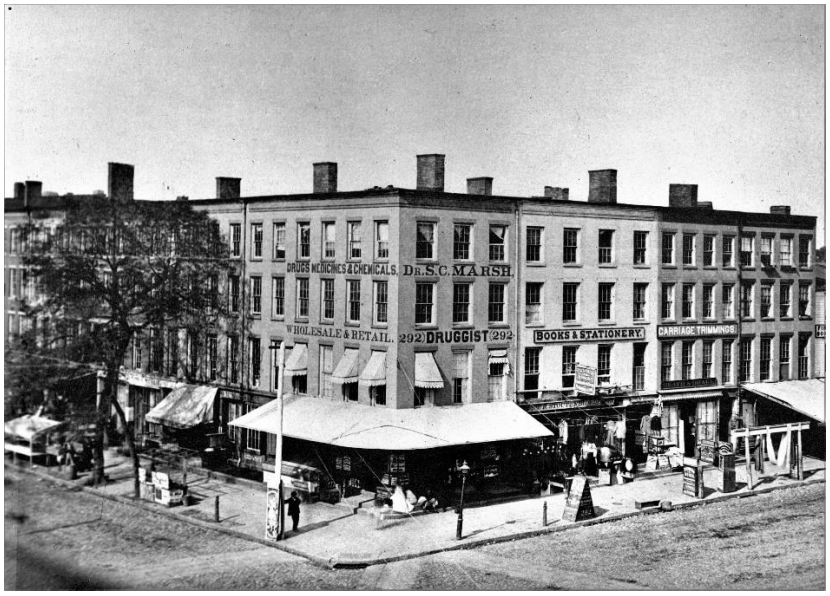
For far too long, New Jersey has been stereotyped by Benjamin Franklin's equally all too frequently quoted metaphor comparing the state to a barrel tapped at both ends. The operative word is "tapped," suggesting that anything of value is sucked out of the state by New York City and Philadelphia leaving behind a barrel with little more than unwanted dregs. It's an effective, damaging and, unfortunately, enduring image. Taps, however, work in both directions and on more than one occasion New Jersey has done the "tapping."



Such was certainly the case in Newark during the nineteenth century when New Jersey's largest city grew from little more than "an agricultural township" in 1816 to "the leading industrial city in the nation" in 1860.1 By that point, Newark was **"**the [country's] eleventh largest city, with 74% of its laboring force employed in manufacturing."2 During the same time frame, Newark's population grew tenfold from just over 6,500 in

1820 to almost 72,000 in the final year of the antebellum period.3 The city's booming economy required raw materials, markets for products and financial capital. In each case, Newark businessmen met their needs by tapping on neighboring cities and states. Manufacturers acquired raw materials from the Delaware Valley, jewelers sold their products to buyers nationwide who gathered in New York City, while growing Newark businesses borrowed essential financing from New York City banks.4 In this case, at least, it was Newark and New Jersey that did the tapping.

And when the time came, just as Newark businessmen found money and markets in New York City, Newark men "discovered" a New York game that met their need for exercise. In 1854 there weren't any Newark teams playing baseball by the Knickerbocker rules and, at most, only one in the entire state.5 By the end of 1855, however, Newark had six to seven clubs, compared to New York City's six and Brooklyn's ten, a significant number for a much smaller city.6 Even more interesting, however, is how extensively males of all ages and races in New Jersey's largest city adopted this old game played by new rules. While the New York and Brooklyn clubs were largely made up of adult White males, Newark had the earliest known junior club (under 21) as well as the country's first Black club.7 How did such a diverse segment of the city's male population "discover" baseball in 1855?



Newark Broad and Market Streets about 1855

At the 2022 Frederick Ivor-Campbell 19th Century Baseball Conference in Cooperstown, Thomas Gilbert argued persuasively that the best way to uncover the "how" of baseball's past is to explore the "who" – the game's early pioneers.8 Gilbert put that approach to good use in his valuable and essential work, *How Baseball Happened*.

According to Gilbert's research the "two types of people that predominated in the baseball clubs of the 1850s" were emerging urban bourgeois (EUB) and artisans.9 The former included doctors and bankers, but especially noteworthy were "dynamic, resourceful urbanites," some of whom were "on the cutting edge of the American economy's transition . . . to modern industrial and financial capitalism."10 Artisans, at a time when there was "no working class in the modern sense," were skilled craftsmen who made things by hand.11 By 1855, Newark had no shortage of both groups, who, like their New York and Brooklyn counterparts, became increasingly aware of their need for exercise.12 It's no surprise, therefore, that Newark men were looking for, or were at least receptive to, new ways to meet that need.

William Dodd – First President of the Newark Club

The city's first baseball club was the aptly named the Newark Club, made up of "some of our best citizens," "whose habits of life are such as to render exercise eminently necessary."13 Founded in May of 1855, the club attracted members from both the EUB and artisan communities, two groups Gilbert considers "polar opposites."14 Perhaps living and working in a much smaller city was conducive to greater interaction between the two groups. Although it may not be why they were chosen, the Newark Club's two senior officers had entrepreneurial spirit in abundance. As a young man, founding president William Dodd, successfully "established a retail hat business" in lower Manhattan.15 He later bought the "patent for forming hat bodies" which he used to start a manufacturing business in Newark when hat making was transitioning from a craft to an industry.16 While nowhere near as successful as Dodd, no one could question vice president John Shaff's "spirit of adventure." In 1849 he joined the California Gold Rush in quest of fame and fortune.17 Similar to Dodd, club member, Nicholas Van Ness also

played an important part in Newark's industrial growth. His obituary credited him as being "one of those who was greatly instrumental in making the city a manufacturing one."18

Name	Age	Occupation
A. Baldwin		
Milton Baldwin	34	Doctor
Henry D. Beland	27	Hotel Business
John V. Case	24	Jeweler
Warren Y. Case	26	Jeweler
S. Chadwick	28	Patent Leather
W.H. Clark		
William L. Clinton	29	Music Store
Joseph A. Coulter	22	Hatter
Edward Gere Denniston	23	Silver Plater
Frederick C. Dodd	25	Accountant
William Dodd	33	Hat Manufacturer
Luther Spencer Goble	29	Lawyer
W. Hedden	18	Accountant
R. Heinisch	19	Patent Sheers Manufacturing
T. Jones		
Henry L. Martin	27	Spring Maker
Milton Mikles	32	Tailor
William Mikles	34	Tailor
Charles Fkasee Murphy	29	Carpenter
John W. Shaff	27	Accountant
Thomas P. Speer	25	Carpenter
Walter W. Tompkins	35	Treasurer - Manufacturing Business
John N. Tuttle	24	Law Student
Nicholas Van Ness	33	Silver Plater
James T. Van Houten	23	Jeweler
Jacob B. Wambold	27	Oysters
Henry A. Ward	26	Bank Clerk

Newark Club Players 1855

While they didn't hold any leadership positions, there was no lack of artisans among the charter members of the Newark Club including jewelers, hatters and carpenters. Joseph Coulter, a hatter, was perhaps symbolic of the difference between EUBs and

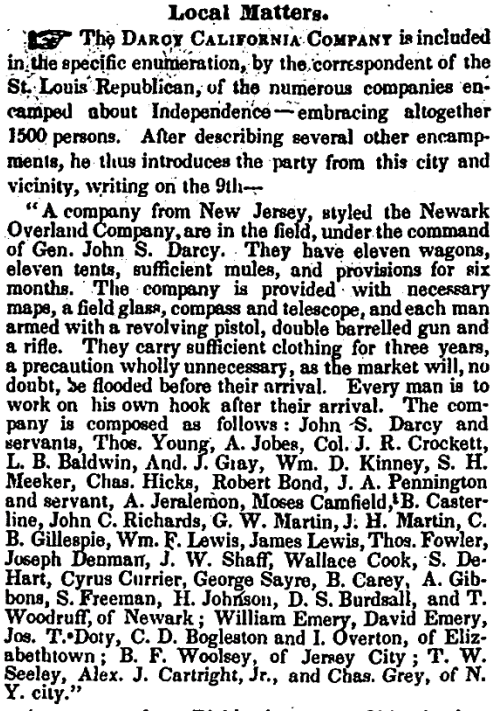
artisans. An 1850 ad in the *Newark Daily Advertiser*, warned the "Trade and all persons from harboring" Coulter who had allegedly left his indentured apprenticeship without permission.19 Such behavior wouldn't have sat well with club president William Dodd, a hat industry executive himself. However, there's no evidence any such tensions were a major problem. Combining the attributes of both groups was Charles Murphy, a skilled carpenter, who didn't lack for entrepreneurial instincts. An enthusiastic fisherman, Murphy, according to his obituary "was the inventor of the celebrated split bamboo fishing rod" which he made by hand and sold to the "most prominent anglers in this country and Europe."20

Although it's totally speculative, there is also the tantalizing possibility Murphy was connected to a third lesser-known source of early baseball players. In 2007, John Thorn, Official Historian of MLB, discovered the Magnolia Club, a long-forgotten team some of whose members came from a somewhat seamy section of Manhattan society that included boxers.21 As a young man, Charles Murphy was also reportedly a boxer who on one occasion "got decidedly the best of "Awful" Gardner.22 Gardner was a Manhattan boxer who later became a well-known evangelist. During his pugilistic days, Gardner was affiliated with John Morrissey and Bill "The Butcher Poole," both of whom were part of the same segment of Manhattan society as some of the Magnolia Club members.23 Again, this is totally speculative, but too fascinating a possibility to leave out.

