CRICKET AS A VOCATION:

A Study of the Development
and Contemporary Structure
of the Occupation and Career
Patterns of the Cricketer.

by

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INTRODUCTION

A. General Scope and Intellectual Concerns.

It is scarcely possible to conceive of more than a
handful of people in contemporary Britain whose lives have
not been affected in some way by the presence of an ever-
expanding, multi-dimensional phenomenon known as "sport".
Many actively participate in the playing of one of its
numerous variants; some "spectate" at "live" performances
while others, _via_ the media of television and radio, watch
and listen from the comfort of their own homes. The daily
editions of the national press devote up to one fifth of
their total print-space to announcements, predictions,
reports, and re-appraisals of sporting events. In the case
of some sports, notably horse- and greyhound-racing, daily
publications cater for the particular needs of the devotee
- and the compulsive gambler.[1] But the influence of sport
clearly extends beyond the immediate public following it
sustains. For large sections of British society, it
provides a staple subject of conversation. The particular
merits of both individual and team performances are, for
many, the focus of protracted debates at home and at work.

Today, the public appeal of sport is in no sense a
class-bound phenomenon. Though many sports have, at

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1 The followers of horse-racing, for example, have the
   choice of two daily papers, the _Sporting Life_ and the
   Sporting Chronicle, in addition to innumerable weekly
   and monthly periodicals.

various periods in their histories, been associated with one specific stratum of society and have consequently acquired elitist or popular stereotypes, the events which now make up their calendars are followed, in most cases, by persons drawn from every sphere of society. For instance, the population of the Members' Stand at Royal Ascot, or the pavilion at Lord's, may be recruited disproportionately from the upper strata, but the horses and jockeys, or batsmen and bowlers, which are the centre of attention, are discussed, evaluated, and even identified with, by individuals as familiar with Petticoat Lane as with Saville Row. It is through a capacity to provide an apparently unending series of cult-heroes that sport has made perhaps its most lasting impression on the every-day life of the majority of the sport-conscious members of British society. As well as stimulating public interest in a whole range of sporting activities, the images and fantasies evoked by the performance, and even the mere mention, of the heroes of this and past generations - Stanley Matthews, Denis Compton, Leonard Hutton, Stirling Moss, George Best, Lester Piggott, and Barry John, to name but a few - have represented a powerful influence in the socialisation of large numbers of children in modern Britain[1] The precise nature of the relationship between the growing popularity of sport in society at large and the adulation heaped upon its heroes is a moot point. While the mass media have projected a variety of sporting activities to a

1 And, of course, in other countries too.

wider and larger audience, many men and women for whom
participation in sport is now a full-time occupation have
made use of the opportunities so provided to project highly
individualistic and dramatised images of themselves. Without
labouring the point, we can accept that one product of the
interaction between these two processes has been, and still is,
a powerful influence making for the incorporation of sport
into the daily fabric of social life.

The components of this fabric have been claimed by the
sociologist as the focus of his particular intellectual con-
tribution. But with this statement of fact, we come face to
face with a strange omission. Despite its mass appeal - to
which even academics have been known to succumb - and the
intriguing complexity of its history and contemporary
structure, until 1960 the phenomenon of sport had been
almost completely neglected by sociologists. In a plea for
the establishment of a "Sociology of Sport", Gerald S. Kenyon
and John W. Loy noted that,

> "Despite the magnitude of the public's commit-
> ment to sport, as a social phenomenon it has
> received little serious study. The ubiquitous
> presence of sports has been taken largely for
> granted by social scientists and physical
> educators alike. A clear description, let
> alone explanation, of this social force is
> largely non-existent."
> [1]

Commenting on the neglect of sport as an area of study,
Eric Dunning has drawn attention to the fact that sport as
a social phenomenon has been treated by sociologists, indeed
by "intellectuals" in general, as a subject hardly worthy of
their concern.

[1] Gerald S. Kenyon & John W. Loy, "Towards a Sociology of
Sport", Journal of Health, Physical Education and
Recreation, (May, 1965), p.24.

> "The sociology of sports and games is generally
> regarded as a frivolous and useless undertaking
> and at best, as one of the marginal byways of
> the discipline." [1]

If the absence of sociological analyses of sport is incontestable, the causes of this regrettable deficiency are less obvious. In the same article, Dunning has argued that they may be sought in part in the continued, uncritical adherence by the majority of sociologists in their choice of subjects for research, to the work-centred values which originated in the Protestant Ethic.

A closely related tendency, noted inter alia by Anthony Giddens is that "we feel slightly guilty when trying to take our non-serious activities seriously." [2] Why should this be the case? Part of the answer, it would seem, lies in the fact that in modern society, play and games are still regarded by adults, to some extent at least, as essentially childish phenomena. When these factors are coupled with the preference typically displayed by members of the intelligentsia for the more "cerebral" and less popular forms of leisure activity, we have at hand at least the basis of an explanation of the sociologist's disregard for the phenomenon of sport.

Since 1960, however, the publication of a number of studies and articles relating to sport has suggested that this trend may be in the process of being reversed. It is particularly encouraging to find that the "discovery" of

1 E.G.Dunning, "Notes on Some Conceptual and Theoretical Problems in the Sociology of Sport," International Review of Sport Sociology, Vol. 2, (1967), p.144.

2 A. Giddens, "Notes on the Concepts of Play and Leisure", Sociological Review (1963) Vol. 11, p.62.

sport has not been confined to any one aspect of the
phenomenon, or to the sociologists of any one country or
continent. In the U.S.A., work includes S. K. Weinberg and
H. Arond's study of the occupational culture of the boxer;[1]
David Riesman and Reuel Denney's description of the cultural
diffusion of football and its bearing on ethnic differentia-
tion and social mobility;[2] and Gregory Stone's analysis of
the structure of professional wrestling.[3] In England, the
work of Eric Dunning and Norbert Elias in the sphere of the
development of sport in general, and of football in particu-
lar, has been a powerful influence.[4] In Western Europe,
contributions have been made by Gunther Lüschen,[5] René
Helanko,[6] Paavo Seppainen,[7] and Kalevi Heinila.[8]

1 S.K. Weinberg & H. Arond, "The Occupational Culture of
   the Boxer", American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 57, (March,
   1962), pp.460-469.

2 D. Riesman & Reuel Denney, "Football in America",
   Perspective, 13, (Autumn 1955), pp. 108-138.

3 Gregory P. Stone, "Wrestling: The Great American Passion
   Play", in Eric Dunning's, The Sociology of Sport, p.301-328.

4 E.G. Dunning (ed.) The Sociology of Sport, (1971). This
   volume includes articles by Norbert Elias.

5 G. Lüschen, "Social Stratification and Mobility among
   Young German Sportsmen", in E.G. Dunning, op.cit., pp.237-259.

6 R. Helanko, "Sports and Socialisation", Acta Sociologica,
   vol. 22, (1956), pp. 182-195.

7 P. Seppainen, The Role of Competitive Sport in Different
   Cultures: Paper delivered to the 7th World Congress of
   Sociology, Varna, Bulgaria, 1970.

8 K. Heinila, "Notes on Inter-Group Conflict in International
   Sport", in E.G. Dunning, op.cit., pp. 343-352.

At the 7th World Congress of Sociology, held at Varna, Bulgaria, in 1970, a research committee devoted to problems in the sociology of sport was included alongside those related to the more traditional specialist areas - social stratification, religion, the family, and the like. It attracted the attention of sociologists from the U.S.A., both western and eastern European nations, and the U.S.S.R.

While this analysis of cricket and the cricketer is presented, then, at a time when sociologists are coming gradually to accept sport as a complex phenomenon worthy of their attention, it is not intended that this study should be regarded simply as a contribution to the "sociology of sport". Of equal importance in the aquisition, organisation, and presentation of the research data has been the desire to relate this analysis of the development of certain aspects of the game of cricket during the past three hundred years to the emergence and subsequent elaboration of a particular occupational structure linked to the game. In this way, it is hoped to further our understanding, not only of the complex historical processes whereby sport has come to play such an important part in our every-day lives, but also of the structure of a type of occupation which, during the past few decades, has been one of the most publicised in Britain and other western industrialised societies. As well as constituting an interesting piece of research in its own right, an analysis of this type of occupation may well benefit future work in the field of occupations more generally.

At this stage, it is important to stress that the concepts employed here in the analysis of the occupational structure of cricket are, in every instance, borrowed from

other sociological studies. The reason for this lies in
my contention that sporting occupations differ from the more
traditional types of occupations in degree rather than
essence. That important points of difference do exist is
not doubted. But it is not accepted here that these differ-
ences warrant the introduction of a new set of concepts and
theories. The actions and attitudes of members of such an
occupation as cricket can be explained in terms of the con-
straints and incentives which emanate from the structure of
the occupation in exactly the same way as can those of the
doctor or the dustman. It is, moreover, precisely by using
a common set of concepts that similarities and contrasts
between both the structure of particular occupations and the
behaviour of their members are best highlighted.

If the validity of this contention can be accepted, it
will facilitate not only the analysis of a relatively new
range of occupations but also a greater understanding of the
structure of occupations in industrialised societies in
general. In the past, what is known as the "Sociology of
Occupations" has suffered from the absence of a central
theory, or even an integrated conceptual framework, as a
guide to further analysis. As long ago as 1956, Raymond
Mack wrote,

> "Sociologists need a theory of occupations.
> We have a theory of industrial organisation
> by Weber out of Roethlisberger and Dickson,
> and more recently refined by Gouldner. We
> have a start toward a theory of industrial
> administration, thanks largely to Barnard,
> Whyte and the applied anthropologists. Our
> knowledge of occupations, however, is almost
> entirely limited to descriptive materials
> without any attempt at theoretic systemati-
> sation. The bulk of our data on occupations

> consists of facts which we possess because
> they were gathered together peripherally in
> research with some theoretical orientation
> other than that of a sociology of occupations." [1]

It would be naive to imagine that the shortcomings in the sociological analysis of occupations and careers can be remedied within the confines of one limited study of a highly special-ised occupation. In this thesis, an attempt is made to use clearly defined concepts in the analysis of data obtained from both primary and secondary sources. By relating it to other studies of the development of occupations, sporting and other-wise, it is hoped that some contribution may be made towards the establishment of an inventory of concepts, the existence of which will facilitate comparative analysis of a range of occupations. Such concepts do exist, although they have rarely been employed with sufficient precision to permit comparison between occupations to be made.

These, then, are some of the aims, hopes, and basic assumptions which have influenced the conduct of this study. The research on which it is based was carried out at the University of Leicester between 1967 and 1971. The analysis itself can be divided into two distinct, but developmentally related, sections. In the first, I describe and discuss both cricket's original form, so far as it can be ascertained, and the stages of development through which the organisa-tion of the game, and the occupation linked to it, have passed. In order to explain not only the type of organi-sational and occupational framework which characterise each

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1 R.W. Mack, "Occupational Determinateness: A Problem and
   Hypothese in Role Theory", Social Forces, Vol. 34, (1956),
   p. 20. Though Mack's comments refer to occupations, much
   the same can be said of sport, and of leisure more generally.

particular stage, but also the dynamics of change from one
to the other, the overall development of the game is related
to fundamental changes in the structure of the wider society
during the last four hundred years. In the second section,
an attempt is made on the basis of sixty depth interviews
conducted with Test and County players at various stages of
their careers, to analyse the contemporary structure of the
occupation and career of the cricketer, and to highlight
significant respects in which these have changed since 1945.

B. Problems of Theory and Method

The decision to incorporate both a historical and a
contemporary perspective on the game of cricket and its
full-time participants was taken in full knowledge of the
profound theoretical and methodological problems that it
would raise. In the first place, one has only to note the
frequently-expressed, mutual antipathy which has, and still
does, colour the relationships between professional histor-
ians and sociologists, to realise that the apparent irrecon-
cilability of the two disciplines over a wide range of
subjects is founded on issues which are more than merely
semantic. At the extremes of this conflict, it has not been
uncommon to find representatives of both disciplines challeng-
ing the entire intellectual apparatus employed by the other,
the metatheoretical postulates, the theoretical and concept-
ual constructs, and the methods of data-collection, refine-
ment, and application. To be confronted, then, by this
spectre of protracted and often embittered controversy is
no new experience for the sociologist intent on initiating
a piece of research.

In a thesis of this type, it is unwise to attempt to
avoid acknowledging explicitly the existence of these
difficulties. As they bring into question several assump-
tions which lie at the core of the intellectual perspective
that is sociology, any denial of their presence can serve
only to confuse matters still further. Moreover, recogni-
tion of their existence and, above all, of their intense
and protracted character, does not imply that they are

necessarily insoluble. Indeed, an unambiguous recognition
of the theoretical and methodological issues which, it is
claimed, divide history and sociology is likely to be a
necessary precondition of their resolution.

By way of introducing a consideration of some of these
problems, I would like to attempt to anticipate some of the
criticisms likely to be made of this thesis. In the first
place, it may be argued that it is, in fact, two studies,
one historical and one sociological, and that there is no
central perspective linking the two. As I have mentioned
earlier, the origins of this type of criticism may be found
in the more general intellectual differences which have
divided historians and sociologists. The presence of this
conflict can be related, in part, to the different paths of
development traced by the two disciplines rather than to
necessarily irreconcilable features in their approach to
substantive problems. Arguments based on the latter assump-
tion tend to be of an ex post facto nature; that is, they
are fostered by, and in turn bolster, the occupational
ideologies to which professional historians and sociologists
subscribe. Leaving aside the more general philosophical
question of whether a rigid distinction between the two
disciplines is legitimate, I would argue that in the case
of this thesis, any distinction between its "historical"
and "contemporary" sections can be based only on the type
and availability of the data used. There is no basis for
claiming that these data are applied in significantly
different ways. If this argument can be accepted, then the

contention that the intellectual perspective represented in the analysis in the first three developmental stages is "historical", while that found in the analysis relating to the contemporary situation of the cricketer is "sociological", becomes untenable. In addition, I would argue that there is a distinct intellectual focus which unites the otherwise temporarily discrete sections of my analysis. Within this study, the focus is always on structure - the structure of occupations, institutions, and most generally, the structure of British society. The basic assumption underlying the whole thesis is that there is a complex interactive relationship between the emergence and subsequent development of cricket as a sport and an occupation, and changes in the wider structure of British society, which can best be described in terms of a series of developmental stages.

Thus far, however, I have mentioned only one of the difficulties raised by developmental analysis. It is one thing to dispute the claim that the subject matters of history and sociology can be substantively differentiated. It is an entirely different matter, however, to claim that the type and status of the conclusions which can be drawn from the different sections of this study are the same. At this point, one must admit that there are several fundamental issues at stake. Given the present condition of sociology, it is not enough simply to ask whether findings derived from analyses of historical data are not necessarily more restricted than those based on contemporary data. For the very formulation of this question implies that the status of the latter type of conclusion is the subject of complete agreement among sociologists. Yet it requires only a common-sense

appreciation of the complexity of social phenomena to realise that this is unlikely to be the case. Any doubts thus raised can be substantiated by a brief glance at the volume of literature which is specifically devoted to the problems of inference and proof in the sociological research. In short, the question of validity is an abiding problem regardless of the type of data, or the methodological techniques employed.

In this study, the problems of deciding the level of generalization which can be sustained is particularly difficult. On the one hand, a large part of the analysis relates to the three stages of development which separate the first forms of cricket from its modern descendant. In this context, a particular problem concerns the employment of theories and concepts. As S. W. F. Holloway has cogently argued,[1] historians have typically failed to come to terms with this problem. On the other hand, even that section of this study which focuses on the contemporary cricketer, in connection with which one might be forgiven for supposing that no problem of comparable magnitude existed, in fact raises precisely the same issues. At the present time, sociology does not possess either a general theory or a comprehensive set of concepts which can be applied to the analysis of occupations and careers. Since this point contradicts the popular assumption that the intellectual contribution of the sociologist lies clearly - and perhaps only - in the facility with which he adds to our understanding of

1 S.W.F. Holloway, "What History Is and Ought to Be", in W.H. Burston & D. Thompson's, Studies in the Nature and Teaching of History, (1967). pp. 16-27.

contemporary societies, it is necessary to devote some time
to considering its implications.

To introduce a lengthy discussion of the problems
connected with the conduct of field research in the social
sciences would be to violate the limited licence of an intro-
duction. My argument can be stated very simply. Just as the
use of historical data must inevitably raise difficulties for
the sociologist bent on reaching conclusions which can support
high-level generalisation, so too, in many cases, does the
employment of contemporary data. Because of this contingency,
it is impossible to make that type of simplistic distinction
between "historical" and "contemporary" studies which, at
first glance, might seem plausible. The reasons for this
may be sought in the complexity of the type of data which
sociologists typically employ. It is exceedingly difficult
to observe the criteria of "scientific method" through what
often appears to be the infinitely complex mass of factors
which constitute the raw materials of sociological analysis.
These factors, power and authority relationships, emotional
ties, attitudes, beliefs, ideologies, and the like, do not
lend themselves easily to the type of precise, controlled
measurement which is the hall-mark of the natural scientist's
work.

This is not to say, however, that sociologists should
not, and do not, try to conduct their research work in a
"scientific" manner. A brief survey of the history of
sociological thought this century will illuminate the many
different ways in which they have tried to gain a more

accurate insight into the true nature of societies. It will also show, however, the unfortunate extent to which notable sociologists have advocated approaches to empirical research which tend to confirm the dubious assumptions upon which their theories are based. Many of the theoretical and conceptual problems experienced in the course of this study can be traced back to this marked tendency toward intellectual self-indulgence. During the past forty years, one of the most infectious vogues within the intellectual world of the sociologist has been an approach which C. Wright Mills christened "abstracted empiricism". According to Mills, writing in 1959,

> "Accredited studies in this style now tend
> regularly to fall into a more-or-less standard
> pattern. In practice, the new school takes as
> a basic source of its 'data' the more-or-less
> set interview with a series of individuals
> selected by a sampling procedure. Their answers
> are classified and, for convenience, punched on
> Hollerith cards which are then used to make statis-
> tical runs by means of which relationships are
> sought. Undoubtedly this fact, and the consequent
> ease with which the procedure is learned by any
> fairly intelligent person, accounts for much of
> its appeal. The results are normally put in the
> form of statistical assertions: on the simplest
> level, these specific results are assertions of
> proportion; on the more complicated levels, the
> answers to various questions are combined in often
> elaborate cross-classifications, which are then,
> in various ways, collapsed to form scales."[1]

If "abstracted empiricism" was characterised by its practitioners' obsessive fascination with quantifying socio-logical data, the controversies - alluded to in a previous paragraph - which developed around the notions of

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1 C.W. Mills, The Sociological Imagination, (Penguin, 1970), pp. 60-61.

"operationalising" concepts and "systematising" theories, were very clearly out of the same stable. Advocates of all three strategies were concerned with a desire to impose upon social reality, in addition to the logical order provided by philosophers, a methodological order which, it was felt, would facilitate the understanding of societies, as well as reinforcing the "scientific" component of the sociologists' professional identity. While "abstracted empiricists", as I have noted, sought to achieve an unimpeachable level of validity through the application of complex quantitative techniques in particular social surveys, "operationalists" saw the future of sociology as depending upon its practition-ers' capacity to incorporate measurable dimensions within the discipline's conceptual apparatus. In the debate which raged during the 1930s and 1940s, the advocates of this technique, particularly George Lundberg[1] took as a domain assumption the proposition that all comparison is measurement. If this approach was characterised as the expression par excellence of neo-positivism, behaviourism, and pragmatism, within sociology, its major critics came not from the middle ground of the discipline, but from its ultra-theoretical wing: the group to which C. Wright Mills attached the name, "Grand Theorists".[2]

"Grand theory", as epitomised in the work of Talcott Parsons,[3] involved an approach to social phenomena that was

1 George Lundberg, "Operational Definitions in the Social Sciences", American Journal of Sociology, (March, 1942), Vol. 37, pp.727-745.

2 C.W. Mills, op. cit., p. 30.

3 In particular, The Social System, (1951).

fundamentally different to that of both the "abstracted empiricists" and the "operationalists". One moves, as it were, from a stultifying fascination with deriving quantifiable findings to a myopic infatuation with constructing universalistic analyses. Just as the former was condemned by the very banality of many of its products, so the sterility of the latter became evident as soon as it was realised that no skein of wool was long enough to permit the sociologist to find his way through the labyrinthine maze of complex theories, concepts and variables which barred the way, so one supposed, to the discovery of general, if not universal, regularities in human behaviour.

Though all three approaches have since been widely discredited, indications of the influence they have exerted can still be found within the main-stream of modern sociology. This point can best be illustrated by examining one of the crucial similarities found within the work of sociologists who identified with these approaches. In each case, their study of social phenomena was based upon certain ontological assumptions about the nature of societies. Empirical and theoretical research proceeded from the supposition that those regularities in social life which the sociologist sought to identify, locate and explain, existed because they were incorporated within a larger, systemically-bounded unit, the society. The tenability of this conception of the real world was rarely, if ever, questioned. Consequently the feasibility of alternative conceptions, such as that enshrined in the Marxist intellectual tradition, was simply never considered. During the period when this conception reigned

supreme - _circa_ 1935 until _circa_ 1960 - terms such as "integration", "functional interdependence", "reciprocity" and "consensus", could be found repeated _ad nauseam_ in sociological analysis. Furthermore, not only did this conception dominate the sociologist's analysis of the substantive features of society, its structure, institutions and groups, it also came to dominate his approach to the entire process of research. In the sphere of empirical studies, the assumption that society could, and should, be conceived of as a functionally integrated entity led researchers to believe that the proper focus of their labour was the description of the form of those institutions which made up a large part of society. Little thought was given to discovering either the ways in which these structural features were related, or the reasons why these relationships formed the fabric of an on-going society. Since society was seen as a functionally integrated unit, it followed that sociological research based on this notion would carry strong teleological overtones. No thought had to be given to whether the real relationships between the phenomena being studied were consonant with those suggested by the general theoretical model of society. In short, as the following statement by Paul Lazarsfeld indicates, research was seen as little more than the accumulation of facts into preconceived categories.

> "Empirical sciences have to work on specific
> problems and build up broader knowledge by
> putting together the results of many minute,
> careful, and time-consuming investigations.
> It is certainly desirable that more students
> turn to social sciences. But not because this
> will save the world over-night; it is rather
> because this will somewhat accelerate the hard
> task of developing in the end an integrated

social science which can help us to understanding
and control social affairs." [1]

Leaving aside its dubious political implications, this
statement outlines a research plan which, if employed, would
reduce the entire research process to a series of "minute"
studies. The assumption is that the resulting findings
could be "put together", and that the end-product would be
an "integrated social science".

General assumptions of similar origin can be found
embedded within much of the theoretical research carried out
during the period. When sociologists grew wary of enmeshing
themselves in the vast edifice that is Parsonian theory,
they sought instead, in the words of Robert Merton, for
"theories of the middle range". According to Merton, these
were

> "Theories intermediate to the minor working
> hypotheses evolved in abundance during the
> day-to-day routines of research, and the all-
> inclusive speculations comprising a master
> conceptual scheme from which it is hoped to
> derive a very large number of empirically
> observed uniformities of social behaviour." [2]

The Mertonian ideal of sociological theory undoubtedly
represented a more subtle and sophisticated conception of
both the nature of social structure, and the functions of
theory in relation to empirical research. But it did not
eschew the ontological assumptions which characterised
"grand theory". While the basis of social integration was
expanded to take account of factors beyond the normative

1 Quoted in C.W. Mills, op.cit., p. 76.

2 R.K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, (New
   York, 1948), pp.5-6.

level of reality, "middle range" theory continued to
embrace as a fundamental meta-theoretical postulate the
notion of post-feudal societies as essentially consensual,
systemic entities, in which integration emanated from the
relationships of functional interdependence obtaining from
a complex division of labour. Where the fact of a differen-
tial distribution of power was admitted to this master-plan,
it was treated as a residual factor; that is, as a product
of the division of labour, thus, by definition, capable only
of confirming the status quo, rather than acting as the
arbiter of social change writ large.

If one product of the "general functionalists' "[1]
conception of social structure was the establishment of a
partial, rigid, theoretical model at the core of sociological
thinking, a further ramification can be found in the unfor-
tunate consequences it had for the preparation and organisa-
tion of empirical research. It is this consequence of
"functionalist" sociology that is most relevant to my discuss-
ion of the general problem of validity in sociological analysis.

As a direct consequence of Merton's now famous call for
"theories of the middle-range", sociologists both in North
America and Western Europe have focused their energies upon
the creation and utilisation of "systematic" theory.[2] While
interpretations of the precise purpose of "systematic"
theory vary, the fact that it emerged as an integral dimension

1 A collective title applied to those sociologists who
  accepted a Mertonian rather than Parsonian conception
  of functional analysis.

2 R. K. Merton, op.cit., p. 39.

of functional analysis meant that, henceforth, research
tended to take on an increasingly ahistorical, formalistic
guise. Merton's treatise upon the necessity of incorporating
"formalised derivation" and "codification",[1] was intended to
"prepare the way for consecutive and cumulative research
rather than a buckshot array of dispersed investigations".[2]
Though the sentiment expressed here is laudible, it is not
unreasonable to argue that, far from realising these ambitions,
Merton's formulations have had dysfunctional consequences
for the conduct of research. Rather than leading to the
"co-development of viable sociological theory and pertinent
empirical research", it seems that they may have precipitated
the development of an orientation to research in which only
formally derived, testable, hypotheses were seen as legitimate.
That the complexity of social structure often made all but
the most banal hypotheses "scientifically" untestable was a
consideration ignored by sociologists too numerous to mention.
Moreover, since functional analysis itself espoused a static,
ahistorical, perspective of social reality, the research
produced by its practitioners tended to ignore large amounts
of historical data. Comparative analysis, too, was afflicted
by the same malaise. Studies tended to emphasize regulari-
ties in the particular features of different societies'
institutions, organisations, or whatever, rather than in the
historical processes by which these situations were arrived at.

1 Ibid., p.153.

2 Ibid., p.141.

The net consequences of these influences - both the
conflict between history and sociology, and the recent
dominance of functionalism in sociological analysis - is
that today there are precious few examples of the appli-
cation of sociological techniques of analysis to historical
situations and processes.[1] Even more unusual are attempts
by sociologists to construct the type of research study which
incorporates both historical and contemporary data. By and
large, it may be said that modern sociologists have failed
to produce theories and concepts which can be applied beyond
the confines of the immediate research situation in which
they are working.

On the face of it, this may appear an untenable criticism.
Some of the most popular concepts known to sociologists -
class, status, and bureaucracy, for example - can be, and
have been, employed in historical analyses. However, by
taking a closer look at these concepts, one can see that
their existence does not invalidate my criticism. In the
first place, far from being the product of contemporary
sociological thought, these concepts were first developed
in the works of Marx and Weber - sociologists whose histori-
cal approach to the analysis of social phenomena has been so
much ignored of late. In the second place, it is difficult
to escape reaching the painful conclusion that where modern
sociologists have attempted to employ these concepts, they
have totally ignored the specific character of the research

1 In this context, the recent analysis by Barrington
   Moore Jr. of the Social Origins of Dictatorship and
   Democracy, (1967), stands out as a notable exception.

in which the concepts were originally formulated. In recent
years, only David Lockwood's analysis of changes in the
structure of the clerical occupation can be cited as an
example of the way in which the concepts of "class" and
"status" can be used to enlighten historical analysis.[1]

Why should this be the case? Again, the answer would
seem to be intimately linked to the sociologist's protracted
love-affair with functionalist analyses, and closely related
to this, his inability to overcome the operational diffi-
culties created by a rigid adherence to the prescriptions
of "systematic" theory. The following may be taken as an
accurate description of the prescribed use of this type of
theory in empirical research:

> "Closed logical-deductive models which pre-
> suppose that co-ordinates can be established
> which will make possible linkages between the
> models and the open systems of the empirical
> world. When the general dimensions of elements
> or units of systems have been specified, the
> investigator can develop complex models of
> systems based on the various combinations and
> relationships of elements in them..... A funda-
> mental method in the construction of such systems
> is the comparison of specific, empirically open,
> systems with the abstract common elements
> necessary to any social system." [2]

Given this model of the research process, it is not
difficult to see why sociologists, by-and-large, have tended
to avoid historical analysis. As Bensman and Vidich stress,
the sheer complexity of social structures makes the establish-
ment of "co-ordinates" which relate theory to the empirical
world a particularly taxing problem. When the sociologist is

1 David Lockwood, The Black-Coated Worker, (1958).

2 J. Bensman & A. Vidich, "Social Theory in Field Research",
   in M. Stein & A. Vidich's Sociology on Trial, (New Jersey,
   1963), pp. 162-172.

confronted with historical situations, the range of these problems tends towards infinity. Testing, measurements of any kind, even comparisons in situations in which direct access to the necessary data is not possible, become, if not impossible, then at least arduous, laborious, and time-consuming operations. In view of the exigencies of time and money which constrain the research ambitions of most social scientists, ventures into uncharted historical waters seemed best avoided. The small-scale empirical study offered a far better chance of success, if success was to be judged by the number of publications entered on a curriculum vitae.

While the difficulties are evident, and the motivations understandable, one must ask whether the sociologist can afford to continue ignoring historical data, or at best, confining its role to introductory surveys of the background to the particular "problem" to be studied? Despite the great difficulties involved, first in obtaining and then in employing the requisite material, the sociologist's answer must be a negative one. In the first place, an awareness of history can make a positive contribution to the development of sociology. As S. W. F. Holloway has argued,

> "....just as sociological theory can revolution-
> ise historical research, so the study of the past
> can transform sociological theory. The social
> scientist who does historical research must not
> only be guided by the facts of sociological theory:
> he must also be prepared to reformulate his theory
> in the light of the facts he discovers. He must be
> ready to do in the study of the past what he is
> already doing in the study of contemporary society." [1]

1 S.W.F. Holloway, op. cit., pp. 18-19

In the second place, it is possible that there are other procedures in the conduct of sociological research which can facilitate the use of historical data without first requiring the sociologist to renounce either his commitment to objectivity and the "scientific method", or the ultimate aim of providing generalisable conclusions. Though Bensman and Vidich's argument relates explicitly to the conduct of field research in contemporary societies, there seems no reason why the strategies they suggest should not be applied in the case of research which combines contemporary and historical data.

While recognizing that the heuristic use of what they call "unsystematic" or "specific" theory is highly limited in so far as it cannot "produce generalised findings beyond the statement of the original problem", Bensman and Vidich claim that by sensitizing the researcher to a plurality of possible lines of explanation, this technique can give rise to "creative work". Further, they contend that the systematic application of "unsystematic" theory leads to,

> "the reconstruction of one's problem, field work,
> and past theory, into a further limited and
> discrete theory to handle the problem....(and)
> in turn, provides raw materials for other research,
> and these new problems as they are studied by
> other investigators in other settings contribute
> to the continuous cultivation of new theories." [1]

In the light of these contentions, it is instructive to consider the following assertion made by S. W. F. Holloway, this time in connection with the use of historical data.

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[1] J. Bensman & A. Vidich, op.cit., p. 168.