How then did these Newark EUBs and artisans "discover" baseball? In the early days of the organized game, the primary way people learned about baseball was through direct personal contact.24 Young men in Newark and elsewhere "discovered" baseball by playing it, watching it being played or talking to someone who had played or seen it. While a lot of baseball was played at Elysian Fields in Hoboken, it's unlikely the first Newark players had much contact with those games. There was no direct railroad connection between the two cities and little evidence Elysian Fields was an important pleasure ground for Newarkers. As a result, the opportunities for interaction with the New York clubs playing there were limited. It's far more likely the city's first baseball players learned about the game through other contacts with New Yorkers.25

Determining exactly how this happened is admittedly speculative, but the lives of some club members offer examples of possible ways this kind of interaction might have happened. Here again, we turn to the club's founding president and vice president, who were likely in those positions because they were among the most interested in playing organized baseball. William Dodd, the first president of the Newark Club, as was previously noted, established a retail hat business in lower Manhattan, just south of Delancy Street. Before moving his business affairs to Newark, he was also the manager of another New York business. In both cases, he had multiple opportunities for

contact with members of the early New York clubs or others who knew about the game.26



Local Matters.

☞ The DARCY CALIFORNIA COMPANY is included in the specific enumeration, by the correspondent of the St. Louis Republican, of the numerous companies encamped about Independence—embracing altogether 1500 persons. After describing several other encampments, he thus introduces the party from this city and vicinity, writing on the 9th—

"A company from New Jersey, styled the Newark Overland Company, are in the field, under the command of Gen. John S. Darcy. They have eleven wagons, eleven tents, sufficient mules, and provisions for six months. The company is provided with necessary maps, a field glass, compass and telescope, and each man armed with a revolving pistol, double barrelled gun and a rifle. They carry sufficient clothing for three years, a precaution wholly unnecessary, as the market will, no doubt, be flooded before their arrival. Every man is to work on his own hook after their arrival. The company is composed as follows: John S. Darcy and servants, Thos. Young, A. Jobes, Col. J. R. Crockett, L. B. Baldwin, And. J. Gray, Wm. D. Kinney, S. H. Meeker, Chas. Hicks, Robert Bond, J. A. Pennington and servant, A. Jeralemon, Moses Camfield, B. Casterline, John C. Richards, G. W. Martin, J. H. Martin, C. B. Gillespie, Wm. F. Lewis, James Lewis, Thos. Fowler, Joseph Denman, J. W. Shaff, Wallace Cook, S. DeHart, Cyrus Currier, George Sayre, B. Carey, A. Gibbons, S. Freeman, H. Johnson, D. S. Burdsall, and T. Woodruff, of Newark; William Emery, David Emery, Jos. T. Doty, C. D. Bogleston and I. Overton, of Elizabethtown; B. F. Woolsey, of Jersey City; T. W. Seeley, Alex. J. Cartright, Jr., and Chas. Grey, of N. Y. city."

Newark Daily Advertiser – April 27, 1849

Unlike Dodd, where we can only infer such contact, there can be no doubt that the club's vice president, John W. Shaff, not only knew a member of the Knickerbockers, but also spent a great deal of time with him. However, this didn't happen in either Manhattan or Newark, but in the far expanses of the western United States. In 1848, at the age of 20, Shaff was a clerk/accountant, an occupation that didn't offer much in the way of exercise or adventure.27 The young man clearly wasn't satisfied because a year later he joined the Newark Overland Company on its quest for gold and glory in California. While the company's 46 members were primarily Newark/ New Jersey men, there were a few outsiders including one Alexander Cartwright, a well-known member of the Knickerbocker Baseball Club of New York.28 With that size of a group, however, being in the same traveling party didn't guarantee any close contact between the two men. Perhaps fortunately for the New York game's introduction to Newark, thanks to totally unrelated circumstances, they spent plenty of time together. In fact, it's possible Newark's "discovery" of baseball was facilitated by a dispute over the most efficient means of crossing the mountains and plains of the western U.S.

When the Newark Overland Company arrived in Missouri, there was disagreement over whether it would be better to use mules or oxen for the rest of the trip. Cartwright and

Shaff were part of a smaller group who opted for mules, but that alone didn't insure the two men would travel together. However, at the Green River in eastern Utah, Shaff became part of Cartwright's "mess," five men who traveled together for almost 900 miles.29 Although mules traveled faster than oxen, it took seven-eight weeks to reach the gold fields, plenty of opportunity for Cartwright to tell Shaff about the New York version of baseball.30

Alexander Cartwright

Writing to the *Newark Daily Advertiser* from San Francisco, Shaff told the paper's readers that not only had he survived the arduous transcontinental trip, he had gained almost 30 pounds in the process without being sick for "an hour."31 Shaff returned from California without fame and fortune, but to everyone he met in the streets of Newark, he was a living example of the benefits of vigorous exercise. And equally importantly, he had likely learned about a game that could provide similar benefits without making a 6,000-mile round trip across the United States. This was obviously a unique set of circumstances, but it illustrates that exposure to the New York game could, and did happen, in more ways than we can imagine. There are other possible Newark Club member connections to New York City including Dr. Milton Baldwin, who graduated from medical school in Manhattan in 1843 and Rochus Heinsch who worked in his father's New York City store at Nassau and Fulton Streets during the Newark Club's gestation period.32 While it's impossible to know exactly where the Newark Club members learned about baseball, there were, as these examples illustrate, many possibilities.

Forming the city's first team wasn't the Newark Club's sole contribution to getting baseball started in Newark. Although exercise may have been their primary motivation, they also may have played a part in getting other teams on the field. On June 13, 1855, not more than a month after being formed, the Newark Club played their first match game.33 Competition, of course, requires opponents something that doesn't just happen especially with a new form of baseball. Unfortunately, little information survives about the membership of the Oriental Club, the Newark Club's first opponent (the name was quickly changed to the Olympic Club).34 There was, however, a family connection between the teams. Two Olympic Club players were the brother and brother-in-law of Frederic C. Dodd, treasurer, and a very active member of the Newark Club.35 This suggests the Newark Club might have encouraged the formation of the city's second baseball club, a contribution to creating a critical mass of baseball teams in Newark.

Name	Age	Residence	Father's Occupation
David Benedict	16	12 Park Place	Saddler
John Bolles	17	2 Park Church Place	Flour Merchant
William Browe	16	12 Green	Gas Fixtures
William Duryee	18	10 Park Place	Hat Manufacturer
William Halsey	14	13 Park Place	Leather Merchant
Henry O. Halsted	14	267 Broad Street	Lawyer
David Ogden Lum	15	37 Hamilton	Mason
George T. McFarland	16	182 Market	Harness Manufacturer
Edward Munn	18	17 Bank	Cutter
Tobias Seaman	15	398 Broad	Hotel Worker
Henry J. Plume	18	19 Park Place	Deceased