> "Historical research will not mean the abandonment
> of theory but it will lead to its improvement.
>
> The importance of historical research goes far
> beyond the passive role of verifying and testing
> theory: it does more than confirm or refute
> hypotheses. It plays an active role; it ini-
> tiates, reformulates, and clarifies theory. In
> the course of a piece of research, data that were
> not expected may be discovered. The data are
> anomalous, either because they seem inconsistent
> with prevailing theory or with other established
> facts. In either case, the seeming inconsistency
> provokes his curiosity: it stimulates the investi-
> gator to make sense of the data, to fit them into
> a broader frame of knowledge." [1]

The congruencies between the preceding statements are

striking. Both authors propose an approach to substantive

research which is somewhat different to the formalised,

deductive, process envisaged by Merton. On the one hand,

Bensman and Vidich argue that data can become more meaning-

ful when seen in the light of more than one theoretical schema,

while on the other hand, Holloway points to ways in which the

content and scope of theory can be increased by exposure to

new "anomalous" (historical) data.

The study presented in the following chapters proceeds

on the assumption that the assertions of Bensman and Vidich,

and Holloway, are realistic. To a degree, my acceptance of

the approach they outline was dictated by the exigencies of

the situation which confronted me at the start of this

research. Such historical data as existed had been provided

almost exclusively by historians. Given this fact, my most

pressing requirement was a number of theoretically sound,

clearly-defined, sociological concepts around which such

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1   S.W.F. Holloway, op.cit., p.19.

data as were available could be marshalled. But, in this respect, sociology proved to suffer from the same kinds of inadequacies as history. Those concepts employed most frequently by sociologists - class and status, aristocracy and bourgeoisie, middle- and working-class, for instance, - were used at a level of generality which completely belied the specific meaning they were first endowed with. In this situation, the strategy outlined by Bensman and Vidich proved to be particularly helpful. After an initial survey of the period I wished to focus upon - circa 1500 to the present day - I directed my attention to various "unsystematic" theories developed at an earlier date, in order to attempt to relate developments in the specific area of cricket, and its occupation, to changes in the wider structure of British society. This strategy had two general advantages. First, as a result of applying a variety of theories, I became sensitised to the significance of specific clusters of data within the problem area. For example, Weber's analysis of "class" and "status" illuminated the relative structural stability of pre-industrial Britain. Similarly, Marx's theory of class formation was particularly helpful in analysing the rapid and fundamental changes in the same society during the first half of the nineteenth century. Second, where my initial survey indicated the saliency of one or more theories, I had at hand an indication of the type of data which might profitably be sought through further field-work. Again, the theories of Marx and Weber were particularly fruitful in this respect.

One crucial aspect of this process of "evoking theory from observation"[1] should be noted here. The different

1   J. Bensman & A. Vidich, op.cit., p. 164.

theories of social change which were employed were not considered for their own sake, but in order that they might constitute practical aids to the successful resolution of the original problem. Moreover, as Bensman and Vidich point out, the role of each theory introduced was "not resolved a priori, but rather on the basis of the contribution of each perspective to the solution of the research problem."[1]

At certain points in the overall research process, it became clear that usefulness of several of the theories employed thus far was "exhausted". That is, they were neither imposing a plausible order upon existing data, nor suggesting areas in which additional data might fruitfully be sought. A case in point can be found in my analysis of the changes in the British class structure in the second half of the nineteenth century. Here, a straight-forward application of the apparently relevant section of Marx's theory of social change in fact hindered research by obscuring the more subtle and complex "coalescence of interests", which was to produce a more durable, numerically larger and relatively heterogeneous ruling class. Accordingly, I resorted to alternative theories which focused attention upon the conditions under which an unequal distribution of power and influence can be institutionalised within a relatively stable structure. The works of Pareto[2] and Dahrendorf[3] proved to be particularly

1   J. Bensman & A. Vidich, op.cit., p. 166.

2   Vilfredo Pareto, The Mind and Society, (New York, 1935).

3   R. Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (1959).

instructive in this context.

The introduction of new theoretical perspectives did not necessarily take place at the same time as data were being collected. In the case of their own research, Vidich and Bensman have noted that,

> "Successive modifications of our problem followed from an interplay of new data and new points of view. Only a portion of this process took place during the field phase; some was a result of the re-examination of field records and some occurred during the writing up of data." [1]

It cannot be doubted that the research process I have outlined does impose significant limitations on the level of inference and proof which could be sustained by, and claimed for, my final analysis. Perhaps the most important of these limitations is a consequence of the fact that the heuristic use of "unsystematic" theory cannot give rise to "generalised conclusions beyond the statement of the original problem". Attempts to generalise beyond this level will succeed or fail depending upon the sociologist's capacity to create higher level, abstracted theories which can systematically incorporate "the differences in the problems, in the levels of heuristic theories, and in the field situations in which the problem and the theory are specified".[2]

But to a significant extent, the construction of this study offsets such problems by accepting the limitations they imply. For the analysis contained in both the historical and contemporary sections was deliberately intended to be of a limited type - limited both with respect to the depth of

1 J. Bensman & A. Vidich, op.cit., p.168

2 Ibid., pp.168-9

investigation, and to the extent to which its findings
could be used as a basis for generalisation. Neither the
conceptual apparatus upon which the analysis of the develop-
ment of the occupation is based, nor the interview schedules
administered to modern players, were structured to permit
the derivation of quantified conclusions. Once these specific
conditions are understood, the process of relevant, construct-
ive, criticism can proceed.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN CRICKET

Part One   Cricket: The Folk-Game

Introduction

At first sight, it may seem a little strange to begin
an analysis of the development of a particular occupation,
that of the professional cricketer, at a time when not only
did this occupation not exist, but when even the existence
of the very game about which the occupation later came to be
constructed is open to doubt. However, some understanding
of the type of cricket which characterised the period when
incipient forms of this occupation were emerging is necessary
for at least two reasons: in the first place, it is only by
adopting this procedure that one can gain an idea of the type
and level of skills possessed by the earliest professional
cricketers; and in the second, it is only by this means that
one can hope to describe, let alone explain, the nature of
the transformation in the way of life of those who were able
to take advantage of the emergence of career possibilities
in connection with the game.

It is unfortunately the case, however, that such an
understanding cannot be obtained from a consideration of the
numerous histories of cricket at our disposal. Indeed, to
demonstrate the extent to which the majority of these accounts
suffer from blatant, ideological distortions is one of the
most important functions served by an analysis of folk-cricket.
Criticism of the less discerning accounts of the origins and

early development of the game is, in fact, a necessary precondition for gaining an accurate understanding of the structure and status of the game at the time when it was first beginning to emerge as a sport with which career possibilities were associated.

The middle and late nineteenth century stand out in many respects as being the most fertile period in the production by historians of interpretations of cricket. The names of Pycroft, Gale, and Lillywhite come immediately to mind in this context. Their work has had a lasting influence on our image of cricket's formative years, but it is one which cannot always be said to be particularly objective. Their writings tended to be tinted with unmistakable traces of Victorian self-righteousness to which was added a powerful legitimizing agent. Reading these analyses, one cannot escape reaching the conclusions that they were written with the aim in mind of filtering out all extraneous, undersirable elements. In this, the motives of the authors in question are not difficult to discern. They were motivated, at least in part, by a desire to reject once and for all the possibility that the development of cricket owed anything to non-indigenous influences. They could not, and did not wish to, accept that cricket possessed anything less than an unblemished ancestry, being linked, as it then was, to many of the most cherished features of the Englishman's self-image. In the nineteenth century, as now, scholars of cricket were confronted with the problem that the origins and earliest forms of the game were an area of research in which speculation easily outweighed fact.

It is, perhaps, only to be expected that in such a situation, many historians forsook some of the most rigorous methodological canons of their discipline in the course of searching for a universally acceptable explanation. However, the consequences of this intellectual levity have been considerable. By virtue of having been analysed according to the tenets of a loose, nationalistically-inclined, methodology, the earliest matches, and their participants, have been credited with degrees of elaborateness and skill which strongly resembled those of their nineteenth century counterparts.

In the course of this transfiguration, many of the most notable myths associated with the game were promulgated. To the unwary, these are capable of providing a more than acceptable varnish to gloss over the most obvious deficiences in existing analyses. In part, therefore, the purpose of this first chapter can be simply described as one of demystification. It is an attempt to separate the few extant facts from the web of Victorian ideology in which they became enmeshed. By this means, it is hoped to expose many of the "mysteries" which are held to surround the origins of the game as, more often than not, "unconsciously" or deliberately contrived ideological shields.

Chapter One   Ideology and Origin Myths.

It is almost certainly true to say that cricket has
attracted the attention of more writers than any other
English game. The intellectual and occupational backgrounds
that they come from are very diverse indeed. That cricket
should have attracted such attention has been explained
most often in terms of the unique attractions presented by
the game to those blessed with the gift of a "truly English
character". Both cricket and the "national character" are
seen as forming part of a complex, interactive relationship
within a broader chain of development which had its finest
expression in the flowering of Anglo-Saxon manhood during the
nineteenth century. Of this relationship, Neville Cardus,
perhaps the most eloquent of all writers on the game, has
noted,

> "It is more than a game, this cricket. It
> somehow holds the mirror up to the English
> nature. We are not hypocrites, but we try
> to make the best of things of contrary appeal....
> We are expedient as a people and not without
> humour. The history of cricket, made by English-
> men no more ethical than jockeys and pugilists
> and footballers, does justice like a play or a
> pageant to a national horse-sense, sentiment,
> and powers of accommodation." [1]

What is it in the nature of this game which excites such
a lasting, apparently inexplicable fascination? As a recent
analysis of the "cricket industry" makes clear, there are
many possible answers:

> "What is cricket? Part of the entertainments
> industry? An exercise in character training?
> An art-form or a variation on the peculiar

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1 N. Cardus, English Cricket, (1945), p. 9.

English cult of weather worship? Should it be
studied by sports writers or social psychologists?
Accountants or anthropologists?
    More has been written about cricket than any
other game. Whereas lesser games have been written
up by journalists and ghost-writers, cricket has
attracted men of letters. It has given more meta-
phors to the language than any other single activity.
It is a peculiarly English game: not suitable for
export and found only in places where Englishmen
have taken it. Cricket is an expression of the
national character, and, as such, inscrutable." [1]

The similarities between this and the previous quotation
are immediately evident. "It is a peculiarly English game"
is the phrase which captures perhaps most adequately, the
sense of pride, coupled with an element of mystery, which is
to be found in both these and innumerable other commentaries
on the game. Here, then, lies the answer to our question:
Cricket's fatal fascination - for historians, theologians and
creative writers alike - derives from the insight it is claimed
to provide into the creation of an easily identifiable,
internally consistent, national image - the "Englishman".

That cricket did, and still does, lend itself to the
imagination of many of the inhabitants of the British Isles
in a way which is, in every sense, phenomenal, cannot be denied.
The amount of coverage it receives in the national press and
other mass media is but one indication of the abiding interest
shown in the game in modern Britain. [2] Similarly, it cannot

1 "Planning for Entertainment", Political and Economic
   Planning, vol. XXII, No.401, (1956), p.3.

2 In advancing this claim, I am aware of the fact that
   according to other indices, - for example, recent atten-
   dance figures at county matches - popular support for
   cricket is declining rapidly. However, while such stat-
   istics undoubtedly indicate that the County Championship
   no longer commands the level of support that it once did,
   they do not necessarily imply a comparable decline in public
   support for the game in general.

be doubted that, in the scope of its history and the complexity of its present-day organisation, there is much to stimulate analysis and sustain commentary.[1]

For the creative writer - Dickens,[2] Meredith,[3] and still more recently, Wodehouse[4] - the successful assimilation of an element of personal sensitivity in the description of situations and the creation of imagery is a fundamental prerequisite. To the extent that it comes into conflict with this criterion, objectivity becomes an irrelevance. But the same claims cannot be met in respect of historians. In their case, objectivity - and the sense in which the term is employed here does not preclude the use of imagination - must remain, so far as is possible, the foundation and principal object of enquiry. In this context, a comment proferred recently by Sir Karl Popper is worthy of note. In the course of a discussion about different conceptions of intellectual enquiry, Popper suggested the following dictum:

> "Be bold in advancing speculative hypotheses but
> merciless in criticising and re-examining them
> thereafter."[5]

1   That, at the present time, no sociological analysis of
    any aspect of the game has been undertaken is not without
    significance. It may be related to a more general neglect
    of sport as a valid sociological problem.

2   There are numerous references to cricket in Dicken's,
    perhaps the most celebrated being the homeric encounter
    at Dingley-Dell, described in Pickwick Papers.

3   See the cricket match between Fallowfield and Beckley in
    Evan Harrington, (1861)

4   The early works of Wodehouse are redolent with images of
    cricket;see in particular, Mike (1906), and Psmith in the
    City (1910).

5   Sir K. Popper, "Reason and the Open Society", Encounter
    Vol. XXXVII, No. 5, (1972), p. 17.

Ideally, the cricket historian should seek to examine the particular features in the game's development within a frame of reference which utilises these data to enrich under-standing of the structure they reveal and of the functions served by the game in changing historical contexts. In this respect, cricket is a phenomenon worthy of study in its own right.

But it is unfortunately the case that many of the most frequently cited histories of the game would have been immeasurably improved had their authors observed Popper's advice. It is a characteristic of these analyses that they tend to be founded on what might be described, at best, as speculation and, at worst, as pure fantasy. Supposedly accurate, factual accounts of particular facets of cricket's heritage, or indeed of the entire span of its development, took on an entirely different character when tinctured with sizeable measures of Victorian, middle-class, morality. Many of the "theories" and "hypotheses" constructed during the second half of the nineteenth century were blatantly biassed in an ideological sense. Yet they continue to be widely believed in to the present day and have exercised a decisive influence upon the type of questions which contemporary historians of cricket have sought to answer.

Nowhere is the pervasiveness of this influence better illustrated than in the search for the origins of cricket. Not unnaturally, it is rare to discover a history of cricket - from Pycroft [1] through to Altham [2] - which does not devote

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1   Rev. James Pycroft, The Cricket Field, (1851); edited
     by F.S. Ashley-Cooper, St. James Press, Nottingham (1922).

2   H.S. Altham, A History of Cricket, (1962), vol. 1.

some attention to the subject of the game's ancestry.
The establishment of a satisfactory explanation to this
problem was, and is, seriously impeded by a general dearth
of evidence which existing methods of historical investiga-
tion have failed to overcome. But this problem has never
prevented some historians from attempting to formulate
explanatory models of the earliest stages in the develop-
ment of cricket. Since few of the historians concerned
appear to have had more than a minimal understanding of the
methodological difficulties involved in such an exercise, it
is not surprising that, in spite of the large number of
explanations provided, little or no consensus has been
established. As one of these historians put it, "there
seem to be as many opinions as there are antiquarians." [1]

By looking in more detail at these explanations, it can
be seen that they fall into two broad categories:

1. Explanations which tend to offset the problem of
data deficiency by employing theories and concepts which
are very often representative of the least sophisticated, and
more often than not, considerably outdated forms of psychol-
ogy and anthropology. One of the most popular concepts
employed in this context is that of human instinct. Thus
the movements associated with "batting" and "bowling" in
cricket are explained as expressions of innate drives.
Dr. Squire, for example, argues that,

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1   F. W. Gale, "Cricket", Once A Week (June 20th, 1863), p.23.

> "We need only to regard with perception the
> habits of some aboriginal race as yet uncon-
> taminated by civilisation; or with a little
> more science and imagination, the behaviour
> of the developing baby who, as any medico will
> tell you, has already progressed through
> successive stages of evolution prior to birth.
> From both these authorities come irrefutable
> evidence that, closely linked to the more
> generally recognised instincts are two others
> - the Instinct to Throw and the Instinct to
> Hit. And herein we trace the remote origin
> of Cricket. Cricket satisfies, even for the
> most cultured of moderns, these age-old cravings,
> and who will venture to say that these inhibitions
> would make the world a better place." [1]

A similar use of the concept of instinct is contained in

a series of articles, collectively entitled Old English Cricket,

written by H. P-T.

> "Cricket will be born again as it was born first
> and has been born a hundred times since. Its only
> parents have been the human boy and the right
> implements to hand, Cricket was essentially a boy's
> game - the natural spirit of the young savage
> whose instinct it was to throw things with a
> club. Heaven help the race whose ancestors had
> not possessed and indulged this inclination. This
> is all the infant game was when it became cricket,
> and it became Cricket as soon as that name was
> conferred on it, and only by that fact. The un-
> christened baby was born, maybe, thousands of years
> before." [2]

Several aspects of these passages are worthy of note. In

the first place, their authors expose themselves to precisely

the same type of criticisms as were levelled at the foremost

proponent of the theory of human instincts, William McDougall

(1871-1938).[3] McDougall, it must be noted, did not consider

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1 Dr. H. Squire, Henfield Cricket and Its Sussex Cradle
   (1949), p.22.

2 H. P-T, Old English Cricket, Nottingham, (1922-1929),p.13.

3 The classic statement of McDougall's views on human instinct
   is to be found in his Social Psychology, (23rd revised
   edition, 1936).

"hitting" and "throwing" as major human instincts though he did include "pugnacity" and "self-assertion" in the list he compiled.[1] Of the many criticisms made of McDougall's work, the following may be considered as particularly pressing:

(a) The tendencies described by McDougall et al are of widely different types. Such "instincts" as "throwing", for example, (which is far from specific as regards the situations that arouse it), cannot readily be put in the same category as impulses like sex and hunger, which involve specialised physiological mechanisms.

(b) Sociologists and social anthropologists argue that comparative studies of human communities have shown, or at least suggested, that much of the behaviour previously regarded as instinctive - for example, the behaviour involved in agression and acquisition - can be attributed to the influence of the institutions, customs, and values of the group in which the individual is brought up.

(c) Whether or not the concept of instinct be theoretically valid, many have argued that, in practice, it is not a particularly useful concept for explaining human behaviour, since human beings, once they have passed the stage of infancy, scarcely ever perform a purely instinctive action.

Another criticism which can be directed at these quotations concerns the universal appeal claimed for the typically English pastime of cricket. The assumptions which lie behind this statement are characteristic of the type of ethnocen-

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[1] The other instincts discussed by McDougall were nutrition, curiosity, fear, repulsion, self-abasement, sex, parental instinct, acquisitiveness and gregariousness.

tricism which pervades much of the literature on cricket, scholarly and otherwise, written in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

In the case of the quotation from H. P-T's <u>Old English Cricket</u>, a further comment is required. The type of "labelling theory" found within this passage - that cricket became what it is when the name was conferred upon it - compounds, as will be shown, a number of fundamental misunderstandings. Folk-games lacked central organisation. They were, in consequence, locally variable. Considerable variation existed, not only in the structure of such games but also in the names which were applied to them. As a result, it is not necessarily the case that modern cricket derived from games which, prior to the eighteenth century - the period when a national organisation and a uniform game-structure began to emerge - were called by that name. Nor can one discount the possibility that our modern game is derived from games which, in medieval and early modern Britain, were called by names which bear no resemblance at all to the term "cricket".

It would be a mistake to think, however, that explanations of the origins of cricket which rested their claim to validity upon the misapplication of scientific concepts were confined to the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. In one of the most recent histories of the game, for example, one finds the following argument:

> "Two hundred years later, the Irish were again
> found to have a strong love for the game: there
> seems to have been an affinity for it amongst
> what are loosely called Celtic populations of
> the British islands.

> These Celtic populations are far larger than
> is generally realised: recent mapping of blood
> groups shows that large parts of England have a
> population of a predominantly Celtic group and,
> most significantly, that there are even to this
> day large 'islands' of this blood group in Surrey
> and Hampshire.....These Celtic peoples are import-
> ant because cricket, when it first reached English
> history, is located in and around what had been
> a very isolated part of the country, the Weald of
> Kent, Sussex, Surrey, and Hampshire." [1]

Apart from the uncertainty which surrounds the notion of

"Celtic blood groups", Major Bowen's argument contains one

very obvious weakness. If one accepts the existence of a

special affinity between the "Celtic populations of the

British islands" and cricket, it is difficult to see why

cricket did not develop fastest and furthest in Wales,

Scotland, and Ireland. In fact, these are, by and large,

the areas where support for cricket has been, and still is,

at its weakest.

Finally, the significance placed upon the role of the

child in the early development of cricket should not be ignored.

Both Dr. Squire and H. P-T portray the first games of cricket

as being played exclusively by children. In this respect,

their ideas are strongly reminiscent of the Wordsworthian

philosophy that "The Child is Father of the Man". In both

instances, references to the child serve a symbolic function.

In the case of the development of cricket, as in the case of

the maturation of the human being, the later stages of the

process involved exposing the erstwhile pure product to

potentially damaging influences. For Squire, H. P-T, and

other historians, the significance of the type of cricket

which they believed to be played by children lay in the fact

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1 Rowland Bowen, <u>Cricket: A History of its Growth and Develop-
ment throughout the World</u>, (1970), pp.28-29.

that it retained "intimations" of the innocence of the
English national character in its pristine form.

Any sociological evaluation of these explanations must
inevitably highlight two particular failings. The first is
closely related to the ideological tradition of which the
works of Dr. Squire and H. P-T are a legacy. In the context
of this tradition - which found its expression par excellence
amongst the Victorian middle-classes - any conception of the
emergence and subsequent development of cricket which attri-
buted more than a peripheral role to non-elite social groups
was anathema. By invoking the image of the classless and
innocent child as the central agent in the emergence of the
earliest forms of cricket, historians of the game thus
avoided perpetrating what amounted to an unforgiveable
heresy. The second major failing is to be explained largely
as a consequence of the first. There is, in fact, little or
no concrete evidence to support the idea that the first games
of cricket were played exclusively by children. If, as seems
most likely, cricket first emerged as a folk-game, it follows
that its players were drawn more or less at random from among
the male members of the local village community. As such,
their influence upon the development of the game constituted
a distinct challenge to the Victorian middle classes'
conception of the elitist origins of cricket. By seeing the
earliest forms of cricket as a play form created by the child
- "the young savage" - historians whose work embraced this
traditional interpretation thus avoided being confronted
with a potentially irreconcilable set of facts.

2. In the second type of explanation, the emergence
of cricket is seen in terms of a direct evolution from another,
earlier game. Thus "stool-ball", "tip-cat", "cat-and-dog",
and "club-ball" have each been designated as "the acorn from
which the mighty cricket oak has sprung."[1] Each of these
games involved a stationary player striking a ball or piece
of wood away from his person with another, larger piece of
wood, or "bat". The object of these games was to "score"
by running between two or more fixed points before the
opposing team could return the ball to either of these
points.

On occasions, as for instance in the case of F. W. Gale,
the occurrence of a more complex line of evolution was
suggested:

> "Assuming that there was an interregnum between
> the days of tip-cat and cricket, and that club-
> ball intervened, no one can well doubt that cat-
> and-dog, tip-cat, rounders, club-ball, and
> cricket are all, so to say, blood relations."[2]

Assumptions of this kind recur so frequently in these
explanations that it is difficult to avoid reaching the
conclusion that, if no further concrete evidence is forth-
coming, an adequate and fully comprehensive analysis of the
origins of the game of cricket is inconceivable. At least
one of the game's historians reached a similar conclusion.
In 1866, F. W. Lillywhite wrote,

> "The origin of cricket is involved in the mists
> of obscurity; although the closest research from

1   A.D.Taylor, Annals of Lord's and History of the M.C.C.,
    (1903), p.26.

2   F.W.Gale, Echoes from Old Cricket Fields, (1874),p. 79.

> from time to time has been made both by the
> antiquarian and others who are interested in
> tracing the cause and effect. How cricket
> took its rise, and whence its appellation, are
> subjects which have furnished many a querest
> with a topic for discussion; and t'is just
> possible that this question will remain for
> ever unsettled, unless perchance some mouldy
> records should be disturbed from the dusty
> pigeon-holes of the archaeologist." [1]

The absence of a significant level of consensus among
cricket's historians highlights their failure to provide
any satisfactory explanation of the game's origins. At
this point in the discussion, it is pertinent to ask two
questions: first, why did historians, in particular in the
nineteenth century, consider it necessary or desirable to
investigate the origins of cricket; and second, why did their
attempts fail so palpably to come up with any generally
agreed upon solution? A tentative solution to the first
question has already been hinted at. After its adoption
by the landed aristocracy and gentry in the eighteenth century,
cricket continued as an elite pastime throughout the nineteenth
century. During this period, although it became as clearly
identifiable an English institution as Queen Victoria herself
and was increasingly referred to as a "national" game, it
never ceased to be dominated - in organisational and playing
terms as well as in ideology - by the upper-classes. It is
no accident that it was at this time that various expressions
associated with cricket became almost liturgical. "Play with
a straight bat" and "it's not cricket" became standard idioms
in middle and upper-class parlance. The behavioural and

[1] F.W.Lillywhite, Cricket Scores and Biographies, Vol 1,
(1865), p.VII.

normative standards around which the performance of the game was moulded enshrined many of the most treasured facets of the then ruling ideology. Cricket's role, moreover, in the perpetuation of these norms and values was not simply a passive one. It was an integral part of an educational system, the function of which was to sponsor the male progeny of an aspiring bourgeoisie and provincial gentry into the exclusive milieu of the upper-classes. Participation in the game, particularly within the confines of a public school, served to finalise this process by socialising the "elect" into the ways of the elite. In such a context, cricket came to form part of a type of process in English society which, according to Max Weber, can be found in all stratified societies in which upward social mobility occurs:

> "The parvenu is never accepted, personally, and
> without reservation, by the privileged status
> groups, no matter how completely his style of
> life has been adjusted to theirs. They will
> accept only his descendants who have been
> educated in the conventions of their status
> group and who have never besmirched its honour
> by their own economic labour." [1]

By the middle of the nineteenth century, cricket had assumed an importance which extended far beyond the boundaries of the playing field. It was, at one and the same time, a much valued part of an elitist way of life and one of the central agencies by which this style of life was perpetuated. And yet, as has been indicated, little or nothing was known of the origins of the game; this, at a time when ancestry and breeding were crucial aspects of social respectability.

1   From Max Weber, ed. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills, (1948), p.192.

Faced with this situation, nineteenth and early twentieth century cricket historians, the majority of whom identified with the norms and values of the upper-classes, saw, as one of their duties, the establishment of a direct, unblemished line of descent in the light of which the pastime of the "cream of English manhood" would be perpetually legitimated.

However, the pedigrees they and their successors have provided now appear to be totally inadequate. This weakness derives from two closely related circumstances. In part, it may be seen as an indication of the deficiences of the particular individuals concerned. In most cases, they cannot be said to be representative of the best traditions of historical scholarship. Their work tends to reflect the orientations of their primary occupations. Journalists from Denison [1] to Webber [2] have been constrained by the nature of their position to popularise the subject while theologians, particularly Pycroft, have been concerned with extolling the moral virtues of the game. But the characteristic inadequacy that has been described here must also, in part, be attributed to the failings of history as an academic discipline. The latter, by and large, has remained oblivious to the contributions which other, related disciplines, notably psychology and sociology, can make to an understanding of human societies, past and present. As a recent critic has noted, by ignoring these contributions, historians have needlessly restricted the scope as well as the clarity of their analyses:

1   W DENNISON, Sketches of the Players, (1847)

2   R WEBBER, The County Cricket Championship: A history of the Competition since 1873, (1957)

> "Historians are constantly concerned with the
> motivation of people in past situations: but
> they ascribe or at least they imply motives
> without basing their statements on any general
> theory of motivation and without taking into
> account what social scientists have written on
> the subject. In the same way, when historians
> offer alternative explanations of what caused
> a given event, they are frequently disagreeing
> more about the nature of causation than about
> the specific event." [1]

Predictably, the consequences have been most evident among the least discerning. The explanations of cricket's origins cited earlier constitute particularly apt examples of the way in which historians of cricket have employed concepts developed within the social sciences of their time without a clear understanding of their meaning, and hence, of their applicability. To break out of the confines thus imposed, it is necessary to admit a wider range of information - to see the origins and development of cricket not simply as an isolated phenomenon but as part of a complex, long-term social process in which a whole range of leisure pursuits emerged, and which was itself closely related to more fundamental changes in the structure of society at large. It is this type of enquiry that was envisaged by Norbert Elias in his analysis of the conditions under which sports first developed:

> "The problems of sport with which one is con-
> fronted if one adheres rigidly to a develop-
> mental approach cannot be brought nearer
> solution without close reference to the problems
> of the society in which sport developed." [2]

1   S.W.F. Holloway, op.cit., p. 19

2   N. Elias, The Genesis of Sport as a Sociological Problem,
    Pt. II, p. 14. (Unpublished manuscript)

Here, it is important to note that this approach, or perhaps, more accurately, the acceptance of its central theoretical premise - that social phenomena are inter-dependent - has exercised a significant influence over the conception, organisation and conduct of this study. The focus of enquiry is the development of particular aspects of the game of cricket - _viz_., its organisation, and the occupational and career structures that it came to support. By seeing the sphere of sport and leisure in general as an integral part of the structure of societies, pre-industrial as well as industrial, it is hoped that a greater under-standing of both the activities themselves, and their position in the development and contemporary structure of British society, will emerge. In addition, a study of this type may help to break down the long-established bias against treating sport and leisure as subjects worthy of academic research - a bias the origins of which may be sought largely in the work-centred value system of western industrial societies.

Chapter Two   The Social Context of Folk-Cricket

It is clear from the discussion in the preceding chapter,
that the majority of analyses of the earliest forms of cricket
have compounded two fundamental misconceptions. In the first
of these, the historians in question have assumed that the
game has always been played in the same way, and that it has
always been accorded the high status which it undeniably
possessed from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards.
It may be noted in passing that one consequence of this assump-
tion has been a general tendency among historians not to study
empirically the"folk-game" stage in cricket's development.
The second misconception referred to is closely related to
the first. Through their failure to understand the nature
of folk-games generally and that of folk-games in pre-
industrial Britain specifically, historians have been led
to misinterpret the patterns of development which culminated
in the emergence of "modern" sports. As Norbert Elias has
noted,

> "English pastimes did not always have the
> character of sport. They had in the earlier
> days, as Schoffer has already noted, the same
> basic characteristics as pastimes in other
> Western and Central European countries. If one
> can determine when they acquired the character-
> istics of sports, what these characteristics are,
> and why they were acquired in England first, one
> may not only contribute to a better understanding
> of the function and role of sport in nineteenth
> and twentieth century societies, one may be able
> to gain a better understanding of certain dist-
> inguishing characteristics in the development
> and structure of English society itself." [1]

1   Ibid., p.14

Over the past fifty years, the precise meaning of the concept of "folk" has become somewhat confused. In a developmental context, it has been argued - notably by Robert Redfield [1] - that all human societies were "folk-societies" until the beginning of city life: thus since folk-culture has always existed, a study of its origins is identical with a study of the origins of culture itself. However, in this study, the concept of "folk-game" is used as a classificatory term to group a certain range of games and pastimes, common to Europe until the seventeenth century and probably elsewhere until modern times, whose participants were recruited from the "common" people, as opposed to an aristocracy or a comparable elite group. "Folk-games" were characterised by being played "according to local conventions, with a high degree of spontaneous excitement, with relatively few restraints and with a wide scope for the use of physical violence". [2]

It must be recognised from the outset that the folk-games of pre-industrial Britain cannot always be distinguished with the same degree of clarity as the sports and games which have developed out of them. This is partly a function of lack of data, partly a function of the elapse of time since they were played - and, of course, of the intervening social changes - but more importantly of the fact that they were often what might be described as polymorphous in character. That is, they were not so highly differentiated as our modern sports: elements from a number of our much

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1   See in particular, Redfield's, "The Folk Society", American Journal of Sociology, 52, (1947), pp 293-308.