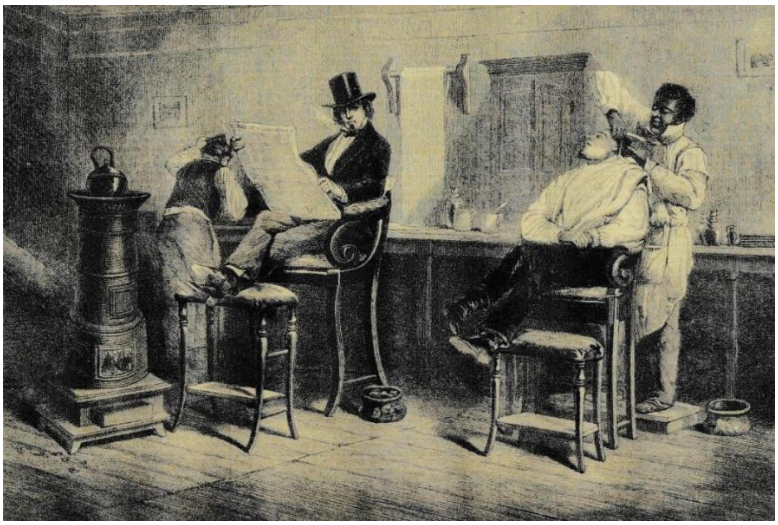
Newark Junior Club Players

Two other senior clubs were formed in Newark in 1855 – the Friendship Club, of whom nothing other than the name is known, and the Empire Club which came on the scene in September.36 While getting four teams started in one season is impressive, far more important are the two other Newark teams formed that same year. First up, is the Newark Junior Club, organized no later than late June of 1855, the earliest known club in the United States to call itself a junior team.37 Eleven of the thirteen Newark Junior Club members who played in 1855 match games have been identified. Their ages range between 14-18, an average age of 16, compared to 27 for the clearly more senior Newark Club. As the above chart illustrates, the fathers of the Newark Junior players were men of property.38 The financial affluence of the older generation meant their

sons, unlike most of their contemporaries, didn't have to work at an early age and had time to play baseball. Perhaps more importantly, parental approval, stated or implicit validated playing baseball as an acceptable activity for teenage boys. This was a valuable precedent for any of their peers with similar interests and inclinations.

How these teenagers were introduced to baseball isn't known, but there were family connections to the Baldwin and Dodd families of the Newark Club. In addition, there were five common occupations between the fathers of the Newark Junior players and Newark Club members.39 Three Newark Junior Club members not only lived on Park Place, but within a few doors of each other, suggesting this was a group of friends who decided to form a baseball team.40 Unlike the brief existence of other junior clubs, the Newark Juniors not only survived, but graduated to senior club status in 1857 as the Adriatic Club.41 The club disbanded after the 1861 season with any remaining players moving to the Newark or Eureka Clubs.42

Sometimes baseball history is discovered, or perhaps recovered, by the fortuitous finding of a brief newspaper article. Such was certainly the case with the short account of an 1855 baseball game between the St. John's and Union Clubs that I stumbled upon at the end of a long day of scrolling through microfilm of the *Newark Daily Mercury*.43 In just four sentences, the paper reported that the game was rained out after two innings, but would be replayed on Friday at the St. John's Club's grounds at the foot of Chestnut Street. This was nothing out of the ordinary, if not for one fact that made all the difference – the two clubs were, in the paper's words, "colored" teams – that is Black or African-American. This is the earliest known instance of Blacks organizing to play baseball in the United States.44 The grounds at the foot of Chestnut Street were definitely a Newark baseball field which confirms that the St. John's Club was a Newark team. The home of the Union Club is unknown.45



Barbershop in Richmond, Virginia – *The Illustrated London News* – March 9, 1861

For Newark to be the home of the country's earliest known Black baseball club was no small accomplishment for the city's miniscule Black population. While Newark had an adult (over 16) White male population of more than 23,000 in 1855, the adult Black male population was a mere 557.46 Most unfortunately, there is no record of the St. John's – Union game ever being replayed nor has any additional information been found about either team. That makes it almost impossible to determine how Newark's very small Black community learned about baseball. There was, however, sufficient interaction between the city's White and Black communities to suggest some possibilities.

A review of the occupations of the Black men listed in the 1855 Newark City Directory shows 13 barbers, eight coachmen and three waiters – jobs where the workers could have heard White men talking about baseball.47 Especially important are the 13 barbers who clearly didn't support themselves cutting the hair of the other 600 or so Black males. As different as life may have been 160 years ago, it's not hard to envision a group of White men talking about baseball in a barber shop, while the barber listened as he worked. And Black barbers were likely a receptive audience. Known as the Knights of the Razor, Black barbers used a craft that "grew out of the courts of European aristocracy" to establish a middleclass identity as artisans.48 And artisans, as we have seen, were one of the two groups most likely to take up the New York form of baseball.

The likelihood of this kind of interaction is even higher because of how close some Black men lived or worked to members of the Newark Club. Broad Street was, and is, the city's main thoroughfare while Bank Street intersects Broad not far from the historic intersection of Broad and Market. The addresses listed on the below chart are for both businesses and residences. Between 150 and 341 Broad Street, five properties occupied by Black men were near those of six Newark Club members. Similarly on Bank Street, two Newark Club members lived or worked near six Black men. Just one example is Frederic C. Dodd, founding treasurer of the Newark Club who worked at 311 Broad Street and lived at 341 Broad. If this baseball pioneer needed a haircut or shave while at work, he could go almost next door to 314A to Abraham Cook's barber shop. Or if Dodd preferred going closer to home, Charles Jackson's shop at 322 Broad was only a short distance from his residence at 341 Broad.49

Address	Name	Race
14 Bank Street	William Clinton	White
23 Bank Street	Abraham T. Cook	Black
28 Bank Street	John Harris - blacksmith	Black
32 Bank Street	Jefferson T. Ellis	Black
47 Bank Street	John O'Fake - Music Teacher	Black
58 Bank Street	Milton Baldwin	White
91 1/2 Bank Street	John E. Littel - barber	Black
104 Bank Street	Abraham Conover - coachman	Black
29 Broad Street	Jefferson T. Ellis - barber shop	Black
150 Broad Street	John P. Williams barber	Black
170 Broad	Jacob Wambold	White
249 Broad Street	Peter O'Fake - barber shop	Black
267 Broad Street	Oliver Halstead	White
269 Broad Street	William Clinton - Music Store	White
299 Broad	Luther Goble	White
311 Broad Street	Frederick C. Dodd - work	White
314 A Broad Street	Abraham T. Cook - barber shop	Black
322 Broad Street	Francis Harley - clothier	Black
322 Broad	Charles D. Jackson - barber shop	Black
327 Broad Street	Joseph Trawin	White
341 Broad Street	Frederick C. Dodd - Home	White
398 Broad Street	Tobias Seaman	White
404 Broad Street	James Wheeler - barber	Black
415 Broad Street	Luther Goble - Home	White

Another probable interaction between the city's Black and White communities is music. While there were doubtless multiple barriers to inter-racial mixing in antebellum Newark, a shared love of music could breach at least some of those barriers. Newark Club member William Clinton owned a music store at 290 Broad and lived at 14 Bank Street. It seems almost certain he knew John and Peter O'Fake, two brothers and popular Black musicians who performed at the Newark Club's first ball in February of 1856.50 The possibility of Clinton and the O'Fakes knowing each other was further enhanced by the proximity of their homes and places of business. Peter O'Fake, in addition to his musical career, operated a barber shop at 249 Broad close to Clinton's store, while John O'Fake, like Clinton lived on Bank Street.51 While there is no evidence either of the brothers played baseball, in the early 1860s, John O'Fake's son, Charles, was a member of the Hamilton Club, another Newark Black team.52 There's no proof these connections led to the founding of the St. John's Club, but they illustrate how Newark's small Black community could also have "discovered" this new form of baseball.

By the end of 1855, baseball was well established in Newark. There was something of a drop off the following year as the Olympic Club failed to return for a second season while the Friendship and St. John's Clubs were never heard from again. Fortunately,

the Newark Club, their junior counterparts and the Empire Club were still very much in business. 1856 proved to be only a temporary hiatus with many new clubs joining the ranks through 1860. Through the end of the final antebellum season, 52 clubs had been formed in Newark, equal to the combined total in Baltimore, Boston and Philadelphia.53 While no record of additional Newark Black clubs has been found, another team, the Hamilton Club played from 1862 to 1866.54 Newark men, not just of different ages, but also of different races had "discovered" their game. Once again, the barrel had been tapped from the New Jersey side.

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5 The *Orange Journal* of May 12 and May 26, 1855 makes reference to the Washington Baseball Club of Orange (neighboring community to Newark) that (based on the article) was organized in 1854. There is no record of whether this club ever played a match game.
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Round Town/Round Town Ball

By Bruce Allardice

A bat-ball game called Round Town (also found as "Round-Town," or "Round Town Ball') has been found in about two dozen sources. It appears to have been played at times from the 1850s-1890s in locations outside the northeast U.S., more particularly, MD, NC, OH, PA, SC, and VA.

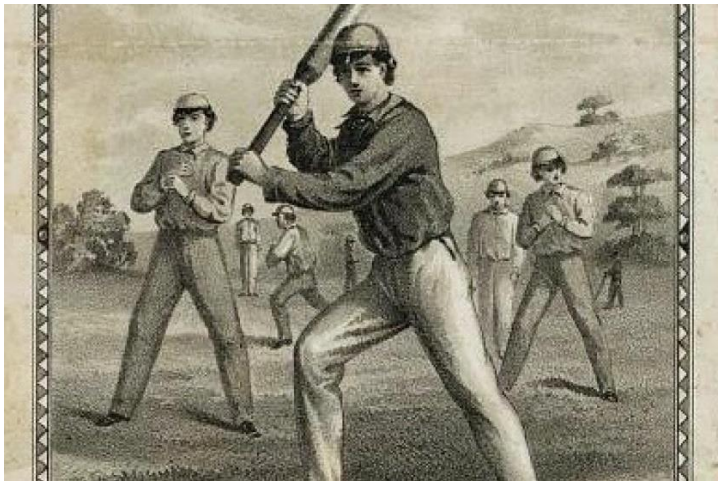
Protoball researchers have found two more or less detailed non-contemporary descriptions of Round Town. The variant name "Round Town Ball" suggests that the game was a variant, or renaming, of "Town Ball," the latter being the common name for various bat-ball games played in the U.S. prior to the 1857 New York Rules.

From the below descriptions, it appears the number of players on each side was flexible, and certainly not confined to the baseball nine. Plugging a runner is part of it. It appears the game had no concept of "foul territory." In short, it shares the common characteristics of Town Ball.

> "An Old Virginia Ball Game
>
> Mount Crawford, a town in Rockingham County, Va., was the scene of a novel ball game on, January 13 last, the occasion being a contest at the old Virginia game of ball known as "Round Town, " the weather being unusually mild for winter.
>
> This game is well understood and is much enjoyed by every country boy, though only a very few of their city cousins know the first rudiments of it.
>
> Forty-four men and boys were engaged in the game mentioned above, and they were the best throwers, surest catchers, and hardest strikers of the two neighborhoods. A large sized crowd watched with unabating interest the movements of the game.
>
> The game of **round-town** is played in this manner: Two sides are formed, the number of players of the division being equal. Four bases are used and are placed in the same manner as if they were being fixed for a game of baseball, although men are only placed in the positions of the pitcher, catcher, and first baseman, the rest of the players being scattered in the field where they think the ball is most apt to

be knocked. The first batsman on the opposing side takes his place at the plate, and he has in his hand a paddle an inch or two thick, and in which only one hand is used in striking. The pitcher delivers a solid gum ball with all the swiftness attainable, the use of the curve never being thought of, and it is therefore very seldom that a "strike out" occurs. The batter hits the ball at the first opportunity and endeavors to drive it over the heads of the opponents, for if it is caught on the fly or the first bound the runner is called out, and also if it is begotten to the first baseman before the runner arrives at the base. Should the runner reach first base safely he can continue to run to the other bases if he wishes, but his opponents have the privilege of hitting him with the ball, and as it is very painful to be struck with a gum ball, the runner is very cautious, and if he is struck he is counted out of the game, although should he reach any of the other bases he is safe.

Another batsman appears and if he makes a safe hit with the ball the runners can continue to move until stopped from fear of being hit with the ball. In case a man is on second base and a ball is knocked and caught on the fly or first bound, the runner must stay at the base until the ball is returned to the pitcher. Each side has only one inning and that continues until every man has made out: therefore if a man makes an out at the first time at the bat he is disqualified to play until all on his side have done likewise, then they take the field. If a player makes the circuit safely it is called a run." [See https://protoball.org/Round_Town_(Round_Town_Ball)]



"**OLD TOWN BALL TIMES**

How the Game Was Played in the Back Counties.

THE PARENT OF BASE BALL

Interesting Reminiscences of Schoolboy days in Little Perry Field and Fielders

“I’ve crossed him out!”

A look of unutterable disgust crossed the faces of the players on the one team, the audience yelled with amusement and the batter, who had knocked a "grounder” to pitcher, made a home run while the first baseman chased the ball into a neighboring cornfield. This was the result of trying a “phenomenal pitcher from the country” at a base ball game, and the "phenomenon’s” losing his head, for- getting that he was playing base ball and following a rule in town ball which put the runner out if thrown between him and the base he was approaching.

In some country districts even to-day the base ball fever has not struck old and young, and one can see town ball, untainted, played as it was years ago. ‘‘Ball” among all classes and conditions of men seems to have been a favorite exercise, and report has it that in Perry county [a county in PA just west of Harrisburg], near the old log block house, which still stands on the MacMillan farm as a monument of the border wars; many games of town ball were played between the Indians and whites during the frequent traces. Rumor also says that the Indians often outplayed their white brethren. Fifteen years ago in Perry county this was still the favorite sport of the schoolboy.

Almost all the pupils brought their lunch to school, but frequently when the excitement ran high over the recess game, time was not even taken for it. The game began as soon as the players, carrying a bat in one hand and a chunk of bread and butter or the common “snitz” (dried apple) turnover in the other, and could get to the field, and these would be eaten while the game was going on, or while the batters as "put outs" were sitting on the fence waiting for the big boy to "clear town." It frequently happened then that the big boys did not get time to eat their lunch, and many a broad back received a tanning because its owner had been discovered trying to satisfy the pangs of hunger during school hours.

When the field was reached, if the sides were not already chosen, two leaders picked up. These leaders were called "it” and were usually the best players in the school. One would wet one side of a flat paddle and the other would call “wet up” or “wet down.” The loser then would have to "toss the stick”—-a long rod—-to him and

the familiar process of grasping for the top of the stick would then be gone through with, This was repeated three times and which. ever one held the top of the stick twice had first choice.

The bases were many, sometimes a dozen being placed on the circle if round town ball was to be played or even more in a straight line if long town ball, for then the line of bases was to be run out about as far as the fielders were placed. The whole of the side not at bat went to the field; none of them played on the bases, but were sprinkled pretty evenly over both in and out-field. Fielders were to play on the runners' line and if a fielder blocked a runner be was put off for the rest of the game.

Play began as soon as the batting order was arranged. The captain of the fielding side chose a pitcher and catcher from his side and placed the pitcher on a spot about fifteen feet from the batter, and in that place he was compelled to stand when pitching. No spread-eagle and awe-inspiring waiving in air of the front foot preliminary to a pitch was allowed, and the pitcher was compelled to throw the ball in such a way that the batter could hit it. If the batter struck at and missed the ball three times and each time the catcher caught the ball, or if the batter hit the ball twice (he was allowed to hit the ball three times and run on any of the hits) and missed it the third time, the catcher holding the ball, he was out, but if the catcher dropped the ball the player was allowed another hit.

In **round townball** the fielders scattered themselves over a semi-circle bounded by a straight line passing through the first running base and the batter's plate, but as there was no foul line the fielders would sometimes be stationed even behind the catcher, especially if they thought the batter was trying to slip a ball back of him.

As in base ball the runner was allowed to steal another base whenever he could, but in no case could two runners be on a base at the same time, and if a runner was on first base he was compelled to run whenever the batter ran, and go as far as possible, only being careful to touch each base in passing. In long town ball it was sometimes a difficult feat for the runners to observe this rule, and several would be crossed out before the line would be in shape again, for the runners went out and back over the same line

In round town ball if one of the fielders bounced the ball twice on the ground inside the circle of bases while two men were on or a man was running from one base to another, it put the whole of the batting side out. For this reason, the sides were

frequently changed, for as there was no limit to the number of players and even girls.1

The object was fun as well as victory. Indeed, the common cry to the pitcher from the contingent on the fence whenever a little fellow came to the bat was: "He's a shaver; come up and give him an easy ball.” After the little fellow did hit the ball and was safely on the first base, no one of the opposition paid further attention to him, unless by accident he reached a place but one base from home, for he seldom failed to make some disastrous run and to put himself out before he could score.

The bats were any shape, both in width and length, but in one school the straight handled old hickory "split broom” was the favorite. The object of the pitcher was not to throw a ball that could not be hit, but one that could be hit. This added interest and made the game much more lively than base ball, for the base runners and fielders were constantly on the go; and if batting was hard, fielders were numerous.

The ball was generally the pride of its owner. A base ball would have made an excellent ball for playing town ball, but base ball had not appeared in those sections, so each boy made his own ball. All the material needed was an old gum shoe, which he cut in narrow strips, and an old knit woolen stocking. An old bootleg was taken for a cover, and after the gum and yarn were wrapped into a solid ball the shoemaker was called in and a cover, cut in shape like the parts of a cap, was sewed on.