2   N. Elias, op.cit., p. 11.

more highly specific modern sports and games, in short,
were often rolled into one in these traditional folk-
games.

Any such folk-game was but one of a series of games
with a similar structure which were played in similar social
contexts in different parts of the country. Essentially
they were the leisure pursuits of people in rural areas or
of those in small market towns. In some cases, children
were the most regular participants, but when work obliga-
tions [1] permitted - on religious feast-days, for example,
and other traditional holidays - entire communities would
take part, men as well as women, the old as well as the
young.

The rules of such games were relatively few and relatively
simple. They were transmitted orally and by example rather
than in written form. The games themselves lacked a uniform
national structure. Considerable local variation often
existed between games with one and the same name. At the
same time, there were often quite marked similarities
between games which, in different areas, were called by
different names. Thus, a game which was called "stoolball"
in one area might have been very different from a game with
the same name in a different area. In similar fashion, the
fact that a game was called "trap-ball" in one area did not
necessarily mean that it was very different from a game which,

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1 This statement should, of course, be qualified since,
   as is the case in pre-industrial societies generally,
   work-obligations in pre-industrial Britain were not so
   rigidly enforced nor, indeed, so rigidly enforceable
   as has become the case today.

in another area, went by a name such as "dog and cat".

Although these games bear a striking resemblance in some respects to folk-games as played in other parts of Europe and even Africa, America and Asia, there is no evidence to suggest that they diffused from a single centre. They were integral parts of the indigenous folk-culture of medieval and early modern Britain. Their existence was perpetuated as part of a cultural legacy rather than being fixed by a central legislative and administrative agency. Such variations as occurred were a response to differing local traditions, local social changes and local topography. In short, these games possessed little autonomy in relation to the wider culture and social structure of which they formed part.

Though the present dearth of extant data prevents us from obtaining a complete picture of the folk-games of pre-industrial Britain, enough is known about their structure to permit the construction of three general types. The first, which included football, hurling and hand-ball, possessed the following, distinguishing characteristics:

(i)   the ball was propelled and controlled by a moving player who used his hands, feet or some kind of implement such as a stick to effect control of the ball.

(ii)   "points" were scored by throwing, kicking, or hitting the ball into a "goal", i.e. an object which had been selected as the "aim" or "goal" of the game.

(iii)   these were essentially team games in which

co-operation was of a specific nature. One

group of individuals collectively faced another

group, who also played as a collectivity.

In games which belonged to the second general type,
such as "goff", "bandy" and "pale-maille" :

(i)   the ball was struck by a stationary player away

from his person with a club, mallet or some

comparable device.

(ii)   the object of the game was to project the ball

either through the rings on the course, or into

the holes in it, in the smallest number of

"strokes" or "shots".

(iii)   these games involved direct competition between

individuals who took it in turns to hit the ball.

The games which belong to the third type - "stoolball",
"trap-ball", "tip-cat", and "cat-and-dog", - possessed charac-
teristics which suggest that they might have been part of a
common matrix from which cricket subsequently crystallized.
For this reason, it is necessary to describe each in some
detail. According to Joseph Strutt, the game of stoolball

> "consists in simply setting up a stool on the
> ground, and one of the players takes his place
> before it, while his antagonist, standing at a
> distance tosses a ball with the intention of
> striking the stool, and this it is the business
> of the former to prevent by beating it away with
> the hand, reckoning one to a game for every stroke
> of the ball; if, on the contrary, it should be
> missed by the hand and touch the stool, the
> players exchange places. I believe the same also
> happens if the person who threw the ball can
> snatch and retain it when driven back, before

it can reach the ground. The conqueror at
this game is he who strikes the ball most times
before it catches the stool...." [1]

In "trap-ball", the bowler was replaced by a crude catapult, or "trap", which tossed the ball "to a considerable height". In addition, the "striker" possessed a bat, and the game required marked boundaries :

> "It is usual, in a game of 'trap-ball' when
> properly played to place two boundaries at a given
> distance from the trap, between which it is
> necessary for the ball to pass when it is struck
> by the batsman, for if the ball fall outside of
> either, he gives up the bat and is out; he is also
> out if he strikes the ball into the air and it is
> caught before it grounds, and again, if the ball
> when returned by the opponents touches the trap,
> or arrests within one bat's length of it: on the
> contrary, if none of these things happen, every
> stroke counts for one towards the striker's game." [2]

In "tip-cat", the ball was replaced by a "cat" or small piece of wood. Strutt describes two methods of playing the game. In the first:

> "A large ring is marked on the ground, in the middle
> of which the striker takes his station: his business
> is to beat the cat out of the ring. If he fails in
> so doing, he is out and another player takes his
> place; if he is successful, he judges with his eye
> the distance that the cat is driven from the centre
> of the ring, and calls for a number at pleasure to
> be scored towards his game; if the number demanded
> be found upon measurement to exceed the same number
> of lengths as the bludgeon, he is out: on the
> contrary, if it is not, he obtains his call. The
> second method is to make four, six or eight holes
> in the ground in a circular direction, and as nearly
> as possible at equal distance from each other, and
> at every hole is placed a player with his bludgeon;
> one of the opposite party who stands in the field,
> tosses the cat to the batsman who is nearest him
> and every time the cat is struck, the players are
> obliged to change their situation, and run from the
> hole to another in succession; if the cat be driven

1   J. Strutt, The Sports and Pastimes of the Peoples of
    England, (1801), p.184.

2   Ibid., p.168.

to any great distance, they continue to run in the same order and claim a score everytime they leave one hole and run to another: but if the cat is caught by their opponents and thrown across between any two of the holes before the player who has left one of them can reach the other, he is out." [1]

The only other folk-game of this type about which we possess any detailed knowledge is "cat-and-dog". The following reference to this game is contained in an Etymological Dictionary, compiled by John Jamieson in 1808:

"Cat-and-dog; the name of an ancient sport.
Three play at this game, two are provided with clubs. They cut two holes, each about a foot in diameter and seven inches in depth. The distance is about twenty-six feet. One stands at each hole with a club. The clubs are called dogs. A piece of wood about four inches long, and one inch in diameter, called a cat, is thrown from one hole to the other by a third person. The object is to prevent the cat from getting into the hole. Everytime that it enters the hole, he who has the club at the hole, loses the club, and he who has the cat gets possession both of the club and the hole while the former possessor is obliged to take charge of the cat. If the cat is struck, he who strikes it changes places with the person who holds the other club: and as often as these positions are changed, one is counted in the game, by the other two who hold the clubs, and who are viewed as partners. This is not unlike the Stool-ball described by Strutt (Sports and Pastimes, p. 176.) But it more nearly resembles Club-ball, an ancient English game: ibid., p.183. It seems to be an early form of cricket." [2]

From these descriptions, it is clear that the games which make up the third general type shared the following characteristics:

(i)   the ball or piece of wood was struck by a

       stationary player away from his person with a bat.

(ii)   the object of such games was to "score" by running

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1   Ibid., p.169.

2   John Jamieson,D.D.:Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish
     Language, Edinburgh; (1808), vol. 1., pp. 78-79.

between two or more fixed points.

(iii)   these were team games, but team games in which
         co-operation between players was of a peculiar
         type. The sides took it in turns to "bat" and
         to "field". Members of the "batting" side,
         however, faced the fielding side individually,
         while the fielders played collectively. [1]

Though games like "stoolball", "trap-ball", "tip-cat",
and "cat-and-dog", may be considered as belonging to a
common matrix from which the modern game of cricket later
developed, there is no concrete evidence to show that a game
called "cricket" existed until around 1550. Before this
date, an acceptance or denial of the existence of a game
which, in all fundamental respects - bar the name - was
identical to cricket depends on the amount of credence given,
first, to pictorial representations, and second, to an etymolo-
gical analysis of certain words in the game's vocabulary.

In the search for the origins of cricket, highly imagina-
tive interpretations have been placed upon pieces of data
often drawn from the most unlikely sources. For example,
it has been claimed that evidence for the existence of cricket
before the middle of the sixteenth century is provided by an
illumination contained in a Decretal of Pope Gregory IX

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1   This typology is an extension of one developed by E.G.
     Dunning in his Early Stages in the Development of Football
     as an Organised Game, (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University
     of Leicester, 1961). The fact that it includes only 3 cat-
     egories must not be taken to exclude the possibility that
     other types of game existed. It is quite possible that
     one or more modern sports possess folk antecedents unlike
     any of the types suggested above. A case in point may be
     tennis.

(circa. 1230), which shows two figures, a young boy holding
a straight club and a ball, and an older man, presumed to
be his tutor, who is demonstrating a stroke played with a
long stick. [1] Joseph Strutt put forward a similar argument
in respect of another illustration:

> "In the Bodlean Library at Oxford, is a M.S.
> (No. 264) dated 1344, exhibiting a female
> figure in the act of throwing a ball to a man
> who elevates his bat to strike it. Behind
> them at a little distance appear, in the
> original delineation, several figures of both
> sexes, waiting attentively to catch or stop
> the ball, when returned by the batsmen." [2]

A significant aspect of the game described in this
passage is that it was played by both men and women, a fact
which lends support to the notion outlined earlier that folk-
games involved little or no differentiation in terms of sex.

In 1787, the London Society of Antiquaries published a
series of manuscripts pertaining to the Wardrobe Account of
the 28th Year of the reign of Edward I, 1300, which contained
the following entry:

> "Domino Johanni de Leek, capellano Domini
> Edwardi, fil regis, proden' per ipsum liberat'
> eiden Domino suo ludendum ad creag', et alios
> ludos per vicis, per manus propias apud Westm'
> IO die Marcii IOOs. Et per manus Hugonis
> camerani sui apud Newenton mense Marcii, 20s -
> Summa .. .. 6. 0. 0.

> (To Master John Leek, chaplain of Prince Edward,
> the King's son, for monies which he has paid out,
> personally and by the hand of others, for the
> said Prince's playing at 'creag', and other sports
> at Westminster, March 10th - 100s. And by the
> hand of Hugo, his Chamberlain, at Newenton in the
> month of March, 20s.
> Total .. .. £6. 0. 0. [3]

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1   Quoted in H. S. Altham, op.cit., p.20.

2   J. Strutt, op.cit., p. 125.

3   Quoted in H. P-T, op.cit., p. 23.

Interest in this entry centres on the identity of the
game "creag". If it could be shown that this was an old
English form of cricket, then the game could genuinely lay
claim to a royal ancestry. H. S. Altham's argument is typical
of the many attempts which have been made to prove this connec-
tion.

> "In the mother tongue of the northern branch of
> the Aryan race, there was a syllable beginning
> with 'cr', ending with the hard 'c', having for
> its letters every variety of the vowels according
> to the tribal predilection, and meaning staff or
> stick.... Furthermore, the termination 'et',
> though it sounds French, need not be anything of
> the sort; it may be really good old English stock,
> a variant of the diminutive terminal 'el'. Hence,
> 'cricket' is simply a small 'crick' or staff, and
> cricket bat a redundancy exactly paralleled by
> golf-club, hockey-stik, or billiard cue ....
>
> Reverting then, for a moment, to Prince Edward,
> let us now see what can be made of the puzzle.
> With the hard terminal 'c' of 'cric' a 'g' was
> virtually interchangeable; now suppose Piers or
> one of the other French play-fellows of Edward
> attempted to pronounce the word, he would sound
> the 'i' as 'ea' or 'ee', and straightway we have
> 'creaget', which the clerk of accounts, following
> his consistent practice, shortened down to 'creag'." [1]

Predictably, the debate on the meaning of "creag" has
proved inconclusive. The facts show only that a game involving
Prince Edward was played at Newendon on the edge of the Weald
of Kent in 1300. In the absence of any fresh evidence there
is no way of discovering the precise identity of the game.

The derivation of some of the basic terms in the vocabu-
lary of cricket is significant insofar as it illustrates the
varying regional influences on the crystallization of the
earliest forms of the game. The Oxford Dictionary of English

[1] H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 21.

Etymology [1] indicates that the words "cricket", "wicket", "bat" and "crease" are all of Anglo-Saxon derivation. "Cricket" derives from "cric-cryec", meaning a crutch, and "wicket" from "wiket", meaning a small gate. The word "beil" derives originally from Old French where it referred to a horizontal piece of wood fixed on two stakes. The word "stump" derives from the Scandinavian "stumpr" and does not appear in an Anglo-Saxon form. The English Dialect Dictionary [2] adds a further dimension to this line of argument. It locates "wicket" as past of Sussex dialect, referring to the entrance of a sheep-pen: this consisted of a small hurdle, two uprights and a moveable cross-bar known as a "beil". This word was probably introduced into the language at the time of the Norman Conquest and appeared primarily in the dialects of Kent and Sussex. Similarly, the word "stump" is given as part of Sussex and Hampshire dialect, meaning a portion of a felled tree left in the ground. The same meaning is attributed to the word "stool", while "stob" is included as another dialect variant. "Stool-ball" was played in Sussex, Wiltshire and Somerset, while "stob-ball" was found only in Gloucestershire.

These fragments of information, then, represent the sum total of our knowledge of the type of cricket which was played before the second half of the sixteenth century. Without the assistance of additional data, any attempt to probe further can only lead us into the realms of fantasy. While lacking

1   The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, (1949).

2   The English Dialect Dictionary, (1938).

in many important respects, this level of understanding does
at least permit us to draw certain conclusions about the
folk forms of cricket. In the first place, the emergence
of incipient forms of what may be described as "modern"
cricket was a sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth
century phenomenon. Before this period, no general form
of the game existed: rather a collection of localized
variations. In the second place, the derivation of a part
of cricket's standard vocabulary suggests that the game's
first distinctive form incorporated features of several folk-
games common to south-east England. Cricket may have origin-
ated as a local variation of one or another of these folk-
games or it may be an amalgam of several or all of them which
crystallized under specific historical conditions. The great
range of variations characteristic of folk-games was made
possible by the non-existence of either a formal code of rules
or a central organisation concerned, amongst other things,
with standardising methods of playing.

It is clear from a number of references, however, that
by the middle of the sixteenth century, cricket had begun
to acquire a relatively distinctive form, and that in this
form it had achieved considerable popularity in a variety
of different contexts. When, following the Reformation,
Stoneyhurst School was forced to move to Rouen, it took with
it the game of "Stoney Hurst Cricket". [1] In the Malden
Corporation Court Book of 1562, a Presentment against John
Porter alias Brown, and Robert, a servant, for "playing an

1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p.21.

unlawful game called 'clyckett'" is recorded.[1] The follow-
ing reference, found among the records of the Borough of
Guildford, describes a game of cricket that was played by
the boys of the Royal Grammar School in Guildford in about
1550.

> "Anno 40, Elizabeth. (1598) Memo, that atte
> this day came John Derrick of Guldeford afore-
> said gent, one of the Queenes Majesties Coroners
> of the County of Surrey, being of age of fyftye
> and nine years or thereabouts and voluntarily
> sworn and examined saith upon his oath that he
> hath known the parcell of land lately used for a
> garden .... and did know the same lay waste and
> was used by the Inhabitants of Guldeford to lay
> timber and for sawpittes .... And also this deponent
> saith that he was a scholar at the Free Schoole of
> Guldeford and hee and divers others of his fellows
> did runne and play there at crickett and other
> plaies. And also that the same was used for the
> Baiting of Bears in the said Town untill the said
> John Parvishe did enclose the said parcelle of
> land." [2]

Though these references are totally devoid of any detailed
information about the way the game of cricket was played, in
the absence of other data they must remain the major source
of our understanding of the earliest forms of cricket. In
the light of the limitations thus imposed, we must ask what
they can tell us of the structure of the game in the sixteenth
century, of the contexts in which it was played, and of its
status in society at large. Without indulging excessively in
speculation, it is plausible to argue that they contain at
least two specific points of interest. Firstly, they indi-
cate that the playing of cricket was a particularly popular
activity among school-boys: but there is no evidence that
cricket or any other game (save perhaps archery) if it can
be considered thus) was included as a part of schools'

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1   Maldon Corporation Court Book, 1562. This reference to
    cricket was discovered by Mr. F.G.Emmison, Essex County
    Archivist.

2   The Guildford Borough Records. 1586 - 1675 (NS)

curricula. Second, it is equally clear that, under certain circumstances, the playing of cricket could be deemed an illegal activity.

Taken out of context, these two facts would not appear to be particularly significant nor to be likely to yield any insights into early forms of cricket. But it would be a mistake to assume on that account that they are mere trivia. What must be remembered is that cricket was first played at a particular stage in the development of English society. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, England was still, in many respects, a typical pre-industrial society. Both her demographic structure and her economy were similar to those found in the under-developed nations of the modern world. Yet comparisons with the modern "Third-World", though revealing in some respects, can be misleading. By the sixteenth century, England was far from being a structurally static society. Political, economic and social institutions were experiencing, or beginning to experience, the first tremours in a long-term process of social change which was to culminate three hundred years later in the emergence of the first industrialised society. It is against this background that the earliest references to cricket must be considered. Only by focussing upon the wider structure of English society can one hope to understand why cricket, and indeed folk-games in general, developed as they did, and why they were frequently prohibited.

For most of the previous two centuries, England had witnessed a succession of internecine rivalries between

members of an aristocracy who, to all intents and purposes,
remained unmoved by the claims of loyalty and obedience
advanced by the monarchy. The feudal order - if it ever
existed - had been gradually, but irrevocably, displaced by
what has been termed "bastard feudalism". [1] In this form
of social order, members of the aristocracy maintained
standing-armies recruited on the basis of a cash nexus, rather
than by the assertion and acceptance of personal obligation.
The development of "bastard feudalism" meant, in effect,
that the monarchy became the prize for which rival factions
battled instead of the ultimate arbiter of order and control.
On many occasions, when central administration could only be
described as a myth, and when that elaborate system of obli-
gation and dependency which, in theory, functioned to cement
the social order in a feudal society was irreparably frac-
tured, a state of near anarchy was the norm. Recalling these
times, one contemporary wrote:

> "Nothing hath plagueth England more than the
> many breaches and ever unsure, never faithful,
> friendshyppe of the Nobles." [2]

Lest it be thought that this state of affairs was some-
how peculiar to the development of English society, one
should note that Max Weber singled out precisely this reliance
upon the honouring of personal obligations as one of the
inherent weaknesses of feudalism.

> "The vassal in the feudal order, for instance,
> paid out of his pocket for the administration
> and judicature of the district enfeoffed to
> him. He supplied his own equipment and pro-
> visions for war, and his sub-vassals did like-
> wise. Of course, this had consequences for the

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1   A phrase employed inter alia by Geoffrey Elton in his
    England Under The Tudors, (1961).

2   L. Humphrey, Of Nobilitye, (1563), p.57.

> lord's position of power, which rested upon a
> relation of personal faith and upon the fact
> that the legitimacy of the possession of the
> fief and the social honour of the vassal derived
> from the overlord." [1]

The replacing of the bonds of honour and obligation central to the ideal of feudalism by the cash-based, contractual relationships which distinguished "bastard feudalism" had the effect of admitting to the social order a permanent potential, and often real, challenge to the authority of the monarchy. One manifestation of the central authority's weakness can be seen in the existence of a number of folk-games, the playing of which constituted a serious threat not only to the maintenance of law and order, but also to the physical well-being of their participants. Several attempts to suppress these games were made. For instance, an Order from Edward III to the Sheriffs of the City of London in 1365 forbade "under the pain of imprisonment" participation "in the hurling of stones, loggats and quoits, hand-ball, foot-ball or other vain games of no value." [2] Another Statute, passed in 1477, sought to prohibit "playing at Cloish, ragle, half-bowle, quekeborde, handyn and handout"; in addition it laid down that "if any person permits even others to use these pastimes in his house or yard, he is to be imprisoned. Those who also play at any such game are to forfeit ten pounds and continue in gaol for two years." [3]

1   H. Gerth & C.W. Mills, op.cit., p. 97.

2   E.G. Dunning, The Sociology of Sport, p.117

3   Observations on the more Ancient Statutes, (1775),
     p. 421.

Though these pieces of legislation, and others like them, [1]
indicate the extent to which the dangers of folk-games were
realised, their very profusion demonstrates the ineffectu-
ality of the central authority's attempts to outlaw such
games.

That none of the pieces of legislation cited above refers
specifically to cricket is neither significant nor surprising.
In fact, there is a very simple explanation at hand. Since
the variations and fluidity inherent in the nature of folk-
games would make precise legislation against all these
activities impractical, if not impossible, the likelihood
is that a decision as to whether or not the staging of
a game of cricket constituted a threat to the maintenance
of order was left to the discretion of the official in
question. Moreover, by their very nature, the antecedents
of cricket were probably less likely to precipitate a breach
of the peace than, say, folk football. Characterised by a
high degree of emotional and physical spontaneity, by a
lack of restriction on either the number of players or the
size of the playing area and by the absence of a formal
code of rules, the latter represented a persistent threat
to law and order. The forerunners of cricket, however,
while also lacking formal codes of rules, involved minimal
degrees of physical contact as well as being much less
mobile games. During a match the playing area remained
constant and the actual position of the players within this
area changed little.

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1   For a more comprehensive list, see E. G. Dunning,
     op. cit., pp 117-8.

If the weakness of central authority was one factor which facilitated the performance of folk-games during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there is good reason to suppose that this situation altered significantly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Statute of Livery and Maintenance (1503) and the establishment of the Court of the Star Chamber are only two examples of the measures taken by the central authority to ensure its sovereignty in all matters administrative, financial, military and judicial. Historians, by and large, have tended to attribute the responsibility for this re-establishment of the authority of the Crown and Parliament to the efforts of the first two Tudor monarchs. Others have taken the argument still further by claiming for the Tudor monarchs the credit for having affected a profound change in the quality of social life. Lawrence Stone, for example, sees this as their supreme achievement.

> "The greatest triumph of the Tudor monarchy was the ultimately successful assertion of a royal monopoly of violence, both public and private, an achievement which profoundly altered not only the nature of politics, but also the quality of daily life. There occurred a change in English habits that can only be compared with the further step taken in the nineteenth century, when the growth of a police force finally consolidated a monopoly and made it effective in the greatest cities and smallest villages. In the early twentieth century, even the lower classes lost habits of violence which their betters have been obliged to give up nearly three centuries before." [1]

There are two points to be made here. The first relates to the indisputable fact that, for whatever reasons, the central authority was much stronger during the sixteenth century than it had been during most of the previous two

[1]   L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, (1965), p.200.

hundred years. It is in terms of the authority given by this restitution and expansion of sovereignty to pieces of legislation which previously had been largely ineffective - for example, the numerous Statutes and Orders prohibiting the playing of several folk-games - that one explanation of the illegality of cricket in the sixteenth century can be couched.

Gratifying though the provision of this solution may be, we should not be blinded to the fact that it is both limited and questionable. To see why, it is first necessary to return to the argument put forward by Professor Stone in order to examine more closely the interpretation he places upon the activities of the Tudor monarchs. The second point which arises out of a consideration of this argument - but which applies not only to Professor Stone's analysis but also to those of the majority of historians of the period - is that it is only by ignoring the contributions of sociology that one can accept that, in some way or another, the Tudor monarchs were responsible for establishing the dominance of the central authority. Though the redistribution of power and authority which occurred during the sixteenth century doubtless owed much to the personal abilities and ambitions of these individuals, it must not be forgotten that they were acting within a particular socio-historical context. The roles which they played were the product of a complex interaction of structural and psychological factors. As such, they cannot be seen as the sole instigators and arbiters of social change. By way of correcting the emphasis on individuals and personalities found in the work _inter alia_

of Professor Stone, we must look to see to what extent, and
in what ways, the structure of English society was changing
both prior to and following 1485 in response to forces which
were logically and empirically independent of the personali-
ties of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth I.
Through identifying and examining some of the forces present
in this context, our intention is to show they may have
directly and indirectly precipitated changes in the position
and status of many traditional forms of entertainment.

The key to an understanding of the processes of change
occurring within sixteenth and seventeenth century England
can be found in the notion of "bastard feudalism". As we
have seen, the autonomy achieved by sections of the aristo-
cracy during the previous two centuries rested to a very
great extent on their ability to _buy_ power in the form of
standing armies and groups of armed retainers. In this sense,
the growth of "bastard feudalism" was dependent upon moneti-
sation of the economy, a process which was itself inextricably
linked to a rapid expansion in international trade.

In a feudal society, the key element was a small-scale
peasant agriculture based upon the bonded serf. This system
was essentially a rural development. Its harmonious func-
tioning was founded upon the condition that, as Marx noted,
"the lord does not try to extract the maximum profit from
his estate. He rather consumes what there is and tranquilly
leaves the care of producing it to the serfs and the tenant
farmers." [1] The decline of feudalism and the rise of both

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1   T.B. Bottomore, _Karl Marx, Early Writings_, (New York,
     1964); quoted in A. Giddens', _Capitalism and Modern_
     Social Theory, (1971), p. 30

"bastard feudalism" and early capitalism involved a number of closely inter-related factors. First, there was the expansion in the number and size of urban centres. It was in these centres that the accretion of mercantile and usurers' capital and the formation of a monetary system which facilitated its use occurred. The growth of commerce, particularly in the case of England, of the cloth trade, stimulated an extension into the feudal economy of commodity exchange based on monetary transactions. Second, the willing involvement of members of the aristocracy in this form of exchange economy was accelerated by the more-or-less simultaneous recognition of the need to supplement their fast-dwindling coffers and the inefficiency of feudalism as a system of production. Throughout the second half of the fifteenth century, the co-existence of a declining aristocracy and the expansion of a monetary economy were conditions which allowed "the more prosperous peasant to discharge his obligations to the lord in a monetary form, or to free himself from the latter's control altogether." [1]

This, then, was the situation which obtained in England about the time of the accession of the first Tudor monarch. Even at this time, however, there remained two fundamental barriers to the development of a truly capitalist economy: the absence of a large, free labour force and the presence in towns of strong guild organisations which restricted both the size of economic enterprises and the free flow of mercantile capital. However, from around the beginning of the

[1]   Ibid., p.31.

sixteenth century, the significance of these two barriers
rapidly declined. Members of the aristocracy and gentry,
confronted by the spectre of the continually growing strength
of the Crown and Parliament, and encouraged by a sharp increase
in the price of wool, saw in the unrestricted expansion of
enclosures an opportunity to replenish their echoing vaults.
Whether or not the enclosure movement, stimulated as it was
by the sale of Church lands after the Henrican Reformation,
resulted in the wholesale replacement of the independent
peasant by the wage labourer, as Marx claimed, it did con-
stitute a powerful impetus to the expansion of capitalist
activities. Another factor which encouraged the transition
from decaying feudalism to burgeoning capitalism was the
"rapid and vast expansion of overseas commerce which devel-
oped as a result of the startling geographical discoveries
made in the last part of the fifteenth... principally the
discovery of America and the rounding of the Cape." [1]

One does not have to look far to see in the expansion of
capitalism a powerful source of opposition to many traditional
work and leisure arrangements. For the sixteenth century
capitalist - manufacturer or entrepreneur - labour was the
key to increased production and hence to larger profits.
In a situation where advances in technology were for the most
part non-existent, the only means of expanding total output
open to the manufacturer lay in increasing the number of
productive units. But while labour was the one factor of
production which was not in short supply, the efficiency of

[1]   Loc.cit.

the labour force was gravely impaired by, first, its
vulnerability to climatic hazards and seasonal fluctuations
in demand and, second, by the traditional attitude to work
which its members maintained.

In pre-industrial England, chronic under-employment was
a characteristic feature of the manual labourer's existence.
The amount of work which he could perform was restricted by
the seasonality of the demand for labour in agriculture.
One of the distinctive aspects of this type of productive
activity was its inability to sustain continuous employment.
A study of medieval masons[1] shows clearly the extent to which
the work of these craftsmen was subject to various discontin-
uities, and how it was frequently casual, seasonal or only
semi-permanent. There is no reason to suppose that the same
conditions did not apply to the unskilled and semi-skilled
labourer of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. All
were subject to "the many Interruptions they must receive
from a Redundancy or Deficiency of Water, want of Materials,
Intervention of Holydays, and other Contingencies."[2]

The inclusion of "Holydays" in this list of obstacles to
the performance of work tasks, however, serves to remind us of
that characteristic of the work life of the manual labourer
in a pre-industrial society which was most directly opposed
to the ethos of modern bourgeois capitalism. It cannot be
doubted that much of the under-employment from which he
suffered was voluntarily induced. A willingness to forsake

1   Douglas Knoop & Gwilym Jones, The Medieval Mason, Manchester, 1933.

2   Library of H.M. Customs & Excise: Excise Treasury Letters,
     1733-1745, fol. 247; quoted in D.C. Coleman's "Labour in
     the English Economy of the Seventeenth Century", Economic
     History Review (2nd Series), vol 8, (1955-56), p.290.

work whenever possible and a marked preference for leisure
as opposed to higher earnings have been identified by Max
Weber as two facets of a more general constellation of
attitudes to which he gave the title of "economic tradi-
tionalism". [1]   These attitudes, according to Weber, are to
be seen not unambiguously in "a man (who) does not 'by nature'
wish to earn more and more money, but simply to live as he
lives and as he is accustomed to live, and to earn as much
as is required to do so." [2]

Typical of this approach to work and leisure - a phen-
omenon known by economists as a backward-sloping supply
curve for labour - was the frequent observance of sundry
saints-days, and religious festivals, "which almost certainly
owed less to the demands of piety than to the attractions of
the tavern. [3]   From the point of view of the capitalist, not
only did the manual labourer take regular - or perhaps irregu-
lar, but frequent - holidays but he also displayed a dilatory
and undisciplined attitude on the occasions when he did work.
"Divers artificers and labourers", wrote Nicholas Bownde in
1608, "waste too much part of their day in late coming unto
their work, early departing therefrom, long sitting at their
breakfast, at their dinner, and noon-meat, and long time
sleeping afternoon." [4]

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1   The classic exposition of "traditionalism" is to be
    found in his The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of
    Capitalism; translated by Talcott Parsons (1930), pp.
    59-65.

2   Ibid., p. 60

3   Coleman, op.cit., p. 291.

4   Knoop and Jones, op.cit., p. 117

It is difficult to ascertain exactly how many working days were lost as a result of the celebration of festivals, religious and otherwise. In a predominantly Catholic country such as Spain, it has been calculated that days amounting to five months in a year were devoted to the celebration of saints' days, which, as one contemporary wryly observed, was "a religion that the London apprentices would like well."[1] In France, Colbert succeeded in reducing the number of saints' days celebrated to ninety-two per annum.[2] In England, particularly after 1536 when an Order was passed abrogating saints' days, it is unlikely that more than forty feast-days and festivals were celebrated by the entire population. In 1579, Sheffield miners are recorded as observing 13 saints' days each year, in addition to take a week off at Christmas, four to five days at Easter and three days at Whitsuntide.[3] The tinners of Cornwall observed a calendar which "alloweth them more holidays than are warranted by the Church, our laws or their own profit;" this excess, however, was attributed to the harshness of the conditions under which they worked.[4]

The importance of saints' days and other annual festivals in this context lies in the fact that they were occasions on

1   J. Howell, Familiar Letters or Epistolae Ho-Elianae (Temple Classics), 1.

2   C.W. Cole, Colbert and a Century of French Mercantilism, (Columbia University Press, 1939), II, pp. 499-501: quoted in Christopher Hill's Society and Puritanism, (1964), p. 144.

3   L. Stone, "An Elizabethan Coalmine", Economic History Review, (2nd Series), III, pp.101-2.

4   R. Carew, A Survey of Cornwall, (1602), p. 5.

which many folk-games were played, particularly those which
involved the participation of large numbers - often every
able-bodied member of the community. In many cases, class
and status distinctions operative in the wider society were
temporarily suspended. The "Cotswold Games" for example,
played at Campden in Gloucestershire over Whitsuntide,

> "consisted of wrestling, cudgel-playing, pitching
> the bar, leaping, throwing the sledge, tossing
> the pike, and various other feats of strength and
> activity; many of the country gentlemen hunted
> or coarsed the hare, and women danced." [1]

This is but one example of what must have been a general
phenomenon. Indeed, one writer has gone so far as to claim
that "most of the feasts in the Church calendar had, indeed,
some sporting connotation." [2] Probably the most important
religious festival from this point of view was Shrovetide.
The games played on this occasion "show more uniformity than
those found at any other festival and records of them come
from all parts of the country." [3] And of all the Shrovetide
games, football appears to have the most popular.
At this time, it retained many of the features of a typical
folk-game:

> "It was still a sport of mass participation, a
> riot for apprentices or an affray for the peasants
> .... Heads and legs were broken and deaths not
> unusual as the sides pushed, hacked and kicked
> their way through streets of shuttered shops,
> through streams and mud, waste land and fallow." [4]

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1   Quoted in the Rev. J. Pycroft, op.cit., p. 8.

2   D. Brailsford, Sport and Society (1971), p. 57.

3   Ibid., p. 53.

4   Loc. cit.

There can be little doubt that, in this form, football
and other similar games functioned to maintain the collec-
tive solidarity of rural communities in addition to providing
their members with a source of entertainment, exercise and
excitement. Festivals provided a context in which "frictions
between neighbouring communities, local guilds, groups of
men and women, young married and young unmarried men" [1]
could be ritualistically acted out in forms of combat -
football is but one example - which were sanctioned by tradi-
tion. In reading contemporary descriptions of these events,

> "One gets the feeling that the young members of
> such groups were often spoiling for a fight and,
> unless the tension exploded beforehand, waited
> with pleasurable anticipation for the coming of
> Shrove Tuesday or for any other day in the year
> which was ear-marked for such a public encounter." [2]

Celebration of saints' days at frequent intervals, then,
was one very important feature of life in pre-industrial
England. Folk-games found their most frequent source of
expression on these occasions. It follows, therefore, that
measures aimed at reducing the number of saints' days and
similar festivals celebrated by the majority of the working
population were, by the same token, threats to the persis-
tence of folk-games. By the middle of the sixteenth century
there is ample evidence that at least three powerful interests,
central and local government, bourgeois capitalism and Puri-
tanism, perceived a continued tolerance of folk-games as
detrimental to their best interests. This point is central
to the argument being advanced in this chapter. Just as the

1   E.G. Dunning, op.cit., p. 122.

2   Ibid. p.123.

burgeoning of capitalism imposed demands for greater
discipline and regularity on sections of the labour force,
and Puritan divines sought to achieve a wider and deeper
influence over the spiritual life of their congregation, so,
too, representatives of the central authority in town and
country laboured to increase the degree of order found in
society at large. The conflation of these three interests,
each emphasizing a need for greater discipline and control,
ultimately sounded the death-knell for many traditional
aspects of English social life. The term "ultimately" is
used because the impact of this pressure was far from uniform.
In the short term, rural communities tended to be affected
much less than towns and cities because it was in the latter
that the strength of the central authority, capitalism and
Puritanism was at its greatest. It was the major urban
centres in England that became the foci of the most rapid
and fundamental changes in customs, habits, ideas and beliefs.

Reference has already been made to the measures taken
by the central authority to limit and finally destroy the
autonomy of the aristocracy. By the middle of the sixteenth
century, those at the opposite end of the stratification
hierarchy were being similarly subjected to various restric-
tions designed to reduce the irregularity and indiscipline
which was characteristic of their work and leisure activities.
In attempting to gain greater control over the working popu-
lation, representatives of central and local government were
motivated by a number of considerations, of which national
security and economic expansion were probably the most pressing.

In the case of the former, many contemporaries believed that "casual labour was a good basic of a mob, and a mob a valuable part of a well-organised riot."[1] Expressions of this sentiment abound in the writings of the time. For example, among the reasons given for the abrogation of Holy Days in 1536 was the fact that they provided "the occasion of much sloth and idleness, riot and superfluity."[2] In the same year, a government official - one Richard Morrison - emphasized the virtue of hard work in a pamphlet entitled A Remedy for Sedition,[3] designed as a piece of propaganda to persuade the northern rebels of the error of their ways. An essay written by Edward VI, entitled Discourse about The Reformation of Many Abuses,[4] stressed the need to train youths in agriculture and the crafts, and to punish vagabonds, in order to preserve law and order.

A more disciplined labour force was, as we have seen, one of the pre-requisites of the expansion of bourgeois capitalism. Beset by one of the now familiar problems of a backward economy, an undisciplined and unstable labour force, used to working shorter hours when wages were high, sixteenth century capitalists repeatedly voiced the need to find ways of compelling the manual labour to work. "Hunger and poverty", noted Sir Walter Raleigh, "make men industrious."[5] A hundred years later Arthur Young reiterated the same theme when he wrote, "Everyone

1   D. C. Coleman, op.cit., p. 292.

2   C. Hill, op. cit., p. 142

3   Ibid., p. 124.

4   Ibid., p. 125.

5   Quoted in D. C. Coleman, op. cit., p. 293

but an idiot knows that the lower class must be kept poor or they will never be industrious."[1] The popular belief of the day was, then, that the maintenance of public order was closely related to the proportion of the labour force in work at any particular time. From this point of view, labour-saving techniques were not in the public interest. In 1662, Thomas Fuller wrote,

> "that being the best way of tillage which
> employeth the most about it, to keep them
> from stealing and starving."[2]

Full employment[3] could only be maintained, so contemporaries argued, if the standard of living of the manual labourer was kept on or below the poverty line. Once wages were allowed to rise to a level at which the labourer could provide for himself and his family without working throughout the hours of daylight for six days a week, the result was an immediate withdrawal of labour; such was the strength of the traditional work ethic to which the majority of labourers subscribed. This point was made abundantly clear in the following observation, made in 1669:-

> "The men have just so much the more to spend in
> tipple, and remain the poorer than when their
> wages were less ..... They work so much the
> fewer days by how much more they exact in wages."[4]

1   A. Young, Farmers Tour through the East of England,
    (1771), iv., p. 361.

2   Thomas Fuller, The Worthies of England, (1662), ed.
    J. Freeman (1952), p. 203.

3   The term is used here in its literal sense.

4   T. Manly, Usurie at Six Per Cent (1669): quoted in
    D. C. Coleman, op.cit., p. 289.

That large sections of society were apparently unmoved by the prospect, or necessity, of economic expansion was a factor which caused widespread concern in trading and manufacturing circles. Nor were the fears expressed by those involved in these activities needlessly pessimistic. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, England was faced with the problem of having to trade in an increasingly competitive cloth market. Tariff walls had already been erected in France and Holland, and by 1632 they existed in Brandenburg, Silesia and Poland. To the producer, whose profit margins were being gradually eroded, the basic cause of his distress was obvious. Writing at the turn of the seventeenth century, Thomas Mun lamented the "general leprosy of our piping, potting, feasting, factions, and mispending of our time in idleness and pleasure," [1] which so harmed our trading prospects with the Dutch. In 1625, Robert Sanderson denounced "Riot and excess" as "the noted proper sin of the nation." [2]

From the foregoing, it can be seen that, by the middle of the sixteenth century, there had developed between the state and an expanding bourgeoisie a marked identity of interests. Nowhere is this identity better represented than in the Statute of Artificers and Apprentices of 1563. Both this Statute and another passed in 1597 for the maintenance of husbandry and tillage, were conceived as means by which order, regularity and discipline could be imposed upon the unskilled and semi-skilled agricultural labourer who, together with his dependents, made up the bulk of the population. The Statute of Artificers was, in effect, a code of practice: it laid

1   C. Hill, op. cit., p. 122.

2   Ibid., p. 123

down the precise number of hours each day during which the
labourer was obliged to work.

> "And it be further enacted by the authority afore-
> said,
> That all artificers and apprentices and labourers
> being hired for wages by the day or week shall,
> betwixt the midst of the months of March and Sept-
> ember, be and continue at their work, at or before
> five of the clock in the morning, and continue at
> their work and do not depart until seven and eight
> (except be it the time of breakfast, dinner or
> drinking, the which times shall not exceed two and
> a half hours in a day, that is to say, at every
> drinking, one half hour, for his dinner, one hour,
> and from his sleep, when he allowed to sleep; the
> which is from the midst of May, to the midst of
> August, half an hour at the most and at every break-
> fast one half hour. And all the said apprentices
> and labourers between the midst of September and
> the midst of March shall be and continue at their
> work from the spring of the day in the morning
> until the night of the same day, except be it in the
> time aforesaid appointed to breakfast and dinner." [1]

Whether or not this Statute succeeded in rooting out the
"lewd practices and condition of life", "the idleness, drunk-
eness and unlawful games",[2] which so restricted the produc-
tive capacity of the labourer is a moot point. There is some
evidence that attempts were made to implement the conditions
of the Statute. In The World We Have Lost, Peter Laslett has
pointed out that "at the County Assizes, the Judges had to
enquire whether 'there were workers who do not continue from
five of the Clock in the morning till Seven at night in
summer, and from Seven till Five in the Winter'." [3]

1   The Statute of Artificers,(5 Eliz. c4), para.IV, quoted
    from R.H.Tawney and E.Power, Tudor Economic Documents,
    vol. I, (1951), p. 342.

2   C. Hill, op.cit., p. 132.

3   P. Laslett, The World We have Lost (1965), p.29.

However, this one reference hardly warrants describing
the Statute as "the most powerful instrument ever devised
for degrading and impoverishing the English labourer", nor
does it seem likely that it gave rise to a state of "industrial
slavery". [1] The naivety of these assertions lies in their
unquestioning acceptance of the success of this Statute. Their
proponments ignore, or fail to appreciate, the extent to which
the traditional way of life, with its set order of persons,
priorities and preferences, was ingrained among the rural
population. Breughel's sleeping harvester was not a drowsy
alcoholic nor a mystic visionary, but just a typical agricul-
tural labourer. That the enactment of the Statute of Artificers
cannot be taken as evidence of its success was the point of a
penetrating assessment by S. T. Bindoff:

> "That it is a document giving some measure of
> coherent expression to a number of related ideas
> will not, of course, be denied. The universal
> obligation to work as a social and moral duty, and
> the grading of occupations in diminishing order of
> utility from agriculture to overseas trade; the
> conception of a fair day's work and a fair day's
> wage for it; the value of an apprenticeship for
> civic as well as technical training; the recogni-
> tion of the independent roles of town and country
> and the discouraging of both occupational and
> labour mobility; the acceptance of birth, education
> and property to confer occupational privilege: all
> these are evident in the statute and help to make
> it a microcosm of the social thought of the age.
> But acts of parliament must do more than mirror the
> Zeitgeist: they must convert it into commandments
> and prohibitions expressed in words and phrases,
> dates and figures. When analysed, not simply in
> its formulation of current notions, but in its con-
> version of these notions into specific rules of
> conduct, the statute of artificers falls short of
> what might be expected in a measure designed to

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1   J. L. & B. Hammond, The Village Labourer (1922), p. 18.

> reduce chaos to order and drafted under a single
> direction and in one co-ordinated operation." [1]

If, as seems likely, the Statute of Artificers did not
have the immediate impact desired by its mentors, is it to
be dismissed as nothing more than the antiquarian's delight -
an historical document which had little or no bearing upon
the situation that it was intended to affect? Is the social
analyst justified in passing over, as of secondary or
marginal importance, any piece of evidence which does not
add to his understanding of the immediate activities of those
he is studying? If this approach can be rejected as need-
lessly restrictive, then documents such as the 1563 Statute
can be admitted to be of value. While it may not have had
either an immediate or even a delayed impact on the life of
the labourer, this piece of legislation is important as a
reflection of the social philisophy presently subscribed to
by a number of powerful groups in Elizabethan England. In
it, one finds a clear indication of the origins of one source
of opposition to traditional work and leisure habits.

But the state and bourgeois capitalism were not the only
interests involved in attempting to restrict the licence and
irregularity of traditional life. There was another insti-
tution in Tudor society, capable of exerting enormous
pressure on the structure of every-day life, that was implacably

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1   S. T. Bindoff, "The Making of the Statute of Artificers",
     in S. T. Bindoff, J. Hirstfield and C. H. Williams (eds.),
     Elizabethan Government and Society (1960), pp. 58-99.

opposed to many aspects of "merrie England". While government officials and capitalists were emphasizing the desirability of greater regularity and discipline, a similar theme was forming the basis of sermons preached from pulpit after pulpit throughout the country. There was no more ardent supporter of the belief that labour was a social duty than the puritan divine. The <u>locus classicus</u> of this doctrine is to be found in the <u>Homily against Idleness</u>.

> "The labouring man and his family, whilst they are busily occupied in their labour are free from the many occasions of sin, which they that live in idleness are subjected unto.... The Serving men of this realm, who spend their time in much idleness of life, nothing regarding the opportunities of their time (would be wiser) to) expend their idle time in some good business, whereby they might increase in knowledge, and so be the more worthy to be ready for everyman's service." [1]

That the relationship between religion and economic institutions has been of profound significance in the development of modern capitalist societies is almost a sociological commonplace. It is again to Max Weber that we are indebted for the first systematic exposition of the "elective affinity" which rested between these two structural elements. In his seminal essay, <u>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</u>, Weber elucidates an anomaly which previous writers on the subject had failed to explain. The anomaly lay in the fact that whereas Catholicism as a doctrine and an institution had, in the course of European History, proved inimical to entrepreneurial activity, Protestantism, which demanded a far more disciplined and total commitment of its adherents, appeared to be conducive to the

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1   <u>Sermons and Homilies appointed to be read in Churches</u> (1802), pp. 443-4.

development of modern western capitalism. Weber's explana-
tion of this paradox, in terms of the peculiar affinity
between the doctrines of ascetic Protestantism, particularly
Calvinism, and the ethos (Geist) of western capitalism, is
fundamental to an understanding of the changes which were
occurring within the structure of Tudor and Stuart society.
As Weber demonstrates, a critical distinction is that between
Lutheranism and later Protestant doctrines, notably Calvinism.
Without taking this distinction into account, it is difficult
to understand why it was that the Established Church in
England - itself a product of the Reformation - came to be
cast in the mould of traditional orthodoxy when confronted
with the demands of rabid Puritans.

That a conflict between Anglicans and Puritans should
have occurred seems, at first sight, unlikely. From its
establishment in the 1530s, the Anglican Church had espoused
a highly critical view of many aspects of traditional English
society. That lack of order and discipline which, as we have
shown earlier, characterised life in rural communities in
particular was a flat contradiction of the beliefs represented
in the Lutheran concept of the "calling". [1] As such, the
teachings of the Church were in accord with the ambitions
of the state and the capitalist. The wholesale celebration
of saint's days, for example, was the target of numerous
attacks. In 1519, Martin Luther claimed that "we increase
the wrath of God more on holy days than others." [2] In England,

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[1]   The concept of the "calling" is a Reformation phenomenon.
      Its significance lay in the fact that it brought every facet
      of daily life within the reach of religious influence.

[2]   Ed. B.L. Woolf, The Reformation Writings of Martin Luther
      (1956), I, p. 166.

the Injunctions of 1547 and 1559 instructed the clergy to preach the message that idleness on holy and festival days during the harvest period was a great offence before God. [1] In a similar vein, "Ridley as Bishop of London in 1550 ordered his clergy to prevent the celebration of any of the suppressed holy days, and to stop men absenting themselves from their lawful callings on these days - even for the purpose of attending sermons." [2]

It would thus be quite wrong to ascribe the conflict between the Anglican Church and dissident Puritan elements within it solely to disagreements over the place of work in the life of the true believer. Though Luther's concept of the calling was, in many respects, traditionalistic, it did represent a significant move towards the stringent regulation of behaviour which characterised Calvinism. Unlike "popery", Richard Sibbes claimed in 1601, it was not "set up by the wit of men to maintain stately idleness". [3]

Nevertheless, by the end of the sixteenth century, signs of a growing schism between Anglican orthodoxy and Puritan fervour were unmistakable. It was not that Anglicanism did not seek to achieve a greater control over the individual's life but that it did not require a total and permanent commitment to discipline. For the Puritan, "every hour lost is lost to labour for the glory of God." [4] "They are unworthy of

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1   C. Hill, op.cit., p. 145

2   Ibid., p. 146

3   Ibid., p. 128

4   A. Giddens, op.cit., p. 129

bread that in their deeds have no care for the commonweal:"[1]
so ran the Hussite heresy of the fifteenth century. Only a
century later, a similar argument was being levelled at the
dominant orders in English society, irrespective of the fact
that both critic and criticised worshipped before the same
Protestant altar. Sloth and indolence, no less than poverty,
were sacrilegious. Preaching at St. Pauls in 1581, James
Bisse condemned all "who lived in no vocation, no craft, no
trade, no profession", while another noted Puritan, William
Perkins, declared that "such as live in no calling, but spend
their time in eating, drinking, sleeping and sporting" were
guilty of an offence against God.[2] It was left to Dod and
Cleaver, by no means radical Puritans, to draw the logical,
but nonetheless subversive, conclusion.

> "Every man, of every degree, as well rich as poor,
> as well mighty and mean, as well noble as base,
> must know that he is born for some employment for
> the good of his brethren, if he will acknowledge
> himself to be a member, and not an ulcer in the
> body of mankind."[3]

The implications of this teaching were not lost upon the
elders of the Established Church. As early as the 1560s,
Bishop Jewel felt obliged to defend the worth of the elite.
He claimed that "the nobleman and magistrate, if he regard
his country, be careful for the laws, aid the poor, repress
tyranny, comfort the weak, punish the wicked, is not idle."[4]

However, it is not the details of the prolonged conflict
between Anglicans and Puritans that are of prime concern here.

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1   C. Hill, op.cit., p.135

2   Ibid., p. 136.

3   Ibid., p. 137.

4   Ibid., pp. 135-6.

The central point is that the ascendence of Puritanism
during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries,
being intimately connected to the burgeoning of capitalism,
represented an important factor in the gradual breakdown of
traditional attitudes and patterns of behaviour. By virtue
of its emphasis upon a disciplined and methodical approach to
one's vocation, the Puritan concept of the calling proved
particularly attractive to the "industrious sort of people" [1]
- yeomen, artisans, and small and middling merchants.

> "They are hot for the Gospel", said Thomas Adams
> of these people, "they love the Gospel: who but
> they? Not because they believe it, but because
> they feel it: the wealth, peace, liberty, that
> ariseth by it." [2]

In their efforts to introduce a greater degree of discipline
and order into the lives of the common people, Puritan divines
united in a condemnation of many traditional leisure pastimes.
Many of these were classed among the "lewd and lavish Acts of
Sin" which threatened the spiritual health of the community.
Thus, in the sermon of one zealous preacher, we find the
following dire prognosis:

> "If we should come into a house and see many Physic
> boxes and Glasses, we should conclude that somebody
> is sick: so when we see Hounds and Hawks, and Cardes
> and Dice, we may fear that there is some sick soul
> in the family." [3]

Even accepted leisure activities could prove dangerous if
taken to extremes. Another divine exhorted his congregation to,

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1   S.Bethel, The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell (1688); quoted
    in C. Hill's Puritanism and Society, p. 128.

2   T.Adams, Workes (1629), p. 389.

3   Quoted in W. Haller's, The Rise of Puritanism (1938), p.59.

> "Watch against inordinate sensual Delight, even
> in the lawfullest sports.   Excess of pleasure
> in any such vanity doth very much corrupt and
> befool the mind." [1]

Folk-games, then, incurred the wrath of Puritan preachers on two counts: first, they often occupied valuable time which could be better spent labouring for the good of the whole community; second, the occasions on which many were played - Saint's days, festivals, and the like - were all too frequently the cue for displays of unbridled licence. One might be forgiven for supposing that, in the face of such powerful opposition. many folk-games and other traditional forms of entertainment would have rapidly become extinct. This, however, proved not to be the case. As Dennis Brailsford has indicated, traditional forms of entertainment retained their popularity throughout the Interregnum, and moreover, persisted in an essentially unchanged form for many decades after.

> "The remarkable thing about Puritan England turns
> out to be, therefore, not the suppression of
> physical recreation by the government but the
> persistence with which many sports and games defied
> official frowns and prohibitions." [2]

In order to understand why these much-abused activities survived, it is necessary to examine in some detail certain features of the Puritan movement. For much of the first half of the seventeenth century, the debate between Puritans and their opponents centred on two issues; the freedom or otherwise of any member of the community to work six days a week, and closely related to this, the nature of Sunday observance. On the first point,

1   Richard Baxter, A Christian Directory (1678), p. 224; in Brailsford, op.cit., p. 147.

2   Ibid., p. 139.

Puritan divines were adamant: "God's law says six days shalt thou labour," pleaded John White before an Ecclesiastical Commission in 1567, "but the prince's law saith 'Thou shalt not labour seven (six) days, but shall keep the popish holy days'." [1] In demanding the liberty to work six days in each week, Puritans found themselves opposed by not only Catholics but also the Established Orthodoxy. The leading figure in the struggle against Puritan demands was Bishop Bancroft. In contrast to his predecessor, Bancroft went to great lengths to discover "whether anyone in his diocese had worked or kept shops open on Sundays or holy days." [2] In 1607, his chaplain went out of his way to refute Thomas Cartwright's contention that "the church cannot take away this liberty of working six days in the week." [3] There is evidence that the Ecclesiastical Court was used to enforce the observance of holy days as well as Sundays. In Huntingdon between 1590 and 1596, for example, there were nineteen cases brought before the Archdeacon's Court in which the defendant was accused of working on saint's days, but only one relating to violation of the Sabbath. [4] In 1627, even the poor rector of Shenley in Hertfordshire was presented for ploughing on a saint's day. [5]

Support for the continued observance of a limited number of saint's days from within the Established Church itself was certainly one factor which contributed toward the survival of

1   C. Hill, op.cit., p. 149.

2   Ibid., p. 157.

3   Ibid., pp. 150-1

4   W. Urwick, Nonconformity in Hertfordshire (1884), p.460.

5   C. Hill, op.cit., p.151.

many folk-games. In addition, it seems likely that outside
of London and the other major urban centres a less than
adequate system of local administration made the imposition
of Puritan decrees a difficult task. The combination of
these factors meant that in many rural communities the
Puritan-inspired challenge to the traditional celebration
of festivals and feast-days was hardly felt. [1]

Attempts to enforce a six-day working week were, however,
only part of a more embracing strategy by which Puritans
sought to impose their particular ethos upon the mass of the
common people. The natural corollary to the six-day working
week was a strict observance of the Sabbath. To see why
Sunday observance represented such a powerful threat to
traditional customs and habits, one has to understand the
full implications of the sabbatarian principle. For the
seventeenth century Puritan zealot,

> "The Sabbath was the day on which men should be
> educated in religious and social duties, the day
> of preaching, catechizing, indoctrination......
> The Sabbath was not a day of leisure, on which
> it was lawful to waste time: it was day for a
> different kind of labour, for wrestling with God
> ...... 'It is a notable abuse of many', said
> Perkins, 'to make the Lord's Day a set day of
> sport and pastime, which should be a day set
> apart for the worship of God and the increase
> in duties of religion'." [2]

The motivations which underpinned Puritan advocacy of
strict sabbatarianism are sufficiently complex to warrant
study in their own right. Reference to them in this context
is justified only insofar as it serves to illustrate the

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1   For a more detailed exposition of this argument, see
    Brailsford, op.cit., Ch. IV.

2   C. Hill, op.cit., pp. 168-169.

interconnectedness of a number of factors which were acting
upon many traditional features of seventeenth century England.
While it would be unwise to ignore the significance of the
theological basis of sabbatarianism, at the same time it is
difficult to believe that support for the idea and practice
of Sunday observance would have been so efficacious had it
derived solely from a concern with upholding the law of the
scriptures. As many authorities have pointed out, [1] a
significant proportion of those who subscribed to sabbatarian
principles, and encouraged others to do likewise, were motivated
by a combination of economic and political considerations.
Christopher Hill, for instance, has argued that many whose
interests lay in the rapidly expanding sphere of capiltalism
saw in sabbatarianism a means of minimizing one fundamental
source of uncertainty in the operation of free market forces.
In Society and Puritanism he writes,

> "the fight for sabbatarianism and against the rural
> sports was an attempt to extend the concern for
> labour disciplines from the South and East of
> England into the dark corners of the North and West." [2]

At another point in the same work, Hill suggests another
reason why Sunday observance appealed to the "industrious sort of
people". In a period of rapid economic growth when the tradit-
ional restrictions upon economic competition imposed first by
the medieval guilds were breaking down, Hill claims that the
prohibition of Sunday labour introduced a modicum of restraint
into an otherwise cut-throat market situation.

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1   See C. Hill, op.cit., Chs. IV & V; W. Haller, op.cit.,
     Ch. 2; Patrick Collinson, The Elizabethan Movement (1967).

2   C. Hill, op. cit., p. 202.

> "In the seventeenth century there was only one
> way in which the industrious sort could be
> protected from themselves; by the total prohi-
> bition of Sunday work and of travel to and from
> markets; and by strict enforcement of this pro-
> hibition, in the interests of the class as a whole,
> against the many individual members of the class
> who would try to evade it." [1]

But, as has been suggested, the desire to develop a
greater degree of regularity and discipline amongst the ranks
of the unskilled and semi-skilled labourer was felt in poli-
tical as well as economic circles. Its presence is reflected
in the numerous efforts to enforce Sunday observance made by
the local authorities before 1640. From existing evidence,
it appears probable, if not certain, that one factor which
encouraged local authorities to attempt to enforce sabbatarian
practice was the disorder and violence which many traditional
leisure activities gave rise to. When a previous Order for-
bidding the playing of sports on a Sunday was revoked, one
Somerset J.P. was moved to protest that the revocation was
"to the great prejudice of the peace, plenty and good govern-
ment of the country." [2] And when, in 1643, Parliament
requested the Lord Mayor of London to enforce the statutes
relating to Sunday observance, he was particularly harsh on
those whose violation had led to the disturbance of the peace.

The very complexity of this subject militates against
embarking upon a more detailed analysis of it. It is not
our intention here to delve into the precise motives of those
who endorsed the principle of Sunday observance, but rather
to indicate the extent to which the upsurge of sabbatarianism

1   C. Hill, op.cit., pp. 147-148.

2   H. A. Wyndham, A Family History (1939), p. 171.

in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries
represented more than just the efforts of a handful of
zealous preachers. The total significance of the sabba-
tarian movement can only be judged when seen against the
background of a society which was experiencing a series of
structural changes more dramatic in impact and far-reaching
in effect than any that had occurred during the previous four
hundred years. Traditional centres of power and authority -
the aristocracy, the Established Church and the Guilds -
were finding that their spheres of influence were being
gradually encroached upon, and in some cases directly
challenged by newer, more dynamic groups and institutions -
a parvenu middle-class which included members of the profes-
sions, entrepreneurs, manufacturers and usurers; Puritanism;
and nascent, unfettered capitalism. It was from these non-
aristocratic, yet economically and politically powerful groups
that sabbatarianism drew its greatest support. Sunday obser-
vance was more than just an idle fancy. Those who laboured
to uphold its principles in practice did so partly for
doctrinal reasons, but it is also the case that the order and
discipline which ensued was consonant with their political
and economic ambitions. In order words, the sabbatarian
movement may be seen as one manifestation of the gradual
gelling of a distinctively bourgeois ideology which itself
was born of a fusion of political, economic and social
aspirations and beliefs, and which was to find its most
elaborate and articulate expression in the Weltanschauung of
the nineteenth century English bourgeoisie.

However, in the context of this analysis, the motivations
which underlay the dynamic quality of sabbatarianism are of
less importance than its consequences. A complete prohibition
of the great majority of forms of Sunday entertainment, in
addition to a similar restriction on the celebration of saint's
days and other festivals, would have meant that there were
very few occasions remaining on which traditional games and
other leisure pastimes could be performed. Under these cir-
cumstances, it would be reasonable to surmise that most of
these forms of entertainment would have rapidly died out.
If it can be shown that this did not occur, then one can
reasonably suppose that it was because the cannonade of
Puritan-inspired Orders, Statutes and Decrees was unable to
erode the local communities' affection for traditionalist
attitudes to, and forms of, leisure.

It is well known that attempts to abolish wakes and
other church festivals date from as early as the reign of
Edward VI, though, as was noted earlier, the prime motivation
in these cases seem to have been political or economic rather
than religious. But by the 1570s, it is clear that the lasting
popularity of traditional games had become a source of great
offence to many clerics, both Anglican and Puritan. In 1573,
for example, Bishop Cooper of Winchester tried to "outlaw
church ales, May games, morris dances, and other vain pastimes."[1]
Perhaps the first explicit condemnation of traditional forms
of entertainment by a Puritan is to be found in a memorandum
written in 1588. It singles out "wakes, ales, greens, May-games,

1   M. C. Bradbrook, The Rise of the Common Player (1962),
     p. 142.

rush-bearings, bear-baits, dove-ales, bonfires, and all
such manner unlawful gaming, piping, and dancing........
in all places freely exercised upon the Sabbath; by occasion
whereof it cometh to pass that the youth will not by any
means be brought to attend the exercises of catechizing in
the afternoon; neither the people to be present at the
evening service." [1]

In their desire to save men from the temptations of
licence and indolence, Puritans were not averse to invoking
the authority invested in Parliament. A bill placed before
that body in 1601 sought to prohibit the holding of fairs
and markets on Sundays, and to make Justices of the Peace
responsible for enforcing church attendance. This bill
failed to gain the Royal Assent. The same fate awaited
similar measures introduced in 1606 and 1621. But in 1625,
Royal Assent was given to an Act which specifically forbade
the playing of unlawful sports, especially in towns. At the
level of local government, the municipal authorities of
Ipswich, Rochester, Manchester, Rochdale, Liverpool, Lincoln,
London, Southwark, Preston, Canterbury, Shrewsbury, Salisbury,
Cambridge, Norwich, Maldon, Okehampton, Exeter and York took
steps to enforce Sunday observance. [2]

The effectiveness of these prohibitions is difficult to
assess. Several factors serve to confuse the issue. First,

1   G. H. Tupling, "The Causes of the Civil War in Lancashire"
     Trans. Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, LXV,
     p. 9.