The field chosen had only one severe requisite—size; for the base line would often enclose between a half-acre and an acre within the circle. Such a thing as sliding a base was useless and altogether unheard of, and so stones and even a few stumps were no serious objection.

Of course, special ground rules were always made and the most common was: “Over the fence (usually distant) is out.”

What jolly sport it was, too! What a rivalry there was among us all! How the perspiration poured down with the ardor of the play, even on the cold days of winter! How the bright sun shone or clouds lowered on the faces in the school waiting for the game! When the weather was clear it seemed that even the birds purposely mingled their songs with our joyous shoats, while neighboring woods echoed back the laughter. The heart of many a man goes back in fond recollection to that

delightful game near the little country school house." [See *The Times* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) - Aug 3, 1890 - Page 9]

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1 This rule seems unique to the Perry County game.

What's Wrong with Baseball? (1867)

Bob Tholkes

From a talk given at the Fred Conference, 2023. Citations omitted.

1867! A banner year for baseball! The surge in baseball participation and popularity in the years before the Civil War had resumed after the war ended in April 1865; and the version of baseball that became the modern game replaced all others. Dubbed a "mania", or "fever" by 1867, baseball was played and watched by more people and in more places than in any previous year. For the first time, the new national game is known to have been played in every state in the union and several U. S. territories. It was established in Canada, and had washed ashore on the exotic islands of Cuba and Oahu.

A deep dive into the thousands of references to baseball in 1867 in the print media, the only means of mass communication going at the time, takes a researcher down many sunken avenues of inquiry. The perennial question,

What's Wrong with Baseball?

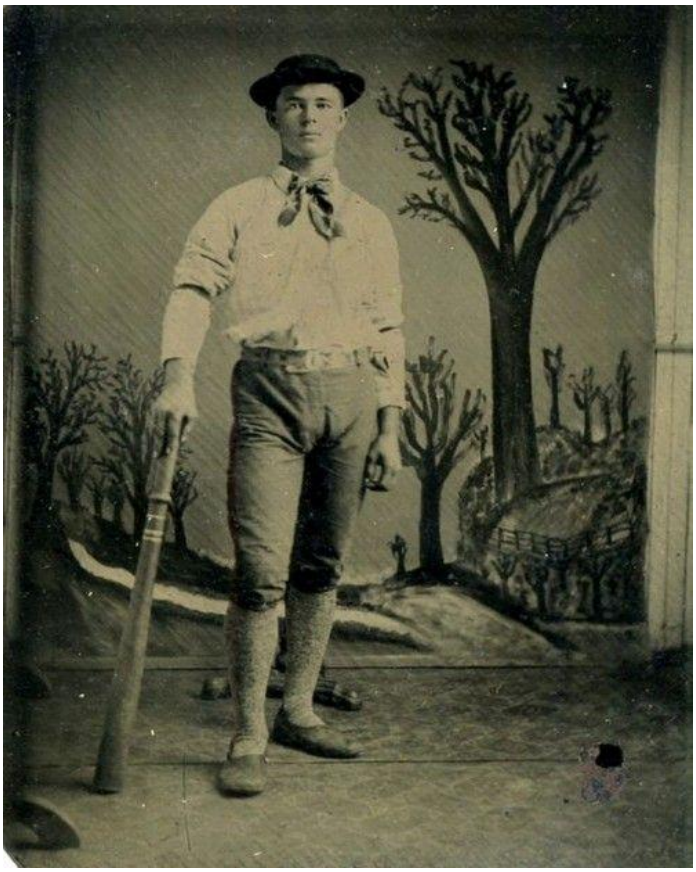
---is one of them. At the time, mass participation in a team sport by men aged 16 and over was a phenomenon, and the new national pastime's effect on the well-being of young men remained under scrutiny.

Today, the discussion in the media of "What's Wrong with Baseball?" primarily concerns professional baseball, and the major leagues in particular. In 1867, in the absence of openly professional baseball and leagues- major or otherwise- to speculate about, what issues were at the forefront?

Four major issues are reflected in contemporary sources. The custom of exchanges ensured that editors of newspapers and magazines all over the country would have the

opportunity to share their own opinions and promote or condemn those of others. Dates of the newspaper quotes are superscripted in the article.

Issue #1: All Play and No Work



Employers were not best pleased about employing baseball players. Quotes:

"When Christ said, 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' he meant the workingmen, and NOT base ball players."[11/16]

"We are glad to learn that the members of the craft in Mr. Burr's shoe shop have refused to admit any person in their teams who belong to a base ball club."[5/11]

Finally, an employment ad: *"Wanted: a steady, industrious young man, who neither drinks whiskey, nor belongs to a base ball club…"*[9/23]

Several circumstances resulted in this widespread criticism of baseball's effect on the work habits of young men:

- The former Confederacy, at least, had hardly begun to recover from the war. As a Tennessee editor put it, "a great number of the young men, in many

portions of the state, are devoting a great deal of time to this game, which might be more usefully employed, at this period of hard times."[4/10]

- Editors across the country had an excuse to be biased. Newspapers were employers; also, advertisers/employers paid the bills.
- All but a handful of adult players across the country were amateurs of working age. Most sources subscribed to the widely reprinted opinion that, "base ball, while excellent as an exercise and amusement, will not do for an everyday employment, not having yet a place among the productive industries of the country."[10/10]
- The most common work week was 10 hours per day, six days per week, and there was no daylight savings time or lighted fields; on top of which,
- Public amusements such as baseball were illegal on Sundays in most parts of the country, though reports of defiance were common. A squad of Cincinnati police, upon receiving a citizen complaint (probably more than one), broke up a large party of young ballists, most of whom scattered, but twelve were hauled in and locked up overnight.[4/8] The same befell a "mob", so-called, of New York City youths who invaded a ballground in Jersey City for the same ungodly purpose.[6/3] The notion that baseball was the cause of illegal activity by young men was a large blemish on its image.

A few sources tried to help the players out, for example: "Let them alone, Mr. Merchant. Better base ball than base something else."[6/22] Another reminded the employers who refused to hire baseballists of the moral and physical benefits claimed for such exercise, and that young men who kept fit were potentially the best employees.[6/28]

Issue #2: Play for Pay

Compensation for playing was nothing new in 1867. Prizes in cash or merchandise, usually baseball equipment, dated back several years. But, as one editor fulminated,

“Not even a game at base ball can be played now-a-days without a bait of a thousand dollars or so to spur on the contestants.”[1/15] Also dating back several years were forms of hidden professionalism. Instead of a salary, star players were compensated indirectly, through employment dependent on their club membership (and not allowed to hamper their participation in baseball), payment of expenses, and waiver of club dues, practices that can be traced to the 1850s. In 1865, compensation for playing baseball become associated in the public mind with dishonesty, when three players so compensated were paid by gamblers to “heave”, as it was called, a game in New York City. In the opinion, apparently, of a sufficient number of National Association of Base Ball Players member clubs, the situation was not in the best interests of the game, and the rule was changed for 1867. As one paper explained:

“By the new National Association rules, no professional is permitted to take part in a match game, and any club paying any person for playing is debarred from all the benefits of the association. There is no doubt of the immense good that will be effected by this arrangement.”[3/12]