2   C. Hill, op.cit., p. 155.

the fact that a large number of statutes were passed pro-
hibiting various common breaches of the Sunday observance
code does not mean that they were necessarily successful in
achieving this end. Dennis Brailsford, for one, has argued
that, in fact, their very profusion suggests the reverse.
"Indeed", he writes,

> "the relative ineffectuality of the statutes, just
> as much as the Parliamentary party's persistence
> over Sunday observance, is shown by the fact that
> three separate acts were passed, each more strin-
> gent than the one before, but each growing in its
> absolute prohibition of games, sports and pastimes
> on the Sabbath." [1]

A second complication arises out of the fact that such
data as are available can be used with equal facility to
support contradictory arguments. On the one hand, several
pieces of evidence suggest that Puritans were successful in
prohibiting the performance of many traditional leisure pas-
times, particularly in urban areas. In London during the
Interregnum, for instance, all play-houses and bear-pits were
closed. Cricket, too, was subjected to similar repressive
sanctions. In 1654 it is recorded that the Churchwardens and
Overseers of the Parish of Eltham fined seven of their parish-
ioners for playing the game on a Sunday. [2] Similar prosecu-
tions, though not necessarily involving cricket, were brought
against infractors of the Sunday observance code in towns up
and down the country. [3] It is not difficult to suggest
reasons why attempts to suppress folk-games were apparently
more systematic and successful in urban as compared with rural

1   D. Brailsford, op.cit., p. 136.

2   Rowland Bowen, op.cit., p. 262.

3   C. Hill, op.cit., p. 150.

communities. We know that Puritanism made its greatest

appeal in towns. Furthermore, the presence within the same

urban locations of a growing number of capitalist concerns,

each demanding of its employees a much higher level of

discipline in the performance of work tasks, represented

another means by which influence could be brought to bear

upon potential backsliders. Finally, it is also the case that

local administration was more efficient and hence more effec-

tive in towns.

According to this line of argument, then, folk-

games and other traditional leisure activities were more

effectively suppressed in urban than in rural communities

because it was in the former that the restraining influence

of religious, economic and political institutions could be

brought to bear most directly on the lives of the common

people. This thesis, it should be noted, does not claim that

suppression of folk-games, and the like, occurred only within

cities and towns. This means that it can only be called into

question and not disproved by evidence which indicates that

prosecutions for sabbath-breaking also occurred in rural

communities. Such evidence is to be found in the records of

Churchwardens' presentments in the Boxgrove Deanery of the

diocese of Chichester. In 1622, the following indictment

was brought:

> "I present Ralph West, Edmund Hartley, Richard
> Slaughter, William Martin, Richard Martin Junior,
> together with others whose name I have no notice
> of, for playing at Cricket in the Churchyard on
> Sunday, the fifthe of May, after sufficient
> warning had been given to the contrarie, for
> three special reasons: first, for that it is con-
> trarie to the 7th Article; second, for that they
> used to break the Church windows with the balls:
> and thirdly, for that little children had like to
> have their braynes beaten out with the cricket batt.

> And I also present Richard Martin senior, and
> Thomas Ward, the old Churchwardens, for defending
> and mayntayning them in it and Edward Hartley for
> playing at cricket in evening prayer time on Sunday
> XXVII of April." [1]

As well as indicating that attempts at prohibiting the
playing of cricket on Sundays were not confined to urban
centres, this reference contains several additional points
of interest. Not only does it exemplify the resilience of
traditional pastimes in rural communities, but it also
contains an indication, albeit indirect, of another charac-
teristic of folk-games; namely that their structure involved
little or no age differentiation. At Boxgrove, the old
Churchwardens played alongside their children. Finally, it
is possible that the activities of the inhabitants of Boxgrove
illustrate an important characteristic of medieval Christianity:
that the Church - i.e., its buildings and surrounds - rather
than being treated with the reverence that it attained in the
eighteenth century, was still regarded by members of the local
community as a piece of common property to which its congre-
gation had access and which they could use at all times.
Though any conclusion drawn from this one incident must, of
necessity, be tentative, it does suggest that the degree of
separation between church and community was nowhere near as
distinct as later became the case. [2]

To return to the main theme of the relationship between
Puritanism and traditional leisure activities. There are

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1 Annals of the Sussex Record Society (1949), vol.XLIX,
   p.46.

2 For a more detailed exposition of this argument, see
   N. Elias and E.G. Dunning, "Folk Football in Medieval
   and Early Modern Britain", in E.G. Dunning's The Socio-
   logy of Sport.

several pieces of evidence which cast considerable doubt
upon the thesis that, under Puritanism, the playing of
folk-games was curtailed and, in some cases, completely
suppressed. For just as the Boxgrove incident illustrates
the resilience of cricket in rural communities, the follow-
ing description by the Rev. Thomas Wilson, a Puritan minister
in Maidstone, suggests that many folk-games, cricket included,
remained a large obstacle in the path of those who sought to
enforce universal Sunday observance. With scarce concealed
horror, the Rev. Wilson recorded that he had seen "Morrice
Dancing, Cudgel playing, Stool-ball, Crickets, and many other
sports openly and publickly on the Lord's Day."[1] This is,
in fact, only one of a number of references which indicate
that many traditional leisure pursuits prevailed even in towns
during the period leading up to, and including, the Interregnum.
Despite the fact that Parliament, in 1644, ordered the des-
truction of maypoles in every parish in England, maypoles are
recorded as being in use in Ludlow, Wolverhampton and Oxford
during the 1640s and '50s.[2] In 1648, at Bury St. Edmunds,
local inhabitants, aided and abetted by members of the local
gentry, "ran horribly mad upon a maypole."[3] In many areas,
particularly those with pronounced Royalist sympathies, the
playing of traditional games and pastimes was probably
encouraged by the seeming inability, or unwillingness, of
local authorities to prevent such infractions of the law.

1   Quoted in Rev. J. Pycroft, op.cit., p. 17.

2   C. Hill, op.cit., p. 180.

3   A. Everitt, Suffolk in the Great Rebellion (Suffolk
    Records Society, 1960), p. 94.

Though Churchwardens "presented" men and women for all kinds
of violations of the Sunday observance code, including taking
part in various folk-games, the extent to which these present-
ments led to convictions varied widely. For example, E. R.
Brinkworth has shown that in Oxford very few presentments for
working on Sundays led to convictions, and that there were
no convictions for Sunday sports. [1]

The overall picture presented by these facts is one of
great unevenness and variation. Attempts to suppress folk-
games were more rigorous in some places than in others, and
again, certain games rather than others came under sustained
attack. As Brailsford has pointed out, "the less public
sports were more tolerated than those which lent themselves
to large gatherings." [2] In making distinctions of this kind,
local authorities tended to be motivated as much by a desire
to protect their own positions as by doctrinal considerations.
It was appreciated that the large crowds of people, both
spectators and players, which were attracted by folk-games
provided an obvious cover for seditious activities. For
example, after giving permission to the Earl of Chester for
Lady Grantham's Cup to be raced for at Lincoln, Major Whalley
justified his decision in a letter to Oliver Cromwell in the
following terms:

> "I assured him that it was not your highness'
> intention in the suppressing of horse races to
> abridge gentlemen of that sport, but to prevent
> the great confluence of irreconcilable enemies." [3]

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1 E.R. Brinkworth, "The Study and Use of Archdeacon's Court
   Records: illustrated from the Oxford Records (1566-1759)",
   Trans. Royal Historical Society, (1943). p. 105.

2 D. Brailsford, op.cit., p. 137

3 Ibid., p. 138.

From several points of view, then, the notion that folk-games declined, often to the point of extinction, during the first sixty years of the seventeenth century cannot be accepted. Neither does it seem plausible to argue that where certain folk-games did disappear, the cause of this demise is always to be sought in the peculiarly rigid and stringent demands of Puritan worship. It is clear that both political and economic considerations must also be taken into account. In the light of these factors, the conclusions reached by Dennis Brailsford are particularly apposite. In Sport and Society, he writes:

> "It can be said at once that the notion of a
> country suddenly passing wholly out of a Stuart
> sunshine into a Puritan gloom is quite false;
> the effectiveness of the Parliamentary adminis-
> tration was of different intensity in different
> parts of the country. It castigated certain
> physical activities (and sometimes certain social
> classes) more roundly than others and it did not
> always bear the clear stamp of Puritan theory about
> it." [1]

The principal purpose of the preceding analysis has been to assess to what extent changes in the political, economic and religious institutions of sixteenth and seventeenth century English society led to a fatal weakening of the position occupied by traditional customs, habits and forms of entertain-ment in the lives of the common people. The steadily growing authority of the state and the rise of bourgeois capitalism were singled out as being of particular significance in this respect. State officials and capitalists were united in their desire to impose a greater degree of discipline and order upon the acitivities of the vast majority of the population. In this unity one can pinpoint the core of a

1   D. Brailsford, op.cit., p. 134.

powerful opposition to traditional beliefs, attitudes and activities. Occurring during the same period, and closely related to the development of capitalism, the phenomenal growth of Puritanism added another dimension to this opposition. In considering the impact of Puritanism, however, two general reservations were made. First, it was argued that rural communities remained in most respects unaffected throughout the seventeenth century. Secondly, though it is very difficult to isolate the impact of the different forces acting within this situation, all available evidence points to the likelihood of the influence of Puritanism having been exaggerated. On the one hand, not all the attacks made by Puritans upon such abuses as violation of the Sunday observance code seem to have reached their target. For this, weakness in local administration and considerable opposition within the local communities themselves were mainly responsible. On the other hand, where attempts to suppress such potential sources of disturbance as folk-games were enforced, it was because, in many cases, they were perceived as a threat to law and order rather than to the spiritual well-being of the community.

Before concluding this analysis of folk-games, reference must be made to one other important process of change which was affecting the structure of seventeenth century society. Throughout this period, England was becoming increasingly urbanised - though, of course, at a very much slower pace than in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The causes of this expansion of urban centres and of the increasing proportion of people living in towns lie beyond

the bounds of this study, save, perhaps, for the observation
that they were probably closely connected with the simultaneous
expansion of trade and manufacture. Here, the major interest
in urbanisation centres not upon its causes, but upon the
gradual development within the growing urban areas of a type
of stratification very different to that found in rural com-
munities. Whereas, in the latter both the form of the local
status hierachy, and the positions occupied by the local
inhabitants in it, were relatively fixed and sanctified by
tradition, the situation which obtained in London and other
large towns was significantly different. Sheer growth in
size involving, as it did, not only a larger population but
also a greater diversity of statuses was one important develop-
ment. [1] Changes in the shape and complexity of systems of
stratification in cities and towns were matched, moreover, by
the rates of mobility, upwards and downwards, found within
these systems. The most dramatic instances of upward mobility,
inter- and intra-generational, were related to the rise of
that collectivity usually referred to as the "bourgeoisie", [2]
whose fortunes were linked in turn to the general expansion
of mercantile activities taking place throughout the late
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even at this time,
circa 1600, the most prosperous members of this group were
engaged in attempts to realise statuses in society commen-
surate with the wealth they commanded. In this, they were
motivated by a desire to rid themselves once and for all of
the stigma which attached to the performance of any form of

1   For a more detailed analysis of these changes, see L. Stone,
    "Social Mobility in England, 1500-1700", Past and Present
    (1966), vol. 35, pp. 16-55.

2   See Conclusion to Part Two, footnote No. 1.

labour, be it manual, clerical, entrepreneurial, or professional.

At the same time as these changes were occurring within the bourgeoisie, the traditional occupants of the highest statuses in English society, the aristocracy, were also entering upon a period of unprecedented change. The causes and consequences of this upheaval are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. Here it is sufficient to record that one precipitating factor was the political dominance recently acquired by the central authority in London, i.e. the Crown, Court and Parliament. In this respect, it is true to say that to a significant degree the central authority's gain was the aristocracy's loss. But most significant in this context was the fact that the gradual centralisation of power and authority in London affected a major change in the life-style of many members of the aristocracy. For those with political ambitions, lengthy visits or even permanent residence in London became both expedient and necessary. Throughout this period, the focus of the aristocracy's political activities gradually shifted from their provincial seats of power to London: its members were increasingly constrained to devote more time, energy and expense to maintaining their status there. An additional factor making for the breakdown of the political autonomy previously enjoyed by the aristocracy was the deliberate introduction by the Crown of families of lesser rank into influential administrative positions. [1]

1   L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, p. 573.

Besides representing a challenge to the internal
solidarity of the aristocracy, the movement away from the
country estate towards the greater physical proximity
inevitably encountered in London was seen by many as the
cause of a significant reduction in the exclusiveness of
that group. Without implying the existence of a simple
cause and effect relationship, it is nevertheless possible
to discern reactions to this threat in both the behaviour
of members of the aristocracy and in contemporaries' concep-
tions of ideal standards of behaviour.

From the start of the sixteenth century, life at Court
began to reflect the growing strength and stability of the
Crown. Court was no longer "the temporary halting place
between one military camp and the next"; [1] it tended to remain
in London and to retain a relatively constant membership.
In this more settled climate, there developed a distinctive
courtly tradition, a relatively regular and disciplined
pattern of intellectual, cultural and physical activities.
Up to a point, the form and content of this pattern reflected
the growing influence in England of the Italian Renaissance,
particularly to the extent that it involved an undeniably
Platonic conception of the union of mind and body. But, in
addition to this, it is not difficult to discern among members
of the aristocracy a growing pre-occupation with creating and
maintaining an aura of exclusiveness about their social lives.
This concern manifests itself in a variety of way, one of
which was a more selective, discriminatory attitude towards

1   D. Brailsford, op.cit., p. 23.

the type of leisure activities in which they participated.
Archery, wrestling and bowls, for example, were favoured
pastimes, while football and many other folk-games were
increasingly shunned.[1] In at least one case, the discrim-
ination practised by members of the aristocracy and gentry
in their choice of games was supported by an Act of Parlia-
ment. In 1541, an Act confirmed the playing of bowls as
the exclusive preserve of "noblemen or others, and having
manors, lands or tenements to the yearly value of £100 or
above."[2] The principle on which such moves were based was
unambiguously clear: "the games of the gentlemen were to be
one of his characterising features, one of the marks, indeed,
of his gentility, and so it was essential that they should
remain largely exclusive to his rank."[3]

The same theme is echoed explicitly and implicitly in
many contemporary writings. Fixed patterns of work and play
appropriate to each rank are described, or alluded to, in the
works of Sir Thomas Elyot and Lawrence Humphrey. In The
Governour,[4] Elyot lauds the traditional pursuits of noblemen
and kings, hawking, hunting, horse riding and tennis, but
scornfully dismisses the equally traditional games of skittles,
quoits, ninepins and football. In the last of these, he found
"nothing but beastly fury and extreme violence."[5] In Of
Nobilitye, Humphrey singles our moderation in dress, diet and

1   D. Brailsford, op.cit., pp. 25-33.

2   Ibid., p. 31.

3   Loc.cit.

4   Sir Thomas Elyot, The Governour (1531)

5   Ibid., p. 43, quoted in Brailsford, op.cit., p. 20.

leisure as qualities ideally sought in the lives of members

of an aristocracy.

> "As in fare, apparayle, buyldinges, they must
> observe dignitye, so in their playes and sportes,
> oughte they keep the golden meane.
>
> Thereof there are two sortes. That more commendable
> which is stouter and manlier. And hath in it some-
> what stately and warlike. The Greeks plaied fyve
> sortes, whirling leaping, casting the dart, wrestling,
> running.... The other sorte, (dyse, cardes, dauncing,
> chesse) made doubt whether christian, made for
> earnest not sporte....Wherein if others excess,
> gayne, and covetyse of lucre be left; if honest
> pleasure, not filthye gayne be sought, I thing they
> maye in time and place be plaied..... Observe not
> so much measure as the health and exercise of the
> bodye..... That play be a releasing of the minde
> to renew our strength, to strengthen our healthe." [1]

The significance of this apparent willingness to forsake

many popular folk-games in favour of more exclusive, and often

less violent, pastimes is debatable. Two factors in particular

lead one to suppose that the impact of such discrimination

was probably limited. In the first place, the evidence

presented indicates that it was practised not by the aristo-

cracy as a whole but by those of its members who participated

regularly in the affairs of Court. Contemporary reports

contain a number of references to members of the aristocracy

who regularly attended such violent spectacles as bear-baiting

and cock-fighting. As the following quotation suggests, such

occasions provided not only a form of entertainment but also

an opportunity to gamble:

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1   Lawrence Humphrey, op.cit., p. 68.

> "Cock-fighting is one of the great English
> Diversions; they build Amphitheatres for this
> purpose and Persons of quality are seen at them.
> Great wagers are laid and I'm told that a man
> may be damnably bubbled if he is not very sharp." [1]

As will be shown in subsequent chapters, the excitement

generated by gambling was one of the factors which led the

eighteenth century aristocracy to take part in cricket matches

so frequently. But even as early as the first half of the

seventeenth century, it seems that gambling provided a much

sought-after distraction from the otherwise oppressive pre-

dictability of life at court. As an extreme example of the

hold that it could take over the life of a "noble lord", one

may cite the case of Henry, Lord Berkeley (1534-1613). As

his biographer has wryly noted,

> "The hours may seem too many which his lord spent
> in his best ages at bowles, tennis, cockpit,
> shufgrote, cardes and dyce. His long and slender
> lady-like hand knew a dyce as well and how to
> handle it as any of his rank and time." [2]

In the second place, since the Court rarely moved out of

London for long periods, it follows that the ramifications

of courtiers' disavowal of some folk-games would have been

confined, at least in the short term, to that vicinity.

There is little evidence that the same concern with status

pervaded the attitudes of country-based members of the aristo-

cracy and gentry to folk-games played on or near their estates.

Given these reservations, it would be wrong to attribute

to that discrimination against various folk-games practised

by some members of the aristocracy a significance beyond the

1 M. Misson, Memoirs and Observations in his travels over England; trans. by Ozelis, (1711), p. 142.

2 J. Smyth, Lives of the Berkeleys; ed. J. Maclean, (Gloucester, 1883), Book I, p.257.

immediate context in which it occurred. Their preference
for games and other pastimes which required only a small
number of participants, which involved little direct physical
contact, and which could be enjoyed in exclusive surroundings,
was just one of a number of factors which began fundamentally
to alter the position and status of many folk-games in seven-
teenth century England. As we have shown, other sources of
opposition included the state and local government, capitalists
and Puritans. For different reasons, each saw the unregulated
performance of these games as detrimental to their best inter-
ests.

Whether or not the obloquy which attached to several folk
activities during the seventeenth century extended to cricket
is problematic. Again, the major barrier to providing a
satisfactory answer to this question lies in the absence of
data. Though it is known that a form of cricket was played
as early as the 1550s, until its transformation into an elite
pastime in the early eighteenth century, very few references
to the game exist. That there are no references to cricket
contained in either James I's Book of Sports (1618) or Richard
Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy (1621), even though the latter
lists the pastimes of "base inferior persons" as well as those
of "great men", lends support to the impression that the game
remained a little-known activity for much of the seventeenth
century. This is not altogether surprising since, as a folk-
game, it would have appeared in a variety of different forms.
Familiarity with any one of these forms would probably have
been confined to the specific location in which it occurred.

Moreover, even in these contexts, it was but one of a large number of games and, as such, likely to be overlooked. Witness, for instance, the list of rural pastimes prepared by Henry Peacham, tutor to the sons of the Earl of Arundel, in 1647.

> "The most ordinary recreation in the country are foot-ball, skales or ninepins, shooting at butts, quoits, bowling, running at a base, stool-ball, leaping, and the like." [1]

Where explicit references to cricket do occur, it must be said that they tend to support the supposition that, in its folk form, the game possessed a comparatively low status. In an attempt to defame the character of Oliver Cromwell, Sir William Dugdale claimed that during his youth, Cromwell had become "famous for foot-ball, cricket, cudgelling and wrestling", and had the name of a "royster". [2] Writing towards the end of the seventeenth century, both Chamberlayne[3] and Stow [4] class cricket as a game of the common people. Stow, for example, observed that,

> "The more common sort divert themselves at Football, Wrestling, Cudgels, Ninepins, Shovel-Board, Cricket, Stowball, Ringing of Bells, Quoits, pitching the bar, Bull and Bear-baiting, throwing at Cocks, and lying at Alehouses." [5]

While the comments of Dugdale and Stow suggest that cricket was accorded a low status by contemporaries, there are also indications that the game was seen in some quarters as a violent, potentially dangerous, activity. In the Boxgrove Churchwardens' Presentment discussed earlier, it was recorded

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1   H. Peacham, The Worth of a Penny (1647), p. 85.

2   Rev. J. Pycroft, op.cit., p. 26

3   f. Chamberlayne, Magnae Britannicae Notitia (1698).

4   J. Stow, A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster (2nd. Ed., 1685), vol. I, Book I.

5   Ibid., p. 257.

that "little children had like to have their braynes beaten
out with a cricket-batt". An equally violent association
is contained in the following piece of seventeenth century
fiction:

> "Ay, but Richard, will you not think so hereafter?
> Will you not when you have me throw a stool at my
> head, and cry, 'Would my eyes had been beaten out
> of my head with a cricket ball, the day before I
> saw thee'." [1]

By themselves, these two references do not warrant the
conclusion that folk-cricket was typically a wild and violent
pastime. On the contrary, the absence of references to
riotous behaviour being occasioned by the playing of a game
of cricket, in addition to the fact that, in contrast to
other folk-games, its structure was less conducive to violence,
suggest the opposite conclusion; that the playing of cricket
posed a regular threat to neither. to its participants nor to
the community in which it was staged.

At first sight, one surprising feature of extant refer-
ences to seventeenth century cricket lies in the fact that
they contain no suggestion of a growing appreciation of the
game by members of the aristocracy and gentry. Yet, as will
become evident in the following chapter, the first half of
the seventeenth century was the period which immediately
preceded the game's adoption by members of the aristocracy.
But these references cannot be taken as proof of the fact
that the playing of cricket was confined to "the more common
sort." It must be remembered that Stow's description refers

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1   E. Phillips, The Mysteries of Love and Eloquence, or The
Arts of Wooing and Complementing: As they are practised
in the Spring Garden, Hide Park, and the New Exchange
(1658), p. 50.

explicitly to an urban context, and that in the case of
many of the other references, difficulties associated with the
collection of data would have inevitably imposed an urban bias
upon a supposedly general evaluation. It is possible that,
whereas in urban areas, lines of social distinction were
meaningful in all spheres of social life, rural communities
retained within their localised milieux facets of work and
leisure which admitted minimal degrees of class and status
exclusiveness in patterns of participation. If this is the
case, then the type of cricket played in rural areas could
have retained a basically folk structure and image while its
urban counterpart developed increasingly low status associations.
It is to hypotheses which embrace this type of distinction
that we must look, to discover an explanation of the subsequent
adoption of cricket by members of the landed aristocracry and
gentry, a process which was enacted in a predominantly rural
context.

Conclusion

The provision of a conclusion to this chapter was
motivated by two separate considerations. In the first
place, in view of the fact that so much of the evidence in
this account falls into one of two categories, speculative
or indirect, and that, as a result, much of the analysis
remains hypothetical, a conclusion may function to pull
together diverse strands of argument and hence, to high-
light the precise contributions that this approach has made
to an understanding of folk-cricket. In the second place,
it will serve to create a platform upon which future chapters
relating to the development from folk-game to modern sport
may be constructed. The reader may thus be able to incor-
porate in his perception of this process some understanding
of the tranformation it encompassed.

As a folk-game, cricket formed part of an indigenous
localized culture and, in this guise, it can have possessed
little or no autonomy in relation to the wider society.
Before the late seventeenth century, it is unlikely that the
game possessed more than a rudimentary structure, nor its
players any specialised skills. Both the rules of the game
and playing techniques were transmitted orally from place to
place and from generation to generation. The existence of
local variations in both was perpetuated in tradition where
they probably functioned to reinforce the separate identity
of the village community. Within the local cultural milieu,
however, the uniqueness of the particular variant was lost.
The piece of land which served as the "cricket field" also
served a multitude of other purposes. It may have been the

village green, in which case cricket would have been played
alongside the market and the stocks, or alternatively a pas-
ture donated for the occasion by a local farmer, where the
game would take its place amid the annual cycle of agricultural
activities. In these communities, no organisations existed
to perform those functions which, at a later stage, devolved
upon the cricket "club". Teams, in the modern sense, did not
exist. The game depended for its participants on a high
level of spontaneous enthusiasm. Where the competing sides
possessed a distinctive identity, it was as the representatives
of particular status or occupational groups within the community.

A failure to comprehend the structure of pre-industrial
societies has prevented many of cricket's historians from
appreciating the nature of folk-cricket. This has led many
to profess surprise at not finding a profusion of concrete
references to the game before 1700. The origins of this
reaction can be traced back to the way in which such writers
had taken a nineteenth century image of cricket as a rela-
tively autonomous, highly organised, national institution -
a product of two hundred years of development - and projected
it back on to a sixteenth and seventeenth century situation.
Not finding a comparable type of activity, they were led to
the conclusion that cricket did not exist. The following
statement, taken from F. W. Lillywhite's Cricket Scores and
Biographies, provides an example of this type of reasoning:

> "None of the early poets who drew their images
> so largely from the pastimes and occupations of
> men make the slightest allusion to this now
> national game. Even Shakespeare, whose plays
> abound with similes drawn from the noblest as
> well as the meanest diversions, never hints at it.
> Massinger, Shirley, Marlowe, and all the other
> dramatists of that age being equally silent on
> the subject, warrants the conclusion that it was

not practised during the reigns of Elizabeth and
James. The schedule of sports drawn up by command
of the latter monarch, sets forth with great minute-
ness and formality, all the games then supposed to
be in existence; many of which at the present day
would appear contemptible, are enlarged on to such
an extent that the risible faculties of a stoic
could not remain calm on perusal of it. If cricket
had been known and practised, it would have proved
a feature in an age and time in which athletic
exercises were allowed great scope and toleration,
because the king was exceedingly anxious to inure
what he termed "the meaner sort of people" to
fatigues that would fit their bodies for war." [1]

Lillywhite's confusion stems from his implicit assumption

that the cricket played in the "reigns of Elizabeth and James"

was in all significant respect identical to the game played in

the nineteenth century. If this were the case, an absence of

references would indeed be significant, but when folk-cricket

is seen as one activity in a localised milieu, this absence

becomes understandable - even predictable. In the eyes of

contemporary dramatists, anticipating an urban audience,

references to a vaguely defined, largely rural pastime would

have been needlessly obscure.

Attempts to explain the development of cricket have been

plagued by the use of the same assumptions. In many cases,

the transformation of cricket has been portrayed as a simple

process in which members of the "upper-class" replaced members

of the "lower-class" as the central participants. Lord Harris

and F. S. Ashley-Cooper, for example, argued that,

"For centuries before the Establishment of Lord's
and the M.C.C. in 1787, cricket had been played at
first by children and the lower classes, and later
by Princes of the Royal Blood, and men of wealth,
position and title." [2]

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1   F. W. Lillywhite, op.cit., p. viii.

2   Lord Harris & F.S. Ashley-Cooper, Lord's and the M.C.C.
     (1914), p. 1.

This type of explanation drastically oversimplifies a
highly complex process. By using the concept of "lower-
classes" to describe those groups from which cricket's
earliest participants were recruited, the authors not only
display their ignorance of the nature of pre-industrial
society, but they also render impossible any satisfactory
analysis of the subsequent development of cricket. If the
earliest cricketers were members of the lower classes, then
they developed relationships with the aristocracy quite unlike
any to be found in other "class" societies, and which contra-
dict most of the theoretical analyses of relationships between
classes in this type of society. In addition to these con-
ceptual deficiences, the explanation provided by Lord Harris
and Mr. Cooper suffers from other, perhaps more serious,
substantive inadequacies. It does not attempt to explain
why the game of cricket was subject to radical changes with
respect to its participants, and as a result, to its popular
image. It does not attempt to relate the transformation in
cricket to fundamental changes in the structure of English
society during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In
the following chapters, the problems on which attention is
focused arise from seeing the development of cricket, not as
an isolated phenomenon, but as part of a general process of
social development which has continued in England since 1660.

Part Two   The "Adoption" of Cricket

Introduction

Many aspects of cricket's emergence as an elite pastime were not unique. It is a characteristic of folk-games in general that they are liable to be adopted by members of a society's elite and, depending on the time and place, to become a "sport of kings". As examples, one can cite the development of football and polo. However, the existence of regularities in such patterns of development must not be taken as *a priori* evidence of the existence of a set of casual factors upon which all comparable processes of development have been founded. An explanation of the particular pattern of development traced by cricket must be related to that restructuring of sections of British society which occurred during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The central theoretical premise of this type of analysis is that,

> "one can best understand the distinguishing problems
>   and characteristics of sport as correlates of wider
>   problems of specific societies; that in order to
>   understand the characteristics of sport one cannot
>   confine oneself to the study of sport nor confine
>   one's enquiry to the particular type of society in
>   which pastimes assumed the characteristics of sport.
>   From the start, the problem and the road toward a
>   solution are attuned to the fact that England, the
>   society in which pastimes assumed the form of sport,
>   like sport itself, became what it is in the
>   sequence of time and that the explanation of this
>   particular form of pastime cannot lie simply in the
>   structure of that society at that particular time,
>   but can only be found in the structure of the process
>   itself. Moreover, it can only be found if one
>   compares the structure of this process, the structure
>   of the development of English society in certain of

its aspects with that of other societies where
pastimes did not, as they did in England as a
result of a relatively autonomous social change,
develop the character of sport." [1]

The type of cross-cultural analysis suggested by Elias
cannot be undertaken here. Nevertheless, in line with the
principles he proposes, it is possible to divide the develop-
ment of cricket into four relatively distinct stages:

(i)   ca. 1660 to 1830, when the folk-game in one or

       more of its forms was taken up by members of the

       aristocracy and gentry, and playing techniques,

       rules and the overall organisation of the games

       became elaborated and more highly formalised.

       During this stage, as will be shown, the game

       assumed importance above all as a means of acting

       out prestige rivalries within leisured elite. At

       the same time, the career as professional began

       to emerge under the patronage of this elite.

(ii)   ca. 1830 ca. 1870, when the patronage provided

       by members of the aristocracy and gentry ceased,

       and teams of independent professionals, dependent

       upon spectator support, toured the country.

(iii) ca. 1870 to ca. 1945, when the game became highly

       formalised and regularised, based on the county

       as a unit of organisation and identification, and

       when it developed a high degree of autonomy,

       organisationally, economically, and in terms of

       the recruitment of players - full-time amateurs as

       well as full-time professionals.

1   N. Elias, op.cit., pp. 14-5.

(iv) post 1945, when the amateur-professional dichotomy
collapsed and decreasing spectator support led to
concern about the viability and survival-potential
of cricket as a spectator sport employing a large
number of players.

These four stages were relatively distinct but they over-
lapped in a temporal sense. Each of them covered a period
of time in which one way of playing cricket was the dominant
form, but the type which was dominant at one stage did not
necessarily fade immediately into extinction as soon as
newer forms appeared. It ceased merely to be the dominant
form. Moreover, at each stage, composite forms of the game
appear to have existed. A good example of such a composite
form is "village cricket". As a result of misunderstanding
the essential features of folk-cricket, some writers have been
led to assume that its structure was very similar, if not
identical, to that of village cricket.[1] A close examination
of village cricket shows, however, that it was not a pure
descendant of the folk-game but, in fact, a composite type -
an amalgamation of characteristics displayed by the game at
different stages of development. In common with folk-cricket,
village cricket possessed little autonomy in relation to the
wider society but, unlike the former, its organisation and
existence were strongly influenced by the benevolence of the
local magnate. The recruitment of sides, for example,
depended upon the interest and availability of members of
the local elite. Moreover, specific patterns of deferential

1   See F. Gale, op.cit., pp. 183-201.

behaviour regulated relationships between lord and servant
or squire and tenant on the cricket field. Again, the
rules according to which the game was played were not a
part of a localised community culture. They were either
agreed upon beforehand by the competing parties or, at a
later stage, they were those codified by the M.C.C..

In the case of each of the four stages outlined above,
analysis will focus on two salient features of the game's
structure:

(i)   Its organisation; a point of particular concern
        in this connection will be to assess the extent
        to which the establishment and subsequent elabora-
        tion, from the eighteenth century onwards, of
        cricket's organisation can be explained in terms of
        its relationship with particular groups in English
        society. To establish this connection, it will be
        necessary to introduce a fairly extensive discussion
        of the structure of both the aristocracy and the
        bourgeoisie during this period and of the relation-
        ships between these groupings;

(ii)   The development of an occupational group based on
        cricket, the members of which may be seen as follow-
        ing one of a series of structured career patterns.

Chapter One   Early Records of Cricket.

>"England, when once of peace and wealth possesst,
>Began to think frugality a jest;
>So grew polite: hence all her well-bred heirs
>Gamesters and jockeys turned, and cricket players." [1]

When, in 1677, the treasurer to the Earl of Sussex, a son-in-law of Charles II, made the following entrance in his ledger, "Pd. to my Lord when his lordship went to the cricket match at ye Dicker",[2] the significance of the action almost certainly eluded his attention. For, as the first recorded instance of a member of the aristocracy participating, if only as spectator, in a game of cricket, the visit to Dicker indicates not only the existences of an unbroken line in the development of cricket from folk-game to modern sport, but also suggests one of the seminal influences in this process of transformation.[3]

As this reference suggests, the aristocracy did not find cricket a totally unorganised pastime. Incipient forms of competitions, basically contests between neighbouring villages and parishes in the counties of Kent and Sussex, existed at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. In 1697, the Foreign Post announced "a great

1   F. W. Lillywhite, op.cit., p. VIII.

2   J. Marshall, Sussex Cricket: A History (1959), p.19.

3   It can hardly be coincidental that regular records of
     the game date back only as far as this period. No doubt
     both the prestige and the formal distinctiveness which
     cricket began to derive from the participation of the
     aristocracy and gentry would have persuaded contempor-
     aries to include references to it in their writings.

cricket match in Sussex, eleven-a-side, for fifty guineas".[1]
An entry in the diary of a Kentish farmer recalls a match
played in 1708: "Memorandum, June ye 23rd, 1708. Wee beat
Ash Street at Creckitts."[2] In Sussex, the match attended
by the Earl of Sussex - at which it is also recorded that
his wife "tired of the prevailing amusements, hunting,
hawking, ninepins and cricket" - was only one of several
recorded. The diarist, Thomas Marchant of Hurst, noted that
on May 31st, 1717, "Willy went to see a cricket match", and
soon after, Marchant himself "was at a cricket match at
Dungton Gate toward night".[3] In 1719, a match was played
"in the Sandfield" at Hurstpierpoint. The entries in
Marchant's diaries give no details of these matches but
since the "Sandfield" which he mentions was a park owned by
the Campions, a local landowning family, it is possible that
members of the aristocracy and gentry were involved in their
organisation. By 1700, interest in the game was such as to
warrant the advertisement of matches in the local press.
These advertisements provided evidence not only of the social
acceptability of cricket at the beginning of the eighteenth
century, but also of the central significance of gambling in
these early matches. Moreover, the following entry in The
Post Boy, of March 30th, 1700, indicates that "gentlemen"
were playing cricket even in those urban areas where, as we

1   Altham, op.cit., p. 23.

2   Egerton M.S. (British Museum), fol. 108-522b.

3   Marshall, op.cit., p. 20.

suggested earlier, the game's prestige had been lowest:

> "These are to inform Gentlemen and others, who
> delight in Cricket-playing, that a match at
> Cricket, of ten gentlemen aside, will be played
> on Clapham Common, near Fox-Hall, on Easter
> Monday next, for £10 per head each game (five
> being defined and £20 the odd one)." [1]

The size of the wagers on the outcome of this match -
considerable in terms of eighteenth century values - is in
itself an indication of the presence of wealthy participants.
The same format of gentility combined with gambling appears
in a similar advertisement placed in The Postman of July
24th, 1705:

> "This is to give notice that a match of cricket
> is to be played between eleven gentlemen of the
> west part of the county of Kent, against as many
> of Chatham, for eleven guineas a man at Moulden
> in Kent on August 7th next." [2]

Though these references contain very little description
of the type of cricket played on these occasions, they do
serve to highlight the involvement of members of the aristo-
cracy and gentry in what, only forty years before, had been
basically a rural folk-game. On the surface, it may appear
rather surprising that an elite group should look to a game
such as cricket to provide a diversion in their seemingly
endless leisure hours. Yet it is clear that the pressures
making for a transformation of cricket - in its form,
structure and organisation - emanated from the active inter-
est taken by members of the aristocracy and gentry.

Of the existing explanations, few add to our understanding
of the origins of this transformation. In the majority of

1   H. T. Waghorn, The Dawn of Cricket (1906), p. 21.

2   Lord Harris, A History of Kent County Cricket (1907,
    p. 11.

cases, it is seen in terms of a simple process of adoption. What was involved in this process, and what motivated the aristocracy at its inception, are questions which have either been ignored or to which no satisfactory solutions have been provided. As before, the dearth of evidence encountered by the student of seventeenth and early eighteenth century cricket makes it unlikely that any totally satisfactory explanation will ever be forthcoming. However, by focusing attention on changes in the membership of the aristocracy and gentry, on the changing relationships of these groups with the rest of society, and on their characteristic life-styles, it is possible to analyse the context in which the "adoption" of cricket probably took place.

Chapter Two   The English Aristocracy in the

Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

By the closing decades of the sixteenth century, the
English aristocracy, traditionally a monolithic, almost
caste-like, 'warrior' elite, was in a state of relatively
violent flux. In the course of a process of economic and
political change which had ramifications throughout English
society, this group experienced not only a redefinition of
its membership but also the novelty of a pragmatic re-
examination of its functions. Underlying this flux were
two inter-related processes of change, the first of which
involved a great expansion in central government authority,
while the second embraced the emergence of features of
nascent bourgeois capitalism. Although both were extremely
complex processes, their effect upon the development of
English society was, in one respect, quite unambiguous.
Together they precipitated the emergence of a social order
in which the aristocracy was to exert a great, and often
dominant, influence, but never as an autonomous group.

To this picture of an aristocracy changing in response
to exogenous pressures must be added some understanding of
the attitudes of its members to the situation confronting
them. The English aristocracy at the end of the sixteenth
century was not an homogeneous group, totally and adamantly
committed to a last-ditch struggle to maintain its traditional
authority and status. There were, it is true, many who did
oppose any suggestion of coming to terms with either the central
government or rising social groups, be they mercantile capital-
ists or professionals. Until the last decades of the sixteenth

century, a number of the great aristocratic families,
particularly those whose domains were farthest flung from
London, like the Percys, the Cliffords, the Dacres, the
Stanleys and the Talbots, clung desperately to the autonomy
won by their predecessors. But their obduracy was to no
avail. By the turn of the century, their resistance had been
overcome by frontal assault, or undermined more insidiously
by a combination of legal sanctions and natural biological
decline. The earls of Northumberland were confined by
command of Elizabeth to Sussex and "as a result, the Percy
clientage withered on the vine".[1] While in the case of the
Stanleys and the Talbots, failure to produce a male heir
greatly reduced their power. As a result of these and other
similarly debilitating circumstances, it could be said without
exaggeration that,

> "by the accession of James, the North was in the
> safe hands of carpet-baggers, bureaucrats,
> lawyers and local landowners of medium rank."[2]

There are grounds for thinking, however, that the policy
of total opposition to the encroachments of the central
authority did not command the support of all members of the
aristocracy. It is probably a mistake to think of the
aristocracy at the beginning of the seventeenth century as
the relatively homogeneous entity that it had been during
the Middle Ages. Changes both in personnel and values had
been introduced in the course of a rapid increase in size
during the preceding century. During the hundred years from
1540 to 1640, the aristocracy approximately trebled in size

1   L. Stone, op.cit., p. 122.

2   Ibid., p. 123.

while the rest of the population barely doubled. The
numbers of peers rose from 60 to 160; of baronets and
knights from 500 to 1,500; of squires from perhaps 800
to 3,000; of armigerous gentry from around 3,000 to 15,000.[1]
Some of the factors responsible for this growth are worthy
of mention insofar as they are indicative of the fundamental
restructuring of economic and social life going on within
fifteenth and sixteenth century society. It can be attri-
buted partly to an increase in the amount of land in private
ownership, partly to an exceptionally high reproduction rate
amongst the aristocracy and gentry, and partly to the efforts
of a rising generation whose fortunes were connected with
the growing volume of trade and commerce taking place in
England at this time, and to a closely related increase in
the demand for professional services.

An increase in numbers, however, was only one respect in
which the aristocracy changed during the Tudor and Stuart
eras. Just as significant was this body's gradual relin-
quishing of its military function. For it is to this process
of de-militarisation, and to the consequent shift of emphasis
to more peaceful forms of economic and political involvement
that one must look to find the beginnings of an explanation
of the aristocracy's espousal of folk-games like cricket.

De-militarisation was not a continuous, unilinear
process. As we have noted already, many 'noble lords'
bitterly contested any diminution of their military power
since, in the great majority of cases, this implied a

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1   A. G. Dickens, The English Reformation (1964), pp.
     163-6; Stone, op.cit., Ch. III.

comparable loss of autonomy. But lose it they did, in some cases gradually and with sufficient perspicacity to seek other sources of influence, but in others, suddenly at the conjuncture of the executioner's block and axe. If evidence is needed to demonstrate the reality of the aristocracy's declining military presence, it is to be found in the observations of contemporaries. First, Sir Walter Raleigh:

> "The lords in former times were far stronger, more warlike, better followed, living in their countries, than they now are. There were many earls could bring into the field a thousand barbed horses, whereas now very few of them can furnish twenty to serve the King...... The justices of peace in England have opposed the injustices of war in England: the King's writ runs over all; and the Great Seal of England, with that of the next constable's, will serve to affront the greatest lords in England, that shall move against the King. The force, therefore by which our Kings in former times were troubled is vanished away." [1]

Then Sir Francis Bacon:

> "Touching the (powers of) command (of the magnates), which is not indeed so great as it hath been, I have it rather to be a commendation of the time, than otherwise: for men wont factiously to depend upon noblemen, whereof ensued many partialities and divisions, besides much interruption of justice, while the great ones did seek to bear out those that did depend upon them. So as the Kings of this realm, finding long since that kind of commandment in noblemen unsafe unto their crown, and inconvenient unto their people, thought meet to restrain the same by provision of laws: whereupon grew the statute of retainers: so as men now depend upon the prince and the laws, and upon no other." [2]

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1   Sir Walter Raleigh, Works (1751), p. 9: quoted in J. H. Hexter, Reappraisals in History (1961), p.145.

2   Francis Bacon, Works (1884), p. 252.

And finally, John Selden:

> "When men let the lands under foot, the tenants
> would fight for their landlords, so that they
> had their retribution, but now they will do
> nothing for them, nay, help the first, if but
> a constable bid them, that shall lay the landlord
> by the heels: and therefore 'tis vanity and folly
> not to take the full value." [1]

It is not difficult to identify a common theme running through all three quotations. Their authors, as Professor Hexter points out, focus attention not upon "the rising or declining fortunes of the gentry", but on certain changes in the distribution of military power which occurred in England during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

> "They are saying very emphatically that
> the magnates do not directly control arms
> and men as they once did, that the old
> relation between high status or great landed
> wealth and a great military following no
> longer exists." [2]

The consequences of the aristocracy's loss of military presence were, it seems, sufficiently dramatic and immediate to be visible even to those who lacked the benefit of hindsight. But the causes of this process are more difficult to discover. However, some suggestions as to the identity of the most significant influences acting upon this situation can be gleaned from the discussion undertaken earlier in this thesis, of the changes in the distribution of power in Tudor and Stuart England. In that context, it was argued that, of the many interests involved, two in particular, the central authority and nascent capitalism, benefited most from the aristocracy's loss.

[1]   John Selden, Table Talk; quoted in Hexter, op.cit., p.157.

[2]   Hexter, op.cit., p.144.

In the case of the central authority, increased power
and authority did not accrue from idle by-standing. Through-
out the period of the Tudor monarchy, the crown and parlia-
ment were, for the most part, united in their attempts to
rid the country of the over-mighty subject whose military
strength had dominated, and could still challenge, their
own. To achieve this end, Henry VII passed a number of
Acts which established beyond all doubt that the first
loyalty of every subject was to the Crown, and only there-
after to his "good lord". But the force of these measures
was much undermined by the unfortunate fact that both
Henry VII and Henry VIII were obliged to turn to members
of the aristocracy and gentry to provide them with an army,
in the event of an attack upon the realm. Though, in theory,
the King could raise a conscript army from a national levy
of all able-bodied men between 16 and 60, in practice the
administrative difficulties of assembling, training and
arming such a force were immense. Lacking a standing-army
of its own, the central authority still had to rely upon the
armed retinues maintained by the great magnates. In 1523,
for example, the aristocracy was responsible for producing
one third of the total army.[1] From the 1540s, however, the
importance of private armies diminished. Henry VIII and
Mary were responsible for encouraging the development of
conscript armies for foreign as well as domestic use.
The office of Lord-Lieutenant came to encompass respon-
sibility for supervising these musters. As a result of
these innovations, for much of the sixteenth century there

1   Stone, op.cit., p. 102.

operated a duel military system, part quasi-feudal and part national. But as the century progressed, the importance of the latter came to overshadow that of the former. In 1573, Elizabeth decreed that out of the general body of the militia there should be groups of picked men, to be equipped at public expense and trained regularly in the use of weapons. Moreover, these "trained bands" were to be controlled by the lord-lieutenants rather than by magnates.[1] "The peer and his retinue", as Professor Stone has written, "were being replaced at home by the deputy lieutenants and the trained bands, and abroad by Ancient Pistol and his forced levies." [2]

In pursuing these measure, the state was undoubtedly aided by the absence of any substantial opposition to its authority, save for the Spanish Armada. Had it been confronted with the continual need to raise a large army to resist challenge from overseas or from within England herself, the state might well have been compelled to fall back on the aristocracy's capacity to mobilise and organise a military force. Since this threat rarely materialised, the military strength of the aristocracy became increasingly irrelevant. In fact, at least one authority has drawn attention to the fact that it was to the navy rather than the army that England came to look to maintain her national security, and beyond this, to extend her international influence.

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1   While this distinction is important, it should not be allowed to obscure the fact that, in many cases, the magnate was also the lord-lieutenant.

2   Stone, op.cit., p. 100.

> "During that period (the sixteenth century) all
> European countries bordering on the Channel -
> with the exception of Germany weakened by inner
> dissensions - were drawn, one after the other,
> into the struggle for domination of the newly
> acquired sea-routes and for possessions overseas.
> To hold her own, England had to develop her
> maritime resources. The growing power of some
> of her neighbours along the coastline opposite
> to hers threatened not only her sea-communi-
> cations, but also her security at home. England
> for her part, threatened with her growing strength
> her neighbours on the other side of the Channel and
> the Spanish Seas." [1]

In addition to stimulating the expansion of the navy, the
prolonged periods of peace experienced during the sixteenth
century meant that by the beginning of the following century,
most members of the aristocracy had neither much experience
of war, nor the technical capacity for leadership. By the
seventeenth century, the traditional qualities of the
English aristocrat, bravery and strength in direct physical
combat, were fast becoming anachronistic. Growth in the
size of armies and advances in the techniques and strategy
of warfare meant that,

> "War ceased to be an exciting chevauchee led by
> high-spirited young men out for a lark. Now
> that small arms had been invented, strength,
> courage and skill on horseback were no longer
> any protection against sudden and ignominious
> death. War was no fun any more, and the tilt-
> yard at Westminster had to serve as a substitute
> for the fields of Crècy and Agincourt." [2]

Professor Stone's observations highlight two central
facets of the aristocracy's decline as a military force
during the sixteenth century. Not only were there very

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[1]   Norbert Elias "Studies in the Genesis of the Naval
      Profession", British Journal of Sociology (1950),vol. 1,p.295.

[2]   Stone, op.cit., p.130.

few occasions on which its members could display their
fighting qualities, but when such opportunities did occur
they found themselves ill-adapted to the demands of a
form of warfare which was more advanced and complex than
any that they could previously have experienced. As the
scions of countless families of aristocratic lineage have
discovered since, bravado, elan and esprit de corps were
little defence against a hail of bullets. In the wars of
the 1540s, about three-quarters of the peerage - almost the
total complement of able-bodied men - had seen service:
by 1576 only one peer in four had any military experience.
By 1642 the proportion had shrunk still further to about
one in six, and one is led inevitably to the conclusion
that one root cause of Charles I's defeat in the civil war
may have lain in the aristocracy's lack of military exper-
ience - or, as one authority has put it,

> "If the Earl of Newcastle had had the profes-
> sional expertise of Sir Ralph Hopton it might
> have been a different story." [1]

Further evidence of the extent to which the loss of this
military function had become a reality for the majority of
members of the aristocracy is to be found in the changing
pattern of domestic organisation which they adopted during
the seventeenth century. By 1650, many "great lords" were
in the process of dispensing with the trappings of their
military past. The most direct manifestation of this
adaption to changing circumstances can be seen in the
reduction in the size of the retinues employed by the

[1] Ibid., p.131.

magnates. Whereas, until the mid-sixteenth century, it
had been customary for these retinues - servants and body-
guards - to number as many as five hundred, by the middle
of the following century they rarely numbered more than
fifty. The Earl of Derby, for example, kept a staff of
118 as late as 1587, but his successor managed to survive
with only 38 servants.[1] Implicit in this and other instances
of pruning the size of households is a recognition by those
concerned of the largely unwarranted cost involved in main-
taining para-military retinues. Not only were such appen-
dages too expensive but, with the growing ascendancy of
the state, they had begun to become increasingly superfluous.
As the aristocracy lost its more-or-less total autonomy,
so too it relinquished the right and the opportunity to
employ servants in a purely military capacity.

A reduction in size, however, was not the only respect
in which the households of "noble lords" changed during the
sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As important a
development was the gradual change in the social origins
of those who were employed. During the middle ages it had
become customary for the younger sons of members of the
lesser aristocracy and gentry to enter upon a period of
service in the household of one of the great magnates.
Young "squires" were thus educated in aristocratic stan-
dards and values, in "polished" ways of behaving and in
such potentially combative activities as riding and fencing.
Doubtless, for many, it was always seen as an easy way of
ensuring a life of relative ease and comfort but, for others,

1   Dickens, op.cit., p.102.

close personal attendance upon one of the major figures
of the day was a means of fostering their ambitions,
social and political. But from the seventeenth century
onward, however, this traditional custom was gradually
neglected. While attention has already been drawn to the
tendency at this time for magnates' households to diminish
in size, an important fact of this decline was that it did
not occur at the same rate in all sections of the household.
Numerical decline was most marked at the level of close
personal attendants, just the position to which sons of
the gentry were most frequently recruited. At the begin-
ning of Elizabeth's reign, the Duke of Northumberland had
forty gentlemen and thirty yeomen ushers in his household,
the Marquis of Northampton 34 gentlemen and 13 yeomen. One
hundred years later, men of similar position were accompanied
by only six footmen and two or three pages.

That, to a degree, the decrease in the numbers of sons
of the gentry entering the service of great lords was a
result of a deliberate attempt at economy by the lords
themselves should not be denied. But it is also the case
that at this time, the gentry began to view the prospect of
committing their sons to a period of personal attendance upon
a magnate as considerably less desirable than had been the
case. As Lord North observed in the middle of the seven-
teenth century; "It is certain that families of noblemen
are clean other than they were anciently: for within memory
of some yet alive, it was usual for persons of the inferior
gentry to put their sons into such service for breeding." [1]

1 Quoted in Stone, op.cit., p. 102.

There are two major points to be made about this change of custom. At one level, it is simply another illustration of the changing nature of seventeenth century English society. But it has a more specific significance than this. The fact that sons of the gentry were entering the service of a magnate in much smaller numbers than before is more than just a comment on the declining military significance of the aristocracy. It is evidence of the extent to which many members of the gentry were thinking in terms of the possibility of gaining entry to the aristocracy. Besides these ambitions, the prospect of entering into service as a personal attendant could only seem degrading.

The heightened expectations held by many members of the gentry and also many prosperous merchants were born of a realization that non-aristocratic birth no longer disqualified one from membership of that elite group. Throughout much of the seventeenth century, representatives of the landed gentry and mercantile interests continued to fill those positions vacated by aristocratic families decimated in war or ruined in peace. So when one writes of the changing nature of the aristocracy in the seventeenth century, one is referring, in fact, to a change both in the foundation of aristocratic authority and in the type of person in whom that authority was vested.

The introduction of these new elements into the aristocracy, however, did not create a direct challenge to its time-honoured superiority. As parvenus, new members were more concerned with discovering methods of consolidating their new-found elite status than with destroying its foundations. Far from advocating the removal of privilege,

most of them simply wanted to guarantee its perpetuation.
Their success in these respects was closely related to a
general reappraisal of the function and value of land going
on within sixteenth and seventeenth century England. Whereas,
in the middle ages, in conjunction with the low degree of
effective state control and the generally violent tenor of
life, land had possessed military and political, as well as
economic, significance; from the sixteenth century onwards,
it began to be seen increasingly in terms of its potential
as a regular source of income. As R. H. Tawney has observed,

> "In the turbulent days of the fifteenth century,
> land had still a military and social significance
> apart from its economic value; lords had ridden
> out at the head of retainers to convince a bad
> neighbour with bows and bills; and a numerous
> tenantry had been more important than a high
> pecuniary reward from the soil. The Tudor dis-
> cipline with its stern prohibition of livery and
> maintenance, its administrative jurisdiction and
> tireless bureaucracy, had put down private war-
> fare with a heavy hand, and, by drawing the teeth
> of feudalism, had made the command of money more
> important than the command of men.... (This change)
> marks the transition from the medieval conception
> of land as the basis of political functions and
> obligations to a modern view of it as an increase-
> yielding investment. Landholding tends, in short,
> to become commercialised." [1]

Two groups in particular tended to profit disproportion-
ately in conjunction with this commercialisation of land.
A combination of profits accruing from successful exploita-
tion of the buoyant wool market, and an increase in food
prices - and therefore agricultural profits - of between 400
and 650 per cent between 1500 and 1640, substantially increased
the prosperity of the economically "enlightened" sections

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[1] R.H. Tawney, The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century
     (1912), pp. 188-189.

of the gentry. A comparable increase was also experienced by those groups engaged in mercantile and fiscal speculation in urban centres. The expansion of capitalistic ventures led naturally to an increase in the numbers of people who could be classed as "entrepreneurs" - the middling and large-scale exporters of London, Exeter, Bristol, Hull, and Newcastle, the wholesalers and retailers in these centres, and the customs "farmers", government contractors and financiers.

The growing prosperity of these groups and the declining fortunes of many aristocratic families had a far-reaching effect on the structure of the upper strata of English society. The hundred years prior to 1642 witnessed probably the highest rates of social mobility experienced in England before the nineteenth century. Evidence in support of this claim can be found in the exceptionally rapid turn-over of land recorded in the Close Rolls and Feet of Fines, a high proportion of which resulted from sales of crown and church estates. Including these categories, as much as 25 to 30 per cent of the landed area of the country previously locked up in institutional hands may have been released on to the private market between 1534 and 1600. [1] Moreover, this rate of buying and selling was facilitated by the weakness of legal restrictions upon the alienation of property: for instance, Tawney found that about one in every three manors in the seven counties he examined changed

1   Stone, op.cit., p. 166.

hands every forty years between 1560 and 1640. [1]

In connection with these land sales, the composition
of the landowning strata underwent continuous reorganisa-
tion. Professor Stone, for instance, has estimated that,

> "between 1562 and 1633, 78 new names were added
> to the list of armigerous[2] gentry in Lincolnshire.
> In Wiltshire, between 1556 and 1623, no fewer
> than 109 new names were added to the original
> total of 203. There were 641 gentry families in
> Yorkshire in 1603; by 1642, 180 of these had died
> out in the male line, or had left the county,
> while 218 had become armigerous, had come into
> the county, or had set themselves up as cadet
> branches..... In county after county, particu-
> larly those in the lowland zone around London,
> Fuller observed the speed of change: 'The gentry
> in all counties..... being in continuo fluxo:
> the gentry in Middlesex seem sojourners, rather
> than inhabitants therein!." [3]

The persistence of a high rate of social mobility over
a period of one hundred years, though highly significant,
must not be seen as indicative of the total collapse of the
existing system of stratification. Although the rate of
mobility, both up and down, was exceptionally high, the
range over which the majority of these movements took place
was relatively narrow. The new members of the landed gentry
were recruited largely from those groups immediately beneath
it in the hierarchy of strata: that is, they were members
of the yeomanry or the lesser gentry who had profited from
the favourable agricultural conditions prevailing at the

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1   R.H. Tawney, "The Rise of the Gentry, 1558-1640",
    Economic History Review, xi (1941), repr. in Essays in
    Economic History, vol. i, ed. E.M. Carus-Wilson (1954):
    pp. 173-4.

2   The term "armigerous" indicates the right to bear heraldic
    arms.

3   Stone, op.cit., p.768.

time, or they were drawn from the most prosperous represen-
tatives of urban capitalism.

One of the most significant features of the social
mobility of the 1540-1640 period is the extent to which
it corresponds with what R. H. Turner referred to as
"contest mobility."[1] By this he meant that type of mobility
which takes the form of a relatively open competition in
which success is largely dependent on the individual's
capacity to utilise his native ability. However, by the
second half of the seventeenth century, the rate of mobility
 had significantly declined. In part, this may be attributed
to the declining efficacy of those factors - population
growth, price revolution, free land market, educational
expansion and Puritan ethical obligations - on which the
original high rates were founded. But, in addition to
these, it is probable that the decline resulted from deliber-
ate attempts on the part of a reconstituted aristocracy to
reduce the rate of upward mobility into its ranks so as to
protect the newly-gained status of many of its members. This
begs the question, to which no firm answer can be given, of
what proportion of the socially and economically mobile did
succeed in achieving a lasting membership of the elite.
Professor Tawney discovered that of sixty-two major land-
owning families in ten counties in 1640, more than half still
retained this property in 1874.[2] Allowing for the fact that

1   R.H. Turner, "Sponsored and Contest Mobility and the
     School System", American Sociological Review, vol. XXV
     (1960), No. 5, pp. 121-137.

2   R.H. Tawney, op.cit., p. 190.

by 1874 a fresh impetus to change in the profile of land-
owners had been provided by the maturing of industrial-
ization, and also for the ineluctable processes of biological
failure in the male line, it appears that, following Turner's
conceptualisation, "contest mobility" had been superceded
more and more by "sponsored mobility". As a result, the
second half of the seventeenth century saw a resurgence
of the aristocracy as a distinctive elite whome many
admired but to which few gained entry. This elite took
upon itself the task of selecting and socialising those
aspirants to whom membership was granted, in an attempt to
ensure, henceforth, against radical changes in its position
and its style of life.

It was not only parvenu outsiders who profited from the
gradual realisation of the social and economic potential of
land described by Professor Tawney. A further source of
disturbance to the traditional conception of the aristocracy
arose out of the undisguisedly capitalistic activities of
many of its most established members. During the reign of
Elizabeth I, for instance, probably the most successful
entrepreneur in England was not a merchant nor an upwardly-
mobile member of the gentry, but none other than George
Talbot, 9th Earl of Shrewsbury. One contemporary commen-
tator described him as "a great grazier, a great sheep-
master, a great timber-man, a great collier, a great corn-
master, a great lead-man, and so of iron, and a number of the
like points of husbandry." [1]

1   Sir Francis Bacon, quoted in Stone, op.cit., p. 175.

Not all Talbot's contemporaries could boast such a
diverse range of interests. Since land was the basis of
their authority, it is natural to find that the efforts of
the majority of magnates were restricted to discovering ways
of extracting greater revenue from their estates. Indeed,
in considering the part played by the aristocracy in stimu-
lating economic growth, there are at least three reasons
why the tendency to exaggerate must be avoided. In the
first place, most of the entrepreneurial activities in which
members of the aristocracy were involved was of a decidedly
speculative type. It was, as it were, another manifestation
of that love of gambling which was, and still is, a distinc-
tive feature of the aristocracy's existence. There are
relatively few instances of the sort of rational, planned
enterprise which Max Weber saw as the hall-mark of modern
western capitalism.[1] Secondly, while peers normally took
the leading role in the initiation and early development of
economic ventures, it was comparatively rare for their
interest to be maintained beyond this stage. Thirdly, within
the aristocracy itself, a clear distinction existed between
those of its members who saw in more efficient estate
management[2] a means of financing an even more lavish and
exotic life at court, and those for whom it was part of a
wider strategy, the ultimate goal of which was the achieve-
ment of total authority within their local community.

1   See The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,
     pp. 47-79.

2   'Efficient estate management' involved 'the operation of
     demesne estate, the conversion of copy-holds, inclosure
     by agreement, taking in the waste, raising rents on new
     lettings, shortening terms of leases, switching from
     beneficial leases to rack-rents,(and) changing lease-
     holders to tenants at will'. Stone, op.cit., p. 158.

The presence of this schism was significant, both for
the development of the aristocracy, and for the development
of the game of cricket. By and large, the composition of
the conflicting factions, the 'Court' and 'Country' parties,[1]
reflected the profound socio-economic and political changes
in the aristocracy during the previous two centuries. The
former, composed of the majority of the nobility and a
minority of the gentry, represented the growing importance
of the Court as the centre of the governmental process. The
latter, the majority of the gentry and lesser peers, were
seen as,

> "persons of public spirit, unmoved by private
> interest, untainted by court influence and
> corruption, representing the highest good of
> the local communities and the nation in whose
> interests they, and they only acted."[2]

What happened in England during the sixteenth and
seventeenth centuries, in contrast with, for example, France,
is that the monarchy and the central administration - even
though their power was growing throughout the period - did
not succeed in establishing total dominance over the "country"
party. The monarch, that is to say, did not manage to trans-
form all major members of the aristocracy into "courtiers",
to bring them under the immediate physical and administrative
control of the central authority. The "country" party was
able to retain a relatively high degree of autonomy. This
was a crucial factor as far as the maintenance of a life

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1   P. Zagorin, "The Court and the Country: A note on
    Political Terminology in the Early Seventeenth Century",
    English History Review, vol. 77 (1962), pp. 301-314.

2   Ibid., p. 309.

style which was founded upon essentially rural pursuits, such as "huntin', shootin' and fishin'" was concerned. As will be shown, cricket came, in this period, to form an integral part of that style of life.