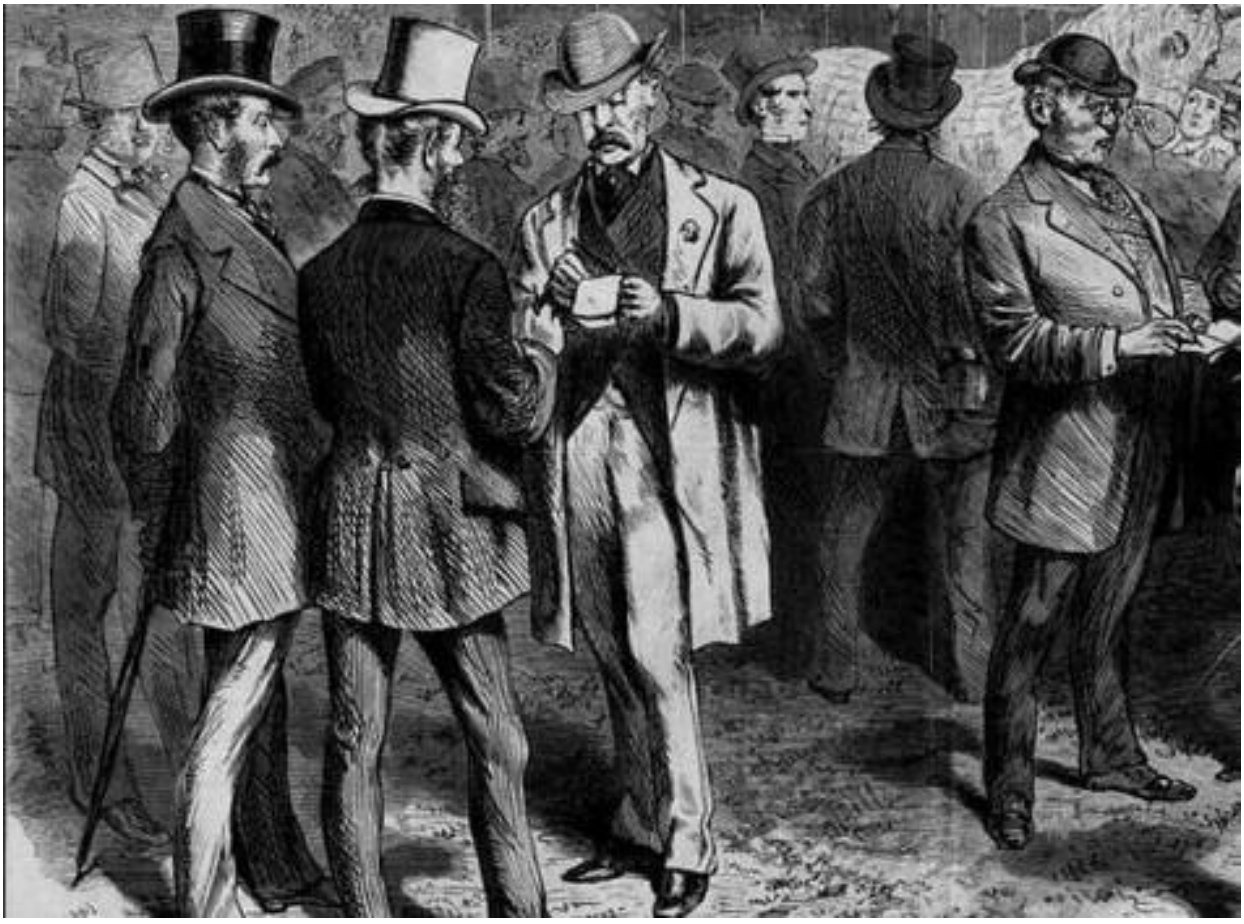
Is this the opinion of an out-of-touch scribbler at a small-town weekly? No. It originated in a major metropolitan daily that covered baseball regularly, the *New York World.* It was widely reprinted.

Greater New York City clubs in particular spent the season fending off accusations of paying players a salary. Such rumors spread to the hinterlands. A star player on the Union Club of Lansingburgh, New York, transferred to a New York City club, allegedly for cash, but returned. His club reported that there had been several such offers to its players.[7/24] Actually, in the case of the Union of Lansingburgh this may have been the pot calling the kettle black. The Union was described later in the season while on a road trip as being “on a short professional tour.”[8/15] A Greater New York City club touring New York State in October went prepared to identify its players’ employers, and these were noted in local papers, so that the locals could be assured that the players were untainted.[10/14] Individual players also needed to contradict reports of such conduct on their parts. A Jersey City player named by rumor as about to transfer referred to the rumors’ sources as “evil disposed persons”.[9/13]

Compensation went on, regardless. In Chicago, 17-year-old Albert Spalding had achieved his first notoriety by pitching the Forest City club of Rockford, Illinois, past the touring Nationals of Washington, D.C., a stunning upset. Despite criticism Spalding later transferred to the Excelsior Club of Chicago, having been offered a superior employment opportunity in the Windy City.[9/21]

Would-be employers of compensated players did need to beware of National Association player eligibility rules. A Delaware club which imported a pitcher and catcher from Philadelphia was prevented from using them in the decisive game for its state championship because the players had not transferred at least 30 days prior to the match, as the rule required. Such subterfuges, successful or otherwise, earned the sport the scorn of the public-image makers of the day, and had a different possible cost. In the Delaware case, the imported players were later dismissed, which, according to report, "restored harmony again amongst the club's members."[8/21]

Issue No. 3: A Game of Chance



Gambling on baseball was, quote, "the vital spark that in the beginning made it worthy of adult attention and press coverage."

Baseball historian John Thorn's conclusion highlights the fact that baseball was immersed from its beginning in the gambling-soaked culture of the United States in the middle of the nineteenth century. One editor fulminated, "Not even a game at base ball

can be played now-a-days without becoming an excuse for pure and simple gambling".[1/15]

The 1867 season was no exception. Warnings about the effects of betting varied from the polite (such as, "Managers of matches should prevent betting on the grounds…if they would maintain the popularity of the game"[8/6]) to gloom-and-doom pronouncements like, "base-ball is degenerating, from a healthful recreation to a game on which bets are given and taken"), and ("if base ball is allowed to degenerate to a field amusement for the express purpose of gambling on the result, it will sink to the lowest grade of sport."[9/5]

Betting was not confined to games involving clubs that compensated their players, as had been the case in the 1865 incident of dishonesty. Considerable betting occurred, for example, at the first of a best-of-three match for the championship of New England between the Lowell Club of Boston and Harvard University, both gentlemanly, amateur clubs. Game accounts noted about the betting, "the Harvards having the call, sixty to forty; and even heavier odds being laid upon their winning."[5/19]

Betting also extended to areas where the sport was new, such as a match at Ottawa, Illinois, the first ever played there, where, the press reported, "at least $300.00 must have changed hands."[5/23] Even a "muffin" match (a match between unskilled players) organized between two locomotive shops in Pennsylvania was reported as disturbed by rowdy bettors.[8/20]

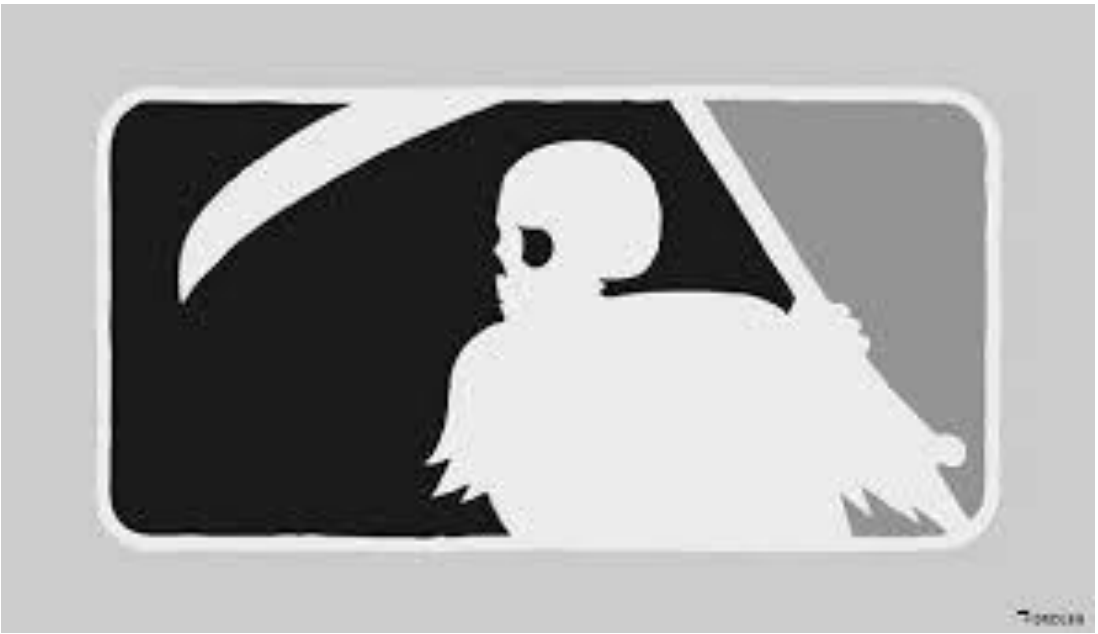
Nor did the matchup, no matter how uneven, necessarily prevent wagering. The Athletic Club of Philadelphia, perennial champions of its state and perhaps the first club to put some of its players on a straight salary (prompting the new National Association rule), annually toured the Pennsylvania hinterlands to promote the sport, resulting in preordained results against inexperienced amateurs. For one such match, at least, the betting turned to the margin, and odds were reported to be varying from a 5 to 1 differential in runs scored to 10 to 1.[7/13]