Moreover, it was to the ranks of the "country" party that the great majority of the new land-owning gentry were recruited. In most cases of upward social mobility, the process is preceded by a period of "anticipatory sociali-sation"[1] during which the individual rejects the style of life of his present membership group[2] in favour of that to which he aspires. It is, in fact, through this process that particular styles of life are perpetuated. But in periods of rapid and extensive social change, when both the identity of the reference group[3] is challenged, either from internal or external sources, the distinctiveness of these styles of life tends to blur. Under such conditions, it is conceivable that the upwardly-mobile group could maintain all or part of its traditional life style within the new context in which it finds itself. Though greatly oversimplified, this hypothetical process can be seen to correspond in most essential respects with those processes of social change which manifested themselves in English society during the seventeenth century. At this time, aspirants to the ranks of the aristocracy were no longer confronted with a largely homogenous elite, but instead

1 For a detailed discussion of this process, see R. K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, pp. 316-329.

2 Ibid., p. 290.

3 Ibid., p. 336.

with a number of opposing factions, each denouncing the life style of the other. The virtues of the traditional English rural utopia were held up as an ideal against which the more bohemian Court style, strongly influenced by the aesthetic precepts of the Italian Renaissance, seemed foreign and immoral.

So much for the development of the aristocracy: what light does the preceding analysis throw upon that group's adoption of cricket as a leisure activity? Does it provide the basis on which a more adequate explanation of this intriguing phenomenon can be based? The most widely accepted explanation of the transformation of cricket, that of H. S. Altham, sees the process as a straightforward adoption of a folk-game by those members of the "Court nobility" who were "exiled" after the Civil War. In A History of Cricket, he writes:

> "The truth seems to be that the last half of the seventeenth century was really the critical stage in the game's evolution, the era in which it developed from the pastime of boys, or, at best, of yeomen of the exclusive Weald into a game with a national appeal, enjoying in ever-increasing measure the patronage of the leaders of Society. To this, it would seem political history may have decisively contributed. With the temporary eclipse of the Royalist cause, it is probable that many of the nobility and gentry would retire to their country seats and here some of them......would find themselves watching the Wealden game as played by their gardeners, huntsmen, foresters, and farm hands, and from sheer ennui would try their own hand at it and find it was good." [1]

The simplicity of this explanation makes it deceptively appealing, but, in fact, it contains a number of serious limitations. Not least of these are, first, a total

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1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 23.

failure to explain why an essentially court-based nobility,
accustomed to a sophisticated, urbane style of life, should
suddenly develop a sustained liking for a simple, folk-game,
and, second, a seriously inadequate understanding of the
activities of the majority of nobility during the Interregnum.
With respect to the latter question, Mr. Altham's assumptions
concerning the physical movements of members of the aristo-
cracy during the Interregnum run contrary to the findings
of Professor Joan Thirsk. In her studies of the impact of
the civil war on patterns of land settlement, Professor
Thirsk has shown that during the Interregnum the lands
forfeited by the two greatest land-owners in England, the
Crown and the Church, were broken up for sale into hundreds
of parcels. By 1660, some 200,000 acres in south-east
England, forfeited by fifty Royalists, had been redistri-
buted amongst 257 people.[1] It was not until after the
Restoration that the majority of Royalists successfully
regained their land.[2] Neither of these facts accord with
the thesis, advanced by Mr. Altham, that "many of the nobility
and gentry (retired) to their country seats". The existence
of a temporarily domiciled group of aristocrats, possessing
sufficient influence to effect at a later date a change in
the leisure activities of the elite, the assumption on which
Altham's thesis is founded, seems, at best, open to question.

1   J. Thirsk, "The Sale of Royalist Lands during the
    Interregnum," Economic History Review, 2nd ser.,
    V. No. 2 (1952), p. 206.

2   J. Thirsk, "The Restoration Land Settlement", Journal
    of Modern History, XXVI, No. 4 (1954), p. 327.

It is against this background that the relevance of
the preceding analysis of the changing internal structure
of the seventeenth century aristocracy becomes clear.
Although H. S. Altham's account of the aristocracy's role
in the early development of cricket is of doubtful authen-
ticity, this does not alter the fact that the growing
involvement of members of the aristocracy was a crucial
factor in the transformation of the game from its original
folk forms. Similarly, there is little doubt that this
involvement dates from around the middle of the seventeenth
century. Altham's mistake stems from his failure to realise
that the aristocracy at this time was not the homogenous,
"warrior" elite that it had been during the middle ages.
For a number of reasons, many of those families that had
previously formed the core of the aristocracy had disappeared,
while others remained, but only at the cost of accepting a
fundamental revision of the role they were to play as members
of this elite. At the same time, as these changes were dis-
rupting the existing structure of the aristocracy, greater
heterogeneity was being lent to this cadre by reason of the
admittance of many landed gentry and prosperous members of
entrepreneurial and professional groups, who were flourish-
ing amid the burgeoning capitalism of cities like London,
Bristol, Exeter and Norwich. For the great majority of
these arrivistes, the acquisition of a landed estate was a
means of cementing their place among the landed aristocracy.

By focusing upon the changes in the character and compo-
sition of the seventeenth century aristocracy, the existence
of two basic preconditions for its adoption of cricket

becomes clear. Better financial management on the part
of many of the surviving descendants of the great feudal
families, together with an infusion of new, prosperous
stock, meant that the majority of magnates had more than
adequate wealth with which to fund the staging of cricket
matches and to pay their chosen representatives on the
"field". Moreover, as well as possessing great wealth,
members of the aristocracy were well endowed with another
crucial commodity - time. Except in the rare case of a
life dedicated to administration in the service of the
state, or to the furtherance of a political or mercantile
career, aristocrats of the period had time on their hands.
Indeed, the absence of any extensive demands upon their
time was probably one factor which led many of them to seek
entertainment in the more bohemian, exotic and often esoteric
activities of the Caroline courts. In addition to specifying
preconditions, however, an understanding of the changing
nature of the seventeenth century aristocracy provides a
clue as to why and how members of such a high-status group
came to be involved in the organisation and even the playing
of a folk-game like cricket. In the first place, a magnate
may have discovered cricket in the course of devoting more
time and energy to managing his estates. Unfortunately,
since very few detailed records of the measures taken in
this connection exist, this explanation can only be advanced
in hypothetical form. Given this limitation, another explan-
ation, at once both "causally" and "meaningfully" adequate, [1]

1   These concepts are central to the Weberian notion of
    "explanatory understanding" (erklärendes Verstehen).
    See Weber's, Economy and Society, vol. 1, (1968), p. 9.

which suggests itself, is that in the course of renewing leases, extracting larger rents and enforcing enclosures, the lord of the manor would have come into closer contact with his tenants and, in this way, would have been exposed to some of their traditional games, a category into which cricket - or its folk predecessors - fell.

Another context in which members of the aristocracy may have been exposed to cricket arose as a direct consequence of one of those facets of the changing nature of the aristocracy in the seventeenth century noted earlier. The likelihood of such an awareness of traditional games and pastimes developing amongst the aristocracy was probably enhanced by the gradual change in the social origins of domestic servants which was taking place throughout that century. Dorothy Marshall has pointed out in this connection that,

> "After the Civil War, it was no longer customary to send young gentlemen into a noble service for a short time, with the result that the servants as a body became a more homogeneous collection........So by the eighteenth century, the domestic menage of the great house had been completely altered. As a result, the tendency was for men to be drawn from a lower social class than had formerly been the case. By the eighteenth century, even the upper servants were in a majority of cases the sons of labourers, artisans or small farmers rather than recruits from the ranks of reduced gentlemen." [1]

To imagine the lord of the manor being confronted with the sight of some or all of his domestic retinue - men and women of the type described by Dorothy Marshall - participating in a game later identified as cricket, does not overstep the bounds of empathic understanding, as described

[1] Dorothy Marshall, The English Domestic Servant in History, Historical Association, No.G.13, (1949), p. 6.

by Weber.[1] But, while remaining on the same hypothetical
level, it is possible to conceive of a process by which
cricket could have become an aristocratic pastime which
does not involve seeing this adoption entirely as a con-
sequence of patronage by established members of the
aristocracy. The key element in this hypothesis is the
exceptionally high rate of social mobility which charac-
terised the higher echelons of English society during the
late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the prevailing
conditions, upwardly-mobile members of the gentry and the
merchant bourgeoisie were not only able to gain membership
of the aristocracy, but also to retain vestiges of their
former life-styles within this milieu. This injection of
elements of different life-styles, of which cricket may
have been a part, produced a form of cultural _mélange_ which
persisted until the stabilisation of the aristocracy in the
late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The possi-
bility that cricket was, indeed, introduced to the aristocracy
by its newest recruits is made more likely by the fact that
there was within the aristocracy at this time a faction -
the Country party - whose members were distinguished by their
support for the traditional virtues of English rural society -
precisely the context in which folk-forms of cricket flourished.

When these three factors, the growing interest shown by
members of the aristocracy in the management of their estates,
the changes in the social origins of the majority of their
domestic servants and the relatively extensive changes in

1   See M. Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences,
     (New York, 1949), p. 74.

the composition of the aristocracy itself, are seen as coincident developments, they represent the basis of a "meaningfully adequate" explanation of the initiation of the process whereby cricket became an elite activity. However, as yet this explanation is limited, since nothing has been said of the motivations which underlay the aristo-cracy's adoption of this folk-game. While it is now possible to see how the transformation may have been effected, no attempt has been made to answer the equally fundamental question of why many of the "noble lords" of the seventeenth century should wish to play cricket. To provide an accep-table solution to this latter question, it is necessary to return to the earlier analysis of the changing structure of the seventeenth century aristocracy.

In the course of losing its pre-eminent military function, the aristocracy forsook the right and the obligation to main-tain large standing-armies. As well as being effectively restricted in size by a number of statutes enacted early in the reign of Henry VII, armies were expensive to maintain and, as guarantors of continuing personal authority and security, increasingly irrelevant. For the aristocracy, however, the loss of its military function meant more than just the acceptance of subordination to the state. Around the performance of this military role a distinctive life-style had developed, in which great stress was placed on the virtues of chivalry and loyalty, and upon physical, combative activities, such as fencing, hunting and jousting. Yet, by the seventeenth century, personal feuds could no longer be settled by might of arms - at least, not without incurring

the displeasure of the state. Castles were replaced by manor houses; standing armies and liveried retainers by numerically smaller retinues of personal attendants and domestic servants. Accompanying these changes, and closely related to them,[1] there occurred an equally significant change in the tenor of social life amongst the aristocracy. Previously, the relatively high degree of personal autonomy possessed by the aristocracy, coupled with the fact that its social position was based on the performance of military roles, had meant that individual members were free to indulge in almost any type of behaviour, violent and otherwise, whenever and wherever he so desired. Accordingly, their lives tended to take on an unpredictable, exciting and often violent character.

The crucial stage in the aristocracy's abandonment of their traditional habits of casual violence lasted from around 1570 to 1620. During these decades, major steps were taken to break up their great landed domains and to cut down the size of their powerful bands of retainers. Once the state began to erode the personal autonomy of the aristocracy, lords, both great and not so great, found themselves increasingly obliged to accept the prescribed, highly stylized, behavioural conventions of the Court. At the same time as these changes were so fundamentally altering the life-style of the aristocracy, the game of cricket first

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1   This is not to say that either set of changes was caused wholly by the other. In fact, it is probable that both were, to a great extent, the product of the more general processes of change referred to earlier, e.g. state centralisation and the growing impecuniosity of large numbers of aristocracts.

attracted the favourable attention of several of its members.
Such a fortunate coincidence suggests that, in fact, more
than an element of chance may have been involved. What
cricket offered to the magnate was an opportunity to
forsake temporarily the oppressive routine of everyday
Court life, for the gay abandon of an unpretentious folk
game, and furthermore, to employ the competitive element
of the game as a means of acting out those prestige rival-
ries which, in different circumstances, had often culminated
in a duel. Insofar as cricket represented a means whereby
vestiges of their old life-style, particularly its rivalries
and tensions, could be re-enacted in a setting which
afforded little or no threat to the maintenance of order,
the game's adoption by the aristocracy is understandable.

The most distinctive feature of this explanation is that,
unlike H. S. Altham's, stress is placed on the fact that the
adoption of cricket, like the reconstitution of the aristo-
cracy to which it was closely related, was a long-term
process which came to fruition only around the end of the
seventeenth century.

Chapter Three   Cricket in the Eighteenth and
                  Early Nineteenth Centuries.

The first stage in the development of cricket from a
folk-game into an organisationally complex, highly presti-
gous, modern sport took place under the influence and
direction of a nucleus of members of the aristocracy and
gentry within the boundaries of south-east England, more
specifically in the counties of Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hamp-
shire, and in London. Though it is known that cricket was
played beyond these confines - for instance, in Gloucester -
as early as 1729, the major diffusion of the game during
this stage of development occurred in the second half of the
eighteenth century. The records of matches played in the
Midlands and the North of England suggest that, until the
nineteenth century, standards of play and organisation there
were significantly lower than in the South. To explain why
and how cricket came to display a distinctive organisational
structure at this time, it is necessary to examine the general
context in which the game functioned as a leisure activity
for the ruling elite, and how the particular structure and
organisation typical of the game at this time were determined
by the structure and composition of that elite group, and
further, by its relationship with the rest of society. In
short, it will be argued that the organisation of cricket
during this stage of development was based upon a pre-
established pattern of relationships and communications
among members of the landed aristocracy and gentry. This
pattern incorporated the responsibilities of government and
the extensive social activities of a ruling elite in a

system of social interaction whose twin foci were the country estate and the London residence.

Though there is evidence that an incipient level of organised competition in the form of inter-village contests already existed, it was not until cricket was patronised by members of the landed aristocracy, both in London and in rural areas, that the game developed an organisational structure distinctively different from that of a folk-game. The first recorded instance of a member of the aristocracy actually participating in a cricket match was in 1725. In that year, the Duke of Richmond, resident at Goodwood, in Sussex, played a double-wicket match against Sir William Gage of Firle in the same county. The Duke was responsible for instigating and organising the contest, which was staged at Goodwood. In a letter accepting the challenge, Sir William Gage wrote:

> "I received this moment your Grace's letter
> and am extremely happy your Grace intends us
> ye honour of making one a Tuesday, and will
> without fail bring a gentleman to play against
> you, One that has played seldom for several
> years.
>
> I am in great affliction from being shamefully
> beaten Yesterday, the first match I played this
> year. However I will muster up all my courage
> against Tuesday's engagement. I will trouble
> your Grace with nothing more than that I wish
> you success in everything but ye Crickett Match." [1]

From this date, reports of matches involving members of the aristocracy and gentry appeared in the press with increasing frequency. In 1726, two matches were reported, both involving teams led by Mr. Edwin Stead, Esq. The first game was played on Kennington Common for 25 guineas, the

1   John Marshall, The Duke Who Was Cricket (1961), p. 40.

second on Dartford Heath. In 1727, the Duke of Richmond
played a match against Mr. Alan Broderick at Peperharowe,
near Godalming in Surrey. At least five matches were played
in 1728: one between the Duke of Richmond and Sir William
Gage at Lewes; one between "the Duke of Richmond and his
Club" and Edwin Stead, Esq., and his company for what was
reported to be "a great sum"; one "at the Earl of Leicester's
Park at Penshurst, between Sir William Gage of Sussex, and
Edwin Stead, Esq., of Kent, for 10 guineas a side of each
county"; and one between the Gentlemen of London and the
Gentlemen of Middlesex. In 1729, Kennington Common was the
scene of a "great match...... between the Londoners and the
Dartford men for a considerable sum of money", while other
matches were played at Penshurst and an unknown venue in
Sussex "between Kent, headed by Mr. Edwin Stead, Esq., and
Sussex, Surrey, and Hampshire, by Sir William Gage, for 100
guineas, eleven on a side". In 1730, the Duke of Richmond
played a match against Mr. Andrews on Merrow Downs, near
Guildford, at which "were present the Rt. Hon. Lord Onslow
and Lord Middleton, Sir Peter Soame, Mr. Stead and a great
many persons of distinction",[1] and another contest with Sir
William Gage at Lewes. Of the twenty matches reported as
played in 1731, six were contests between teams of Kentish
men - led either by Edwin Stead or Lord John Sackville, -
and the Gentlemen of London, four involved teams of Gentlemen
from various London Boroughs, such as Fulham, Chelsea and
Brompton, and two were between the Gentlemen of Kent and
Surrey. In 1733, the rapidly growing popularity of cricket

1   MARSHALL, OP. CIT., P. 44

was, in a sense, legitimised through the participation of
H. R. H. the Prince of Wales, who donated a silver cup to
be competed for by a team selected by Mr. Stead, and one
composed of "the Prince's men". That the Prince played in
various matches is confirmed by a report in 1735:

> "July, 'The great cricket match was played
> at Moulsey Hurst, in Surrey, between H.R.H.
> the Prince of Wales and the Earl of Middle-
> sex, son of the Duke of Dorset, for £1,000
> a side: eight of the London Club and three
> out of Middlesex played for the Prince, and
> the Kentish men for the Earl, His Royal
> Highness came into the field between 12 and
> 1 o'clock, and the stumps were immediately
> pitched. Kent won with three men to come in.
> This day fortnight, the second match is to be
> played at Bromley Common'." [1]

Between 1735 and 1746, when he died, the Prince was
involved in a series of matches played either in London or
Surrey, between teams selected and sponsored by, and often
including, various members of the nobility. Apart from
those already mentioned, the Duke of Cumberland, the Earl
of Middlesex, and the Lords Waldegrave, Baltimore, and
Montford, are all recorded as cricket supporters. Few
"great matches" did not involve "several persons of Distinc-
tion".

In what way did the aristocracy's participation in these
cricket matches typify the general pattern of their social
life? By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the
landed aristocracy had re-established its social and poli-
tical dominance in English society. In the process, it had
regained the essential characteristics of an elite - a high
degree of corporate exclusiveness and stability. As an

1   Lord Harris, op.cit., p.15.

example of the latter quality, one has only to point to the work of H. J. Habakkuk,[1] who has shown that with only two exceptions, the register of land-owning families in Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire in 1740 included all those families who had owned land a century before. Throughout the eighteenth century, the ownership of landed property represented the foundation upon which the political and social domination of the aristocracy depended. "Landed property", wrote William Marshall in 1804, "is the basis on which every other species of material property rests: on it alone mankind can be said - to live, to move, to have its being."[2] The political significance of property derived from the fact that it was an essential qualification for entry into the House of Commons as well as the key to control over local government. In fact, the very purpose of governments was seen to lie in their capacity to defend the individual's rights over his property. Once established, the political authority of the aristocracy tended to develop certain self-perpetuating properties. Of these, perhaps the most influential was a tacit assumption by politically active sections of the aristocracy of the right to receive the largesse of the state, and an equally tacit acceptance of this claim by even those most critical of systems of privilege. Cobbett, in his

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1   H.J. Habakkuk,"English Landownership", Economic History Review, Vo. X, No. 1, (1940), pp. 1-17.

2   Quoted in H. A. Perkin, The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780-1880 (1969), p. 42.

Political Register, noted that sinecures and places,

> "..... now serve, or ought to serve, the purpose
> of rewarding public service ..... and.... of
> upholding and cherishing them against the ancient
> nobility and gentry who otherwise might fall into
> a state that would inevitably bring disgrace
> upon rank." [1]

But the aristocracy's control over government was only a
translation into political terms of the authority it exer-
cised in all spheres of life. Again, this domination was
not only accepted, but was seen as right and just - in fact,
in terms of the continuing stability of society, a functional
pre-requisite. Thus Samuel Johnson, in conversation with
James Boswell, argued:

> "Sir, I would no more deprive a nobleman of his
> respect than of his money. I consider myself
> as acting a part in a great system and do to
> others as I would have them do to me. Sir, I
> would behave to a nobleman as I would expect
> he should behave to me, were I a nobleman and
> he Samuel Johnson." [2]

The pervasiveness of the aristocracy's authority in
society was the result partly of an increase in the number
of landowners, partly of a growth in the size of their
estates, and partly of the large income they received and
the even greater wealth they controlled. According to
Gregory King,[3] the aristocracy in 1688 accounted for 1.2%
of all families, a figure which had increased to 1.4% by
1803. Since it is likely that during the seventeenth
century, there existed a differential fertility rate whereby

1   W. Cobbett, The Political Register, March 1st, 1806.

2   J. Boswell, London Journal, 1762-1763,(Yale edition of the
     private papers of James Boswell) London, 1950, p. 320.

3   Gregory King, "Scheme of the Income and Expense of the
     several families of England", in Charles Davenant's, Works
     (1699).

the upper strata produced more children than any other section of society, the aristocracy came to represent nearly 2% of the total population. It has been estimated that during the same period the peerage had a replacement rate of 1.5; that is to say, children of peers were producing 50% more children per generation.[1] King calculated that 12,000 out of the 16,586 aristocratic families were headed by "plain gentlemen": by 1803, the respective totals were 20,000 out of 27,204.[2] Taken in conjunction with a number of economic factors - a more rational approach to agrarian production based on enclosures, an expansion of markets and a steadily growing volume of trade and commerce - making for a reduction in the autonomy of local communities at this time, this real increase in size meant that the aristocracy was in a position to exert greater control over a larger part of the total population than had been possible ever before. Other factors which contributed to the expansion of aristocratic authority were, first, the growing size of landed estates and, second, the great income and wealth which magnates derived from the ownership of land, political and administrative office and even entrepreneurial activity. In the case of landed estates, Professor Habakkuk has shown that these grew on average by around 15% between 1640 and 1740.[3] The greater part of this increase resulted from the enclosure of those common lands which had formed

1   Stone, "Social Mobility in England", p. 41.

2   King, op.cit., p. 68.

3   Habakkuk, op.cit., p. 10.

the basis of an earlier peasant economy.[1] Gregory King's calculations show that the top 10% of families measured in terms of rank received over 20% of the total value of all incomes received.[2] Add to this the vast inherited wealth possessed by the aristocracy and one sees very clearly how it was that eighteenth century England could accurately be described as "a federation of country-houses".[3]

These estates formed the heart of a distinctive system of authority in which the central figure, both locally and nationally, was the landowning magnate. As Justice of the Peace, landlord, and employer, his influence pervaded every aspect of the community's life. By subtle use of patronage, he created a complex network of dependencies and obligations among the local population. The efficiency of this network as a method of informal control was increased by the highly personalised relationships which existed between individuals at different levels of the local stratification hierarchy. It was upon the personal, face-to-face, relationships of patronage that the elaborate system of paternal responsibility which served to legitimize the power of the magnate, rested.

But the exercise of authority was only one aspect of the aristocracy's role in society. At the same time as being the head of a local community, and possibly the occupant

1   See Barrington Moore, op.cit., p. 26; and W. Hoskins, The Midland Peasant: The Economic and Social History of a Leicestershire Village (1957), p. 260.

2   King, op.cit., p. 60.

3   Habakkuk, op.cit., p. 17.

of a governmental or Crown office, the local landowner
was also a member of a leisured elite, the very distinc-
tiveness of which reinforced his superiority. As G. M.
Trevelyan noted:

> "Perhaps no set of men and women since the world
> began enjoyed so much zest as the English Upper
> Class at this period. The literary, the sporting,
> the fashionable and the political 'sets' were one
> and the same. When the most unsuccessful of all
> great politicians, Charles Fox, said on his death
> bed that he had lived happy, he spoke the truth.
> Oratory was at its highest, politics at its keenest,
> long days tramping after partridges, village
> cricket, endless talk as good as ever was talked,
> and a passion for Greek, Latin, Italian, and
> English poetry and history - all these and alas,
> the madness of the gambler." [1]

Within the ideology of this elite, the primacy of work
over leisure which typifies bourgeois capitalist societies
was reversed. When the Earl of Sandwich, in response to a
call to attend a meeting concerned with some aspect of
government administration, replied, "I'll at your board
(the Admiralty) when at leisure from cricket," [2] far from
being simply capricious, he was conforming to the dictates
of a life-style which was as important a feature of the
aristocratic way of life as the unearned income upon which,
economically, the existence of this elite was based. It was
the capacity to live a life of uninterrupted leisure which
set the true gentleman apart from the rest of society and,
as such, it was the ideal upon which most aspirations
centred. To the gentleman, work was anathema - an activity
totally irreconcilable with his privileged status in society.

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1   G. M. Trevelyan, English Social History (1946), p. 404.

2   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 34.

The connection between these two, theoretically discrete,
aspects in the role of the aristocrat was the country
mansion - the "big house". In this setting, the local
magnate persued his particular interests and acted out
his part in the essentially paternalist conception of noblesse
oblige.

Descriptions of cricket matches in the first half of the
eighteenth century suggest that, for members of the aristo-
cracy, participation in the game served four general functions.
First, through his patronage of cricket, the local magnate
widened his sphere of influence within the community and
attained as well, a degree of direct personal control over
the potentially disorderly leisure activities of other,
lower status members of the community. In this respect,
playing cricket may be seen as one of those activities which,
according to Bulwer-Lytton, gave the English aristocracy its
distinctiveness in the eighteenth century.

> "The social influence of the aristocracy has been
> exactly of a character to strengthen their
> legislative position. Instead of keeping
> themselves aloof from the other classes, and
> 'hedging their state' round with the thorny
> but insubstantial barriers of heraldic distinc-
> tion: instead of demanding half a hundred quar-
> terings with their wives, and galling their
> inferiors by eternally dwelling on their inferior-
> ity, they may be said to have mixed more largely
> and with more seeming equality with all classes
> than with any other aristocracy in the savage or
> civilised world..... Their hospitality, their
> field sports, the agricultural meetings they
> attended in order 'to keep up the family interest',
> mix them with all classes...." [1]

In a different context, the involvement of the aristo-
cracy and gentry in games like cricket may be seen to have

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[1] E. G. Bulwer-Lytton, England and The English (1883) p. 30.

exercised a significant influence upon the particular form these games developed. As Norbert Elias has pointed out:

> "The peculiar character of sport in England
> cannot be understood if one does not see the
> stamp left on its character and organization
> by the period in which landowning groups, and
> particularly the English aristocracy possessed
> a power, both in economic and political terms,
> hardly equalled by that of any other landowning
> cadre." [1]

Second, cricket matches between members of the aristocracy constituted a further strand in a complex web of interaction which, simultaneously, both emphasized the exclusiveness and maintained the corporate nature of this elite. The early eighteenth century patrons of cricket had two things in common: they all owned country estates within the relatively confined area of Kent, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire, and with the exception of Edwin Stead, who died a bankrupt in 1735, all were either Members of Parliament or Crown appointees. The Duke of Richmond was Lord High Constable of England, Lord of the King's Bedchamber, Master of the Horse, an appointment which by 1805 was worth over £27,000 a year, and a member of the Privy Council. In addition, he maintained an influence in the sphere of local politics by being Mayor of Chichester, the constituency he represented in Parliament as the Earl of March, and which he secured for an uncle on his resignation. He also controlled the constituency of Seaford in Sussex, for which his cricketing friend, Sir William Gage, was the member. Alan Broderick, son of Viscount Middleton, whom he succeeded in 1728, was the member for Midhurst, a Commissioner of the Customs, and

[1] Norbert Elias, The Genesis of Sport, p. 28.

subsequently Joint Comptroller of the Army accounts. Lord
John Sackville, second son of the Duke of Dorset, was the
Member for Tamworth. It is not difficult to imagine the
matches patronised by these gentlmen, staged either at one
of their country residences or in or near to London, as
constituting one aspect of that annual round of events which
incorporated both the pleasure-seeking and governmental
responsibilities of the ruling elite.

The third function served by participation in cricket
matches lay in the fact that it was an activity in which
members of the aristocracy could act out their prestige
rivalries without being exposed to the same degree of
physical danger involved in other, similarly functional,
elite activities, such as jousting and duelling, which, of
course, reflected the military past of their class. That
the majority of matches expressed the personal rivalries of
various individuals or groups within the aristocracy and
gentry was a paramount feature of this type of contest.
Though the teams played under a variety of titles, they
were essentially the personal representative of a particu-
lar magnate, patronised and organised with the specific
intent of improving or defending his status within the elite.
The introduction of an element of serious rivalry into what
previously had been primarily a source of enjoyment had
important consequences for the development of at least one
aspect of the game; i.e. status and role differentiation
among its participants. Whereas, as a folk-game, cricket
had been played by individuals, perhaps representing various
status groups within the community, the collectivities

which represented the likes of the Duke of Richmond and
Lord John Sackville, including a number of "professional"
players, selected purely on the basis of technical exper-
tise, bore a closer resemblance to the modern conception
of the "team".

Finally, cricket provided a source of entertainment,
exercise, and excitement for a group of people who possessed
almost infinite amounts of time and money to devote to the
cause of leisure. The complete absence of self-conscious-
ness, coupled with a sublime indifference to the presence
of large crowds which, particularly in London, would have
included in all probability a sizeable lower-class component,
only indicates the extent to which members of the aristo-
cracy had internalised, by that time, a belief in the
legitimacy and permanence of their superiority. Though
cricket's capacity to entertain and excite derived in part
from the structure of the game, it was magnified in the
particular context in which the game was played in the
eighteenth century. While the prestige rivalries which so
often provided the basic motivation behind the organisation
of these games undoubtedly produced a high degree of involve-
ment on the part of the players and spectators alike, it was
the betting and the wagering - by the middle of the eighteenth
century, an integral part of any match - which activated
much of the aristocracy's interest in the game.

In fact, cricket was only one of many gambling media
supported by the aristocracy. Given sufficient imagination,
almost any situation containing an element of competition
could become the scene of a hefty wager. In a letter to

Sir Horace Mann, written in 1756, Horace Walpole described

how,

> "My Lord Rockingham and my nephew, Lord Oxford,
> have made a match of five hundred pounds between
> five turkeys and five geese, to run from Norwich
> to London." [1]

In The Old Betting Book of All Soul's College, a record

of bets struck by the Fellows between 1795 and 1870, an

entry for 1815 reads: "Cartwright bets Birens £10 to £1

that some Jurist Fellow of the College will marry before

D'Oyley does." [2] It would be a mistake, of course, to

suppose that this penchant for gambling was entirely an

upper-class phenomenon. At the end of the seventeenth

century, an article in The London Spy contained the following

observation:

> "The gentry indeed might make it their diversion,
> but the common people make it a great part of
> their care and business, hoping thereby to relieve
> a necessitous life; instead of which they plunge
> themselves into an ocean of difficulties." [3]

A complete explanation of the great popularity of gambling

during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries does not fall

within the purview of this study. However, on the basis of

the limited amount of data already introduced, it is possible

to suggest lines of enquiry which, if developed, may provide

fruitful insights into the nature of this phenomenon. As a

point of departure, one may take the fact that the functions

of gambling as perceived by members of the aristocracy were

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1   Sir P. Warner: Lord's, 1787-1945 (1946), p. 27.