Wagering evidently went on from the beginning to the end of a game; a big inning causing a sudden change in a club's prospects of victory could bring a flurry of betting and swing the available odds. [8/6] And betting in baseball, the *New York Sunday Mercury,* a sporting weekly, reminded a reader, was different from betting in other sports, because, "The National Association of Base Ball Players does not countenance betting on baseball at all", so that "Bets are made on the score, and not on the legal or illegal result of a match", as was reported to be the case for such sports as cricket, rowing, and horse racing.[11/3]

After the 1865 incident of dishonesty, betting was always assumed to be behind the accusations of dishonest play which appeared in the press. A nationally-reported stir was caused when Spalding and his Rockford club pulled off its upset in the Nationals' first game in Chicago. Local bettors then placed bets on the visitors' next opponent, the Excelsior Club of Chicago, which had defeated the Forest City in state championship competition. The National then embarrassed the Excelsior to the tune of 49-4, prompting accusations that the visitors had "heaved" the Rockford game to allow members of their traveling party to make a killing. There is no way to get an accurate figure for the betting "handle" on this game, but the consensus in the Chicago press was that local bettors' losses ran into five figures; one Illinois paper used a report that $20,000 had been bet in total on the game. Later (and wilder) reports claimed $100,000.[8/2]

Clubs posted "no betting" signs at their grounds and issued condemnations of gambling, both apparently to no avail.

Issue #4: Fatal Attraction



"If it bleeds it leads" is a modern byword for producers of news sources. It had its equivalent among American journalists of 1867.

Misery may not love company, but newspaper editors, the supreme pundits of 1867, reliably reported the frequent occurrence of serious injury and illness to players. There was only a limited understanding of the health risks posed by exertion in the heat of summer, and no use of defensive equipment against the dangers posed by rough fields,

bats, steel spikes, and hard, lively balls. The nationally distributed *Ball Players Chronicle* printed a correspondent's estimate that two-thirds of those termed 'veteran ball-tossers' were marked by broken fingers, swollen and dislocated joints, and assorted bruises.[10/31] The article was widely reprinted. Dipping into sarcasm, a remark made the newspaper exchange rounds announcing that, "a machine has been invented for breaking fingers and stiffening joints as effectually as base ball."[8/26]

At the apex of such risks were outright fatalities. There had been the very occasional fatality among baseball players since at least 1859. The sport's spread to new, inexperienced participants nationwide meant that there would be more. Editors who for various reasons objected to the rapid growth of baseball enthusiastically spread the word about the several reported in 1867. A fatalities list as reported in the media, doubtless incomplete:

"Previous to the game of the Athletic and Bachelor, Mr. Norris Bell was struck on the side of the head with a ball. He played the game through, and went home. Inflammation set in, resulting in his sudden death."[4/24] One of the sporting weeklies protested that the unfortunate young man had actually died of, "congestion of the brain, induced by a previously diseased condition,"[5/5] but the sporting paper could of course be accused of bias.

"John Dunham, in an interval of a game sat down on the ground and began whittling. Another player running for the ball accidentally ran against him, and plunged the knife the length of the blade into Dunham's breast, just below the heart, killing him almost instantly."[5/1]

"Two young men in New York City, and one in Brooklyn, died last week from drinking ice water while playing base ball."[7/4]

"A young gentleman named James Brown, in playing base ball, in Richmond, on Friday last, over exerted himself in pitching, so much as to injure his intestines, from the effects of which he died yesterday evening…a *post-mortem* exposed the fact that his viscera had become invaginated while stooping in catching the ball. It seems that base-ball is not unattended with danger."[7/13 7/15]

"Lemuel Grosvenor Perry, of Brown's University…a *post mortem* examination of his remains showed that his death was caused by an abscess resulting from inflammation of the *psoas muscles*, brought on by excessive exercise at the time of the University's match-game of ball between the students of Harvard and Brown."[7/23]

"John Gray, of New Pottsville, died from the effects of violent exertion in playing base ball."[8/7]

“J. Allen, of Hazleton, Schuylkill county, died on Monday of last week of the effects of over-exertion in playing base ball.”[8/10]

“A boy died in Chicago on Thursday from injuries received from a blow by a base ball club. The blunt end of the club struck and ruptured the lower intestines, and, mortification supervening, death ensued. Noble game.”[8/27]

“Henry Gondolf, aged fourteen, while making a ‘home run’ was struck by a ball in his groin…the symptoms indicated an internal rupture…in spite of the utmost exertions of medical skill, he died.”[10/22]

“Carl Ruff, a young man, was killed by a sharp fence picket piercing his throat while he was jumping a fence, playing base ball. [10/11]

This last, at least, is an example of the case (or cases, more likely) where a widely reprinted report was subjected to distortion by a crusading editor. A later article reprinting the entirety of the original report about Carl Ruff revealed that the accident happened not during a game but after the players had stopped playing and were leaving the field.[10/18]

A final, widely reprinted report with a twist especially sensational for the times appeared in November. Michigan was one state—Pennsylvania and New York were others—where ladies’ baseball clubs were reported, with the following apparently tragic result:

“In Allen’s Prairie, a Michigan village, there is a base ball club composed of ladies. One day last week they played a game, when a Miss Howard was made ill by overexertion, mortification ensued, and she died on Friday last, after three days’ sickness.”[11/20]

It’s civic pride apparently wounded by the claim that its young women were so unladylike, Miss Howard’s local paper issued a denial, as follows: “Several cases of typhoid fever had occurred in the family during the last three months. Miss Howard was attacked, and after eleven days sickness died-- from the disease.”[11/26]

Likely inaccuracies notwithstanding, summing up the carnage near the end of the season was a conclusion that, “the accidents and the evils consequent upon base ball playing are numerous and conspicuous. There has been too violent reaction from the hitherto sedentary life of our young men.” [10/30] Another source calculated that, “The deaths from base-ball violence number about one per month”.[10/18]

Even taken at face value, is this list actually rather insignificantly short? Remember that the nation was in the wake of a war costing hundreds of thousands of its young men, and baseball was still in the shadow of its traditional role as child’s play. One such fatality would have been newsworthy.

One editor, at least, issued a terse counterpoint:

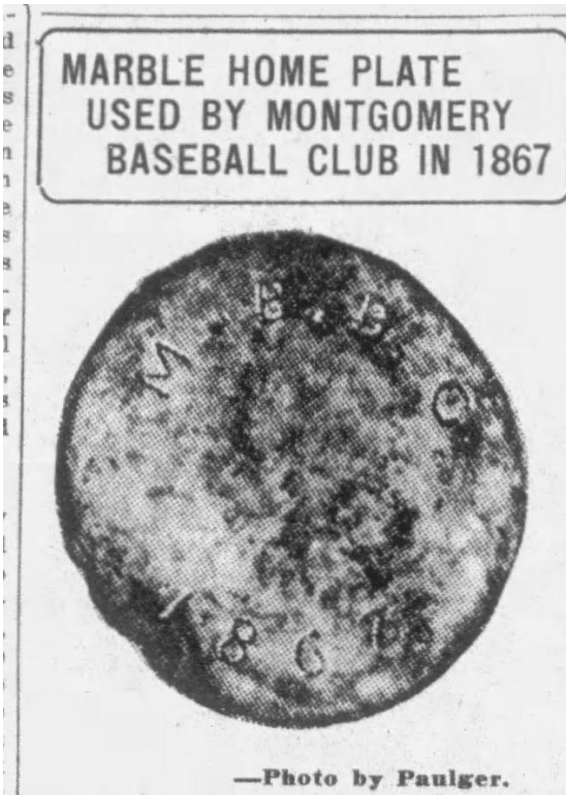
“Base ball kills one of its votaries every month. The exercise saves lives by the hundred.”[11/11]

Thus 1867. A concluding note: Refocus of the answers to the question, “What’s Wrong with Baseball?”, happened, but it took several decades, with the repeal of Sunday blue laws, shorter work weeks, night baseball, the uncoupling of baseball in the public mind (despite occasional scandals) from gambling, the spread of defensive equipment, gains in medical knowledge, and baseball as an admitted (if not universally admired) profession, with clubs organized as businesses and into major and minor leagues.

Potpourri

A Home Plate made of Marble?

From the Montgomery (AL) Advertiser, Aug. 14, 1927.


MARBLE HOME PLATE USED BY MONTGOMERY BASEBALL CLUB IN 1867

—Photo by Paulger.

Just as a matter of proof that baseball was played in Montgomery during the sixties, above is presented a photo of the marble home plate used in those days. The plate can be seen over the main entrance of Cramton Bowl.

In about 1920, so the story goes, the relic was dug up from Mr. Young's lot by some workmen employed by his son, Bernard Young, who gave it to Judge Walter B. Jones, at that time president of the city league. Judge Jones, in turn, presented the plate to Cramton Bowl.

in The Advertiser appeared the next

First Baseball Song?

Porter's *Spirit of the Times*, Nov. 8, 1856, prints the lyrics of what may be the first baseball song ever written. The music is taken from a ballad popular at the time, "Here's a health, Bonnie Scotland to thee."
The words can be found at https://protoball.org/ProtoPix:PSOT11856. The sheet music can be accessed at https://protoball.org/ProtoPix:First_Baseball_Song_Sheet_Music.

For more on early baseball music, see "The Music of Baseball," *Sports Illustrated*, Oct. 3, 1960.

First Reported Second-to-First Force-Out Double Play?

The "double play" has been part of baseball since its earliest days. Yet most of the (few) early reports of "double plays" referenced instances where the outfielders caught a ball on the fly and doubled up a wandering baserunner. Cf. the NYC *Times Union*, Aug. 6, 13, 1859. It's hard to imagine that the force-out double play didn't happen in the early years: rather, it wasn't reported as such.

With this in mind, an early newspaper report of a second-to-first force-out double play can be found in the report of this 1867 ballgame:

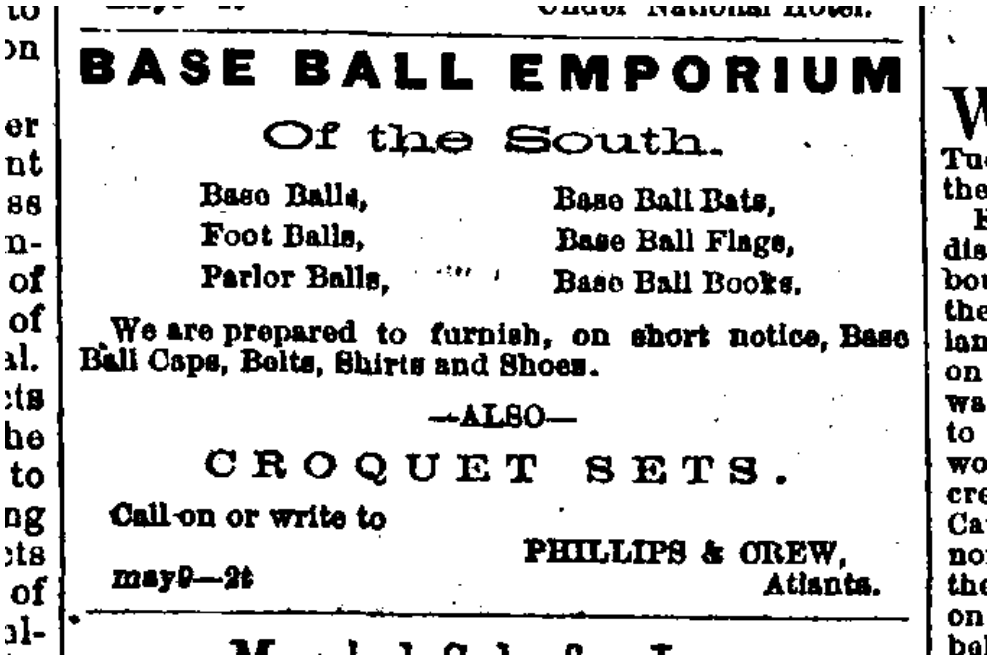
> "Kennedy to bat: made a fine stroke to right field, and made his first. Budd to bat, forcing Kennedy, who went out on the second, and a double play to first: Budd out, the ball being knocked straight to second base. …"

See the Chicago *Inter Ocean/Republican*, July 29, 1867, reporting on the 6th inning of a game between the Washington Nationals and Chicago Excelsiors. The visiting Nationals won the game 49-4.

For more on the evolution of force-out rules, see Hershberger, *Strike Four*, pp. 31-35. The New York Clipper, Aug. 17, 1861, reports a shortstop to second to first double play, cited in Morris, *Game of Inches*, 1:256. In response to a query, the *New York Clipper*, Sept. 2, 1865, explains the concept of a double play.

Ad for Baseball Emporium

This ad, in the Atlanta *Daily New Era*, May 9, 1868, is one of the first advertisements for baseball equipment in the southern states.



BASE BALL EMPORIUM

Of the South.

Base Balls, Base Ball Bats,
Foot Balls, Base Ball Flags,
Parlor Balls, Base Ball Books.

We are prepared to furnish, on short notice, Base Ball Caps, Belts, Shirts and Shoes.

—ALSO—

CROQUET SETS.

Call on or write to

PHILLIPS & CREW,
Atlanta.

may9—2t

Phillips and Crew, located at 22 Whitehall, sold prints, books, pianos and sheet music as well as sporting goods. Harvey Thomas Phillips (1824-99) was a Dartmouth graduate who'd moved to Atlanta during the Civil War. Tennessee-born Benjamin Baker Crew (1844-1916) had been a newspaper editor prior to entering the piano business.

Latest Protoball Additions

Total numbers—As of Aug. 11, 2023, the Protoball **Pre-Pro (pre-1871) Database** contained 12,063 clubs and 4,046 ballgames, with a further 4,800 games in the searchable Tholkes RIM file but only partially entered into the Pre-Pro database. Since the April newsletter, 291 clubs and 96 ballgames have been added.

Of the 291 U.S. cities in 1870 with a population of 5,000 or more, pre-1871 baseball has been found in 289 of them. The fishing cities of Gloucester, MA and Calais, ME are the only exceptions.

For the so-called **"predecessor" games** such as townball and cricket, there are 654 U.S. entries. Since the last newsletter, 29 such games/clubs have been added. The **"Glossary of Games"** includes 328 predecessor and derivative bat-ball games. The **"Chronology"** has 2,063 entries.

300 early U.S. **baseball fields** are described, including baseball fields in all 50 states. Since the April newsletter, 3 fields have been added.

ProtoPix: We're slowly adding photos and images of early baseball to the new "ProtoPix" section of Protoball--128 so far. It is hoped to eventually make this a one-stop source of images of early baseball. Submissions would be welcomed.

Finds of the Month

First match game between two African-American clubs? The St. John's and Union Base Ball Clubs of Newark were to play a match game on Oct. 24, 1855, as reported in the *Newark Daily Mercury*, but the game was rained out. H/t to John Zinn on this.

Tholkes RIM: Not a find, per se, but the Tholkes RIM database of match games through 1858 have been entered into Protoball's "Ballgames" section, as part of an ongoing project to integrate the RIM into Protoball's Pre-Pro database.

Research Requests

Elysian Fields Project: Protoball has opened a page on the state of knowledge about Elysian Fields and its influence on the evolution of baseball. Irwin Chusid and Jon Popovich have expressed strong interest in writing further about Elysian Fields, and will participate in this limited-term discussion. For a riveting presentation on Elysian Fields from a baseball researcher's point of view, see Irwin and Jonathan's recent Youtube presentation at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwJGWeWDHPA.

Protoball has found and listed baseball in **all but five of the world's 200 countries**. But we're still looking for baseball in the tiny countries of Andorra and Liechtenstein (Europe), Dominica (Caribbean), Timor-Leste (Asia), and Equatorial Guinea (Africa).

BULLETIN BOARD

John Zinn had an article in the Spring, 2023 *SABR Baseball Research Journal* on "A Stepping Stone to the Majors: The Olympic Base Ball Club of Paterson, 1874-76."

Bruce Allardice published an article on baseball in the Confederacy, titled "Baseball: the Confederacy's 'National Pastime'," in the Civil War blog *Emerging Civil War*. See https://emergingcivilwar.com/2022/04/16/baseball-the-confederacys-national-pastime/

John Thorn's always excellent *Our Games* blog has a July 31st article on the first Hispanic baseball players. See https://ourgame.mlblogs.com/pioneers-steve-bell%C3%A1n-48dbd75fa32f

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The **Frederick Ivor Campbell 2024 Conference** (the "Fred," April 19-20th at Cooperstown) will feature a panel discussion on "How Important Were the Knickerbockers?" The panelists will be "origins" gurus **Tom Gilbert**, **Bob Tholkes**, and **Bruce Allardice**, with **Bill Ryczek** as moderator.

Our friends at Love of the Game auctions currently have on auction an invitation to a Thanksgiving, 1863 Party sponsored by the Una Base Ball Club of North Bridgewater, MA.

Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Poison Ball