2   Quoted in E. B. Perkin's Gambling in English Life (1950),
    p. 11.

3   Ibid., p. 12.

radically different from those served in a lower class
context. To the former, the profitability of a bet was not
as significant as the excitement it engendered. By stimu-
lating suspense and pleasurable insecurity, participation
in a betting enterprise satisfied important emotional needs
for individuals whose lives were becoming increasingly
regularised and predictable. If the diaries and letters
of the period can be taken as reliable evidence, the every-
day life of a typical gentleman, securely ensconced within
a social hierarchy which had, by this time, become relatively
stable, was extremely tedious. While at first looked upon
as deviant, by the second half of the seventeenth century
gambling had become a socially acceptable, even desirable,
form of behaviour. An ability to stake large sums of money
would have demonstrated to contemporaries not only possession
of considerable wealth, but also, and perhaps more signifi-
cantly, an imperviousness to any considerations related to
the preservation of this wealth. It has been said of the
Court of Charles II that "unless one gambles freely, it was
quite impossible to be counted a gentleman, or for that matter,
a lady of fashion." [1]

It is to this combination of emotional satisfaction and
social desirability that one must look for an explanation
of the pervasiveness and persistence of gambling in eighteenth
century society. This approach has many limitations, perhaps
the most obvious being its failure to explain why the life of
the typical aristocrat should have been becoming more boring.
To this question we can only suggest a particularly tentative

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1   Ibid., p. 13.

solution: that the boredom experienced by aristocrats was
a direct consequence of the greater routinisation and
predictability introduced into their lives by reason of
two related developments; first, the continuous expansion
of state authority and, second, the involvement of members
of the aristocracy in the business of government, both at
a national and a local level. While it was not until those
reforms of the administrative branch of government intro-
duced between 1830 and 1860 that the aristocracy's control,
via Parliament, of sinecures and pensions was seriously
challenged, the onset of this process can be dated from the
exclusion of office-holders from Parliament in the mid-
eighteenth century, a deliberate attempt by a Whig govern-
ment to protect the ruling elite from Crown encroachments.
Though, perhaps, a digression, it is nonetheless signifi-
cant to note that the period which saw most inroads into
the dominance of the aristocracy also witnessed a great
boom in gambling activities, a factor which found reflection
in the appearance of a number of exclusive gambling clubs
in London.

By 1750, when the amount of extant data is sufficient to
permit relatively detailed analysis, it is clear that as a
result of existing as part of an aristocratic milieu, cricket
had developed a structure which, in several significant
respects, differed from that which typified the folk-game.
This is not to say, however, that differences were, without
exception, the result of innovation: in fact, particularly
in the sphere of developments in the laws of the game,
standardization or condification rather than the introduction

of new restrictions account for the majority of changes.
Though the typical eighteenth century match can be con-
trasted with its folk predecessor in almost every respect
- in form, in structure, and in organisation, - the fact
that the focus of this study centres on the last of these
dimensions means that changes in the first two can only be
summarised.

One way of emphasizing the contrast between the typical
cricket match of the mid-eighteenth century and earlier
variants is to examine the descriptions of the game con-
tained in two contemporary sources, a Latin poem, entitled
In Certamen Pilae, composed by William Goldwin in 1706, and
the Articles of Agreement drawn up for two matches played
in 1727 between the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Alan Brodrick.
In the former, the teams, drawn it appears from the same
community, converge upon the venue - "a meadow yields
with smooth expanse" - carrying curved bats, a style which
was not superceded until the last decades of the century,
the Hambledon era. At this stage in the poem, an argument
over rules ensued, which is only resolved by the inter-
vention of a "Nestor" - "a grey veteran",

> "a Daniel come to judgement, he to all speaks equity.
> Though now his arms be laid aside
> and marred by years his early pride,
> yet rich is he in cricket lore,
> and proves that they need strive no more." [1]

Two sets of wickets - two stumps and a "milk-white Bail"
- are pitched, and two sides equal in number prepare to
play. A coin is tossed to decide who has first innings, and

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[1]   In Certamen Pilae, translation by H. A. Perry, (1922):
      quoted in R. S. Rait-Kerr's The Laws of Cricket (1950),
      pp. 4-8.

when both teams are ready, one of the umpires - "the
Moderatores bini" - calls "play", and the contest begins.
The fielding side, using a leather ball - "Coriaceus Orbis"
- bowl four-ball overs, while the batsmen can be dismissed
by being "caught", "bowled", or "run out". To score, a
batsman had to touch with his bat a piece of wood held by
the umpire at the opposite end, and these "runs" were
recorded by cutting notches in a piece of wood. As late
as 1823, runs were still described as "notches". Methods
of achieving a run-out varied: in Goldwin's poem, the
dismissal is not clearly recounted, but from other sources,
it appears that one method involved placing the ball in a
"popping hole" before the striker could place his bat therein.

By the time the Articles of Agreement were drawn up,
though many features of the game remained unaltered, the
context of its performance had changed radically. Because
of the functions cricket now served, and because of its
almost permanent association with gambling, it was in the
interests of the organisers and the central protagonists
to minimise the chances of disagreement. Thus, in one
sense, the 1727 Articles represented an attempt to impose
a standard code of rules upon the numerous local variations.
They defined the circumstances under which a batsman could
be "caught out" and "run out" - i.e. "the wicket must be put
down with ball in hand". But in addition to this, they
included specific provisions relating to the availability
of substitutes and the powers of the umpires, both of which
were potentially divisive elements in a situation charged
with the presence of large amounts of money. In the case
of the umpires, it is noticeable that the central protagonists,

the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Alan Broderick, were specifically excluded from the sphere of their jurisdiction. Finally, of course, the Articles recorded the sums of money at stake - here, a relatively moderate "twelve guineas of each side". By 1727 then, though elements of the variability of the folk-game were preserved in, for instance, the provision of a twenty-three yard pitch, the formal structure of cricket had become relatively standardised and, as such, had begun to develop a framework capable of sustaining that distinctively elitist image which later generations were to see as the "be-all and end-all" of the game.

On subsequent occasions during the eighteenth century - in 1744, 1771, 1774, and 1788 - many of the sanctions and prohibitions included in the 1727 Articles were incorporated, albeit in a modified or expanded form, into codes of "Laws". In these, one finds not only precise definition of the form to be taken by cricket's implements, - bat, ball, stumps, and bails, and of the dimensions of the pitch itself, but also considerable elaboration of previous levels of regulation, including reference to "hit-wicket", "no-ball", "short-runs", and a type of obstruction closely akin to the modern "L.B.W.".[1] That the growth of a more elaborate, standardised, code of rules can be related directly to the multiple advance in the techniques and strategies

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1   For the uninitiated, the letters "L.B.W." stand for "leg-before-wicket", and refer to a mode of dismissal in cricket. A batsman may be adjudged out if, in the opinion of the umpire, either or both of his legs were so placed as to prevent the ball delivered by the bowler from hitting the wicket.

employed by the leading players of the day is barely

contestable. On at least two occasions, it is possible

to trace a direct cause-effect sequence of events in the

establishment of a new rule. In the first, a _cause célèbre_

among cricket historians, the source of trouble was the

size of the bat used by one "Shock" White. The event was

recalled many years after by John Nyren:

> "Several years since (I do not recollect the
> precise date) a player named White, of Ryegate,
> brought a bat to a match, which being the width
> of the stumps effectually defended his wicket
> from the bowler: and in consequence, a law was
> passed limiting the future width of the bat ....
> I have a perfect recollection of this occur-
> rence; also, that subsequently an iron frame,
> of statute width was constructed for and kept
> by the Hambledon Club; through which any bat
> of suspected dimensions was passed, and allowed
> or rejected accordingly." [1]

A similar series of events characterised the introduction

of the third stump. On this occasion, as Nyren again recounts,

> "When Small went in the last man for fourteen
> runs, and fetched them, Lumpy was the bowler
> upon the occasion; and it having been remarked
> that his balls had three separate times passed
> between Small's stumps, it was considered to be
> a hard thing upon the bowler that his straightest
> balls be thus sacrificed, the number of stumps
> was in consequence increased from two to three." [2]

While still not the responsibility of a single, central

authority - the M.C.C. did not prepare its first code until

1788 - the aforementioned changes contributed towards the

establishment of a set of rules which found acceptance over

a far wider area than any linked to the folk-game. To explain

this, it is necessary to look no further than the context in

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1   Quoted in Col. R.S. Rait-Kerr, _op.cit._, p. 22.

2   _Ibid_. p. 23.

which they were formulated. Except in the case of the
legislation which followed the indiscretion of "Shock"
White, for which the Hambledon Club was responsible,
codification of rules in 1744 and 1774 took place under
the highly prestigious auspices of, in the first place,
the "London Club", whose President was Frederick Louis,
Prince of Wales, and in the second, "a committee of Noble-
men and Gentlemen of Kent, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex,
Middlesex, and London".[1] As a final testament to the
pervasiveness of the aristocracy's influence upon the
structural development of cricket in the eighteenth cen-
tury, one can cite the inclusion within the 1774 code of
Laws the following clauses which related specifically to
gambling:

> "If the notches of one Player are laid against
> another, the Bet depends on both Innings,
> unless otherwise specified.

> "If one Party beats the other in one Innings,
> the Notches in the first innings shall deter-
> mine the Bet.

> "But if the other Party goes in a Second Time,
> then the Bet must be determined by the numbers
> on the score."[2]

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1   These rules were published under the title of "The Laws
     of Cricket", and printed "By order of the Committee"
     by J. Ridley, St. James St.

2   Col. R.S. Rait-Kerr, op.cit., p. 19.

Chapter Four   Patterns of Organisation in Eighteenth
                 and Early Nineteenth Century Cricket

As a general observation, the proposition that the
changes in the organisation of cricket during this period
were directly related to the functions it served for a
leisured, landowning elite can be accepted. As has been
shown, within the milieu dominated by the aristocracy, the
typically spontaneous, largely unregulated, folk-game was
superceded by pre-arranged fixtures played at specific
venues, between teams selected partly on the basis of
technical expertise. However, it would be entirely erron-
eous to suppose that the involvement of members of the
aristocracy and gentry resulted in establishment of only
one discernible pattern of organisation. Until the demise
of the Hambledon Club in the last decade of the century, the
organisation of matches reflected not only the influence of
the aristocracy but also the enduring factor of local
community rivalry. That two such socially discrete factors
could both exercise an influence upon the development of
cricket at this time is one further indication of the
peculiar characteristics of the English aristocracy. The
paternal system of social control, upon which much of its
authority rested, together with the extraordinary confidence
its members exuded in their relationships with the rest of
society, meant that, in contrast to many of its European
counterparts, this elite did not deliberately and totally
detach its leisure pursuits from the folk context in which
many of them originated. As a result, it is possible to

distinguish two complementary patterns within the overall
organisation of the game.

The first, in which the participation of the aristo-
cracy was characterised by a relatively high degree of
exclusiveness, had as its focus that seemingly endless
round of social events, centred upon the country estate
and the London residence, which formed the foundation of
interaction among this elite group. In the second pattern,
the presence of the aristocracy has to be combined with
two other causally significant factors; first, the durabil-
ity of a pre-existing framework of localised contests, and
second, the growth of the urban middle-classes, whose status
aspirations increased in direct ratio to their economic
power, and who saw in participating in this, perhaps least
established, of elite pastimes one means of satisfying some
of these aspirations.

A more detailed examination of the first pattern reveals
it to have been based upon two central axes of competition.
The first consisted of contests between two country-based
aristocrats, such as the Duke of Richmond and Sir William
Gage, or later, Lord John Sackville and Sir Horatio Mann,
played at either one or the other of the protagonists'
estates, or at a neutral venue, normally approximately
half way between the two. The emergence of this type of
contest was a particularly crucial feature in the trans-
formation of cricket from folk-game to modern sport because,
oriented towards a common social stratum rather than a
local community, it affected a means by which cricket
could transcend its traditionally localised sphere of

interest. While the latter orientation had remained
dominant, the geographical localisation which it fostered
sustained the existence of a large number of variations
in rules and prevented, as well, the improvement of playing
skills through contact with teams from different areas who
employed different, and possibly more advanced, techniques.
The internal cohesion of the land-owning cadre from which
cricket's new patrons were recruited provided an ideal
framework on which to base a greatly expanded organisational
structure.

This type of contest persisted throughout most of the
eighteenth century. Though personalities changed, the
resemblances between them, and the matches they staged,
remained. Most of the great patrons of the second half
of the century, like their immediate predecessors, combined
an active involvement in cricket with high administrative
or political responsibilities. The Duke of Dorset was
Ambassador to the Court of France, and Steward of His
Majesty's Household. Sir Horatio Mann represented Sand-
wich in five successive Parliaments between 1774 and 1807.
Their counterpart in Surrey, the Earl of Tankerville, was
Joint Post-Master General, and a Privy Councillor. Between
them, these three devotees were responsible for organising
many of the "great matches" played in South-east England.
To the extent to which these matches emphasized the fact
that leisure was the "natural" condition of the aristocracy,
they provided de facto legitimation for what was a particu-
larly distinctive way of life. Of this, one can find no
better summary than that contained in the obituary of Sir

Horatio Mann, which appeared in an issue of <u>The Gentleman's</u>
<u>Magazine</u> of 1814:

> "His life was rather dedicated to pleasure than
> to business. Enjoying a good constitution, he
> was much attached to gymnastic exercise,
> specially cricket, which as he advanced in
> life, he relinquished for the more sedate
> amusement of whist. Of late years, he regu-
> larly passed his time between Bath and Margate,
> and was a warm promoter of every institution
> and improvement in these places. At Dandelion,
> near Margate, also several good matches came off
> under his patronage after he had left Bishop-
> bourne." [1]

That the influence of men like Sir Horatio Mann upon

the organisation and other spheres of the game should have

been so pervasive, was largely the result of the amount of

land they owned. In Mann's case, though Bourne House,

Bishopbourne, was the centre of his cricketing life, he

also owned estates at Linton, near Maidstone, at Sissing-

hurst, and nearly one half of the parish of Frittenden.

However, the Duke of Dorset and Sir Horatio Mann, though

probably the most influential, were only two members of

a wider group of cricket-loving, local landowners in Kent.

Between 1751 and 1773, regular matches were played at

Ashford, Bethersden, Bourne Paddock, New Romney, Wye,

Canterbury, Egerton, and Swinfield. The extent to which

members of the local aristocracy and gentry became involved

in these matches varied considerably. On some occasions,

the teams were named after the community in which the land-

owner resided, while on others, they took the identify of

the particular patron - for example, Mr. Farrar's Club,

(Isle of Thanet), Mr. Louch's Club (Chatham) and predictably,

1   Quoted in Lord Harris, <u>op.cit</u>., p. 28.

Sir Horatio Mann's Club. In the case of Mr. Stephen
Amherst, not only did he form his own club, but he also
retained particularly talented players as his servants.

As the preceding discussion indicates, for most of
the eighteenth century the motivation behind this type
of contest depended upon the continuing enthusiasm of
individual members of the aristocracy and gentry. It
was not until 1787, upon the instigation of Stephen
Amherst, that an attempt was made to introduce aspects
of formal organisation into this most exclusive type of
contest. In that year, the following notice appeared in
the press:

> "Cricket Meeting at Coxheath to begin in 1787.
> Subscription - Two Guineas a Year. To Meet
> once a week except on those weeks when a great
> County match is to be played, of which Notice
> will be given on the Meeting nearest to it, for
> the Encouragement of the Best Players to come
> to choose as equal a match as possible for one
> innings. To allow 5s. for Winners, and Two
> Shillings and Sixpence to the losers, to
> pay all expenses of Horse Hire, etc. To allow
> One Shilling each man for Eating and Sixpence
> for his drink. An ordinary to be provided at
> Two Shillings for Subscribers and Three Shillings
> for Non-Subscribers. The wines etc., to be paid
> for exclusively. No forfeit of any kind for Non-
> Attendance." [1]

The original notice of the Meeting was accompanied by
a list of the supporters of the venture in which were to
be found the names of the Duke of Dorset, Sir Horatio Mann,
two other Baronets and three Members of Parliament. However,
the provision of expenses suggests that the "Encouragement
of the Best Players" referred to the most skilled local
cricketers regardless of their social position, rather
than to members of the upper strata. In this light,

1   Ibid., p. 29.

the Coxheath Meeting may be seen as another example of
the close personal interaction which typified the relation-
ships of the landed aristocracy with the rest of society.
It is perhaps significant that this attempt to organise
regular matches through the creation of a club with a
specific sporting, rather than general, social orien-
tation came at a time when, for different reasons, the
major patrons of cricket in Kent were becoming less active.
The Duke of Dorset's enthusiasm lapsed, never to be rekindled,
on his appointment as Ambassador to France in 1784; Sir Horatio
Mann played his last recorded match in August, 1782. Given
the fact that the type of match in which they participated
depended for its organisation upon the more-or-less spontaneous
enthusiasm of individuals, the disappearance of two such
committed patrons no doubt partly explains the declining
number of matches played in Kent in the latter years of the
eighteenth century. But, in addition, it is likely that a
further contributory factor was a relative weakening in the
social and political status of sections of the landed aristo-
cracy and gentry consequent upon industrialisation, a factor
which began to manifest itself in a growing concern with
exclusiveness in many facets of the social life of its
members. The French Revolution, coming at a time when
the traditional fabric of English society was being strained
and, in many cases, destroyed by the onset of industriali-
sation, probably contributed to growing distance, and grow-
ing fear in inter-class relations. In this context, one
must note that the apparent decline in the rate of aristo-
cratic participation in cricket matches conincided with the

formation and growth of the Marylebone Cricket Club in
London.[1] If the Coxheath Meeting was designed to restore
flagging interest in the game, even one of the most ardent
supporters of the game in Kent was forced to concede that
the venture was a failure.

> "From that date (1789), the horrors of the
> French revolution and the sanguinary career of
> Napoleon with his long-threatened, but never
> carried-out, intention of invading England, seemed
> to have almost put an end to cricket in this
> county........So great was the falling-off of
> play that for the year 1801, Mr. Haygarth was
> unable to record more than ten matches, for 1802
> twelve, 1803 nine, 1804 seven, and like numbers
> up to 1811 and 1812, when the numbers dropped to
> only two for each year."[2]

The second axis of competition in intra-elite cricket
matches in this period consisted of contests between country-
based and urban-based teams, an example being the match
played in 1731 between the "Eleven Gentlemen of Sevenoaks"
and the "Eleven Gentlemen of London". Public parks and
commons in boroughs on the outskirts of London, such as
Kennington, Dulwich and Dartford, were the popular locations
for matches of this type. That return fixtures at a pro-
vincial venue were less common suggests that these contests
coincided with the visits to the capital of country-based
members of the aristocracy in pursuance of their Court,
administrative, or political careers. The "London" teams
included amongst their numbers men of the stature of the
Prince of Wales, Lord Strathavon, Lord Montford, and Lord
Waldegrave. Permanently resident in London, they formed

1   Hereafter referred to as the M.C.C.

2   Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 80.

the nucleus of a loosely structured coterie known as the
"London Club" which, between 1735 and 1751, when its Chair-
man, the Prince of Wales, died, was the focus of organised
cricket in London. One indication of the authority it
possessed by virtue of the status of its members was the
standardised code of rules it produced in 1744. Though
highly speculative, the following passage provides an
imaginative and perceptive account of the functions
served by such collectivities as the London Club in the
organisation of the elite's leisure activities.

> "One can hardly suppose sides to have often
> taken the field without some sort of banding
> together for the purpose. But moneyed folk
> did the thing in full style. The local gentry,
> when at home, could play with the assistance
> of their neighbours: but when the Court of
> Parliament took them up to London, they had to
> seek out companions of their own class who were
> acquainted with the game, if they wished to
> indulge in it. To facilitate this, they formed
> associations of similarly inclined men: with
> exclusive membership, and big subscriptions,
> and with the primary object of assembling tog-
> ether for the game. These were incidental
> amenities particularly in regard to dissipating
> such stakes as they won. They whipped up the
> cricketers of their own set, rented grounds,
> hired players and ground men and before long,
> were charging admissions for the privilege of
> watching their agile exertions." [1]

As a result of being chosen as the venue for most of
the matches organised by members of the London Club, the
Artillery Ground acquired a reputation comparable to that
of Lord's or the Oval in the present century. While in
1731, only one match was played on the Ground, in 1748,
it staged six matches involving Kentish teams alone.

1   H. P-T, op.cit., p. 54.

Another index of the growing popularity of the game is
the increasing number of spectators it attracted. When a
team representing Kent played another representing Sussex,
Surrey and Hampshire in 1731, it was reported that a crowd
of "some thousands" attended. By 1751, matches played at
the Artillery Ground were being watched by as many as
10,000 spectators - approximately, if one is to believe
the accuracy of contemporary assessments, a fiftieth of
the total population of London at that time! So large
were these crowds and so uncontrolled were their movements
that, on one occasion when the Prince of Wales was a
spectator, "a poor woman, by the crowd bearing upon her,
unfortunately had her leg broke, which being related to
His Royal Highness, he was pleased to order her ten guineas."[1]

Though no concrete evidence is available, it is not
difficult to imagine the motivations of these eighteenth
century supporters. In the first place, cricket matches
were one of the few forms of organised entertainment open
to the urban working classes. They also provided members
from all ranks of society with an opportunity to gamble.
Secondly, they were occasions on which members of the
aristocracy, normally, in urban areas, a body totally
distanced from the lower classes, were on display to the
general public. As players, their presence was highlighted
by the distinctive colour of their apparel, as spectators,
by the fact that they gathered in specially demarcated
areas of the ground. In 1737, it was recorded that a

1   Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 16.

"pavilion was erected for His Royal Highness, the Prince
of Wales, who was accompanied by several persons of
distinction." [1]

Many of the eighteenth century "great matches" were
played on grounds owned or leased by publicans. In 1668,
the proprietor of "The Ram" in Smithfield was rated for a
cricket field. A similar ground was owned by Mr. Smith of
"The Pyed Horse" in Chiswell Street, but whether this was
the same Mr. George Smith who managed the Artillery Ground
is not known. From the way in which these grounds were
managed, it is clear that they were entrepreneurial ventures.
The first recorded admission fee was charged at the Artil-
lery Ground in 1744, when Kent played an All-England team.
Spectators paid two pence to gain admission to the ground
on the understanding that they accepted the following
conditions:

> "Gentlemen are requested not to bring dogs
> to the ground. All persons that go out of the
> ground during the match and intend to return
> again, are desired to take a ticket, otherwise
> they will not be readmitted." [2]

The introduction of this charge did little to deter
spectators from attending either that or succeeding
matches. But when charges were increased to six pence,
the size of the crowd decreased rapidly, and the following
notice appeared in the press in 1746.

1   Ibid., p. 19.

2   G. B. Buckley, Fresh Light on Pre-Victorian Cricket,
     Cotterell (1937), p. 39.

> "The small appearance of the company is a plain
> proof of the resentment of the public to any
> imposition, for the price of going into being
> raised from two pence to sixpence, it is not
> thought that there were 200 persons present
> when before there used to be 7000 to 8000." [1]

Smith eventually recognised his error, and in 1748,
announced his intention of reducing the cost of admission
to its former level.

> "Numbers of my friends have intimated that the
> taking of sixpence admittance has been very
> prejudicial to me. This is to inform them
> that for the future, they shall be admitted for
> two pence, and the favour of their company
> gratefully acknowledged.
>
>   Their Humble Servant,
>
>   George Smith." [2]

The extent to which these early promotions were finan-
cially successful is open to dispute. Though, by one
calculation, each match cost eighty pounds to stage, the
organisation itself involved little more than the provision
of refreshments, and a rope. The latter served not to
demarcate the boundary - a nineteenth century innovation -
but to provide a means of controlling the movements of the
crowd, and hence, of protecting the pitch itself." [3]

Notwithstanding the importance of the participation of
members of the aristocracy and gentry, the rapid increase
in cricket's popularity during the eighteenth century cannot

1   Ibid., p. 38.

2   H. T. Waghorn, op.cit., p. 15.

3   The demarcation of specific boundaries is a development-
    ally specific feature of modern sports not recognised by
    Johan Huizinga who sees it as generic. See his Homo
    Ludens (1948), p.212.

be explained without reference being made to the growing involvement of various non-aristocratic groups in the game. Their participation was a fundamental factor in the emergence of the first of two distinct variations in the second major organisational pattern. The sections of society most directly concerned with this development may be loosely described as the urban middle and upper working classes, a diverse collectivity composed of representatives of those occupational groups whose growing importance reflected most clearly the expansion of international trade, internal mercantile activity and manufacturing ventures. While at its strongest in London, the influence of these entrepreneurs and manufacturers was also to be found in many provincial centres. According to one contemporary, in "Every City, they were a Commonwealth by themselves." [1]

The composition of these mercantile communities was a significant factor in the development of relatively elaborate forms of organised cricket, not only because many of their most prosperous members saw in cricket a means of enhancing their status, but also because it was from the less prestigious sections, the ordinary tradesmen and craftsmen, that many of cricket's earliest "professionals" were recruited. Professor Tawney has constructed a breakdown of the occupational structure of one seventeenth century provincial centre, Gloucester, which shows that the mercantile occupations represented 30.8% of the total working population.

[1]   Thomas Wilson, The State of England, 1600: edited by
      F. J. Fisher, Camden Miscellany (1936), p. 20.

> "Thus Gloucester....contained nine brewers,
> fifteen maltsers, eighteen tanners and curriers,
> and ten saddlers, who offered a market for
> barley, hops, and hides; while its thirty mercers,
> sixteen drapers, twenty tailors, twenty-three
> shoemakers, eleven glovers, and five haberdashers,
> together with the eighteen servants can hardly
> have made a living by clothing its own popula-
> tion." [1]

It was as a result of far-reaching changes in the socio-economic status of this group in the hundred years which followed the Restoration that cricket's newly gained popularity was both secured and extended. In the middle of the seventeenth century, the status of the merchant still fell below that level at which one could reasonably aspire to gain membership of the upper strata of society within a generation. In 1669, John Chamberlayne wrote that "Tradesmen in All Ages and Nations have been reputed ignoble".[2] Yet, even at this time, the universal validity of this observation was being questioned. Precipitated by the fact that primogeniture had resulted in the normal occupational outlets for the younger sons of members of the aristocracy - the Church and the Civil Service, - becoming saturated, a prolonged debate over the question of whether the younger son of a "gentleman" could enter the world of business without forsaking his father's status raged among contemporaries. At the same time, a signifi-cant increase in the numerical and financial strength of the urban middle classes occurred. In 1688, according to Gregory King, the total income of the mercantile and

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[1] A. H. Tawney & R. H. Tawney, "An Occupational Census of the Seventeenth Century" Economic History Review, (2nd series), Vol. V, (1937), pp. 25-64.

[2] Chamberlayne, op.cit., p. 84.

professional sections of society was nearly as great as that of the landed aristocracy.[1] By 1725, Defoe could observe that:

> "Trade is so far from being inconsistent with a gentleman, that, in short, trade in England makes gentlemen......for, after a generation or two, the tradesmen's children, or at least their grandchildren come to be as good gentlemen, statesmen, parliamentarians, privy councillors, judges, bishops, and noblemen as those of the highest birth and most ancient families."[2]

However, the accumulation of a level of wealth comparable to that of the typical aristocrat did not, itself, resolve the considerable anxiety and insecurity experienced by many members of mercantile, fiscal, and professional occupations as a result of the inconsistency they perceived as existing between the fact of having worked and the desire to be thought of as a member of a leisured elite. In their quest for status, the capacity to live a completely leisured existence was a central factor. Of those groups in eighteenth century society who aspired to membership of the elite, it fell to the urban middle class to possess, at the same time, the most doubtful status and the greatest financial resources. The most popular measure employed to reconcile this inconsistency involved the conversion of wealth into landed property. As Laurence Stone has observed:

> "Despite their wealth, they lacked confidence in their status and pride in their occupation: their ambition was to pull out of trade, buy an estate and become absorbed into the landed gentry."[3]

1   G. King, op.cit., p. 89.

2   D. Defoe, The Complete English Tradesman (1726), p. 376.

3   Laurence Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy, p. 51.

Actual examples of this phenomenon abound in the
writings of contemporaries. For example, Sir William
Harrison noted that merchants "often change estates with
gentlemen as gentlemen do with them: by mutual conversion
of one into the other", while William Lambarde, in his
Perambulations of Kent, claimed that,

> "The gentlemen be not here (throughout) of so
> ancient stocks as elsewhere, especially in the
> parts nearest to London, from which city (as
> it were from a certain rich and wealthy seed-
> plot) courtiers, lawyers, and merchants be
> continuously translated and do become new
> plants amongst them." [1]

While the marriage of wealth and property helped to
legitimate the economic prosperity of sections of the
eighteenth century bourgeoisie, this relationship was
further secured by their participation in accepted elite
leisure activities, such as cricket. It is hardly a
coincidence that at the same time as members of the
aristocracy and gentry were expanding their involvement
in cricket, so too, according to contemporaries, were
members of the urban middle classes.

> "Quoits, Cricket, Ninepins and Trap-ball will
> be very much in fashion, and more tradesmen
> may be seen playing in the fields than working
> in their shops." [2]

John Chamberlayne describes cricket as a "recreation
of citizens and peasants", [3] an assessment which becomes

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1   Quoted in P. Laslett, op.cit., p. 41.

2   Anon, "The World Bewitch'd", (1699), p. 22.

3   J. Chamberlayne, op.cit., p. 84.

more meaningful when compared with the classification
made by Thomas Smith of "Citizens, Burgesses and Yeoman",[1]
as the strata in British society located immediately below
the "Nobilitas minor". By 1743, when the heir apparent
to the throne of England was to be seen on the cricket
field, groups of merchants were involved in games of cricket
which, in every sense, were a direct imitation of those
played by their social superiors. In the press of that
year, it was recorded that on

> "September 21st, a cricket match will be played....
> between some Gentlemen of London with Mr. Little-
> boy, a book-binder in Creed Lane at their head,
> and some Gentlemen of the Borough of Southwark,
> for 20 guineas a side." [2]

The significance of this one reference need not be
overstated. It does no more than indicate that certain
groups among the early eighteenth century bourgeoisie
played cricket. While it is true that their participation
adds some support to the hypothesis already suggested, it
is also possible that another reason for playing cricket
may have been simply the sense of enjoyment it provided.
However, this description does indicate the degree of flexi-
bility contained within the contemporary definition of
gentility, a factor which, as de Tocqueville noted, was one
characteristic of the English aristocracy which set it apart
from its European counterparts:

> "The same thing was happening in England,
> though at first sight one might think that
> the ancient English constitution functioned
> there. True, the old names and old offices

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1   Sir Thomas Smith, The Commonwealth of England (1583),

> were retained: but in the seventeenth century, feudalism was to all intents and purposes a dead letter, classes intermingled, the nobility no longer had the upper hand, the aristocracy ceased to be exclusive, wealth was a stepping stone to power, all men were equal before the law and public offices were open to all, freedom of speech and of the press was the order of the day. All this lay quite outside the purview of the medieval mind, and it was precisely these innovations, gradually and adroitly introduced into the old order, that, without impairing its stability or demolishing ancient forms, gave it a new lease of life and a new energy. Seventeenth century England was already quite a modern nation which, however, venerated and enshrined within its heart some relics of the Middle Ages."[1]

In part, it was this characteristic of the British aristocracy which made it feasible for a "book-binder from Creed Lane" in the city of London to claim the status of a gentleman. Whether or not this claim was successful depended to a large extent upon the capacity of the individual in question to satisfy the dictates of the particular style of life associated with this status. One of the great advantages of cricket in this respect was that, since it required no great acquired skills, the absence of a formal education or a mastery of those social graces associated with elite status groups did not prevent the entrepreneur from participating alongside members of the landed aristocracy and gentry.

The second variation in this organisational pattern differs from the first in the degree to which the local community, rather than a particular status group, constituted the central focus. Here, it must be emphasized that the difference between these two major structures was one of degree. In no instance can it be said that the presence

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1   Alexis de Tocquiville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution, translated by Stuart Gilbert, (New York, 1955).

of members of the aristocracy was not a significant
influence upon the particular type of competitive structure
which developed. However, in the case of those matches
played between teams representing local communities in
south-east England, that bond of communal sympathy existing
between players and between teams and spectators, was at
least as significant a factor in their continuing popu-
larity. Particularly when contests were staged at one of
the local communities instead of at one of the London
grounds, the spectacular content of the event was out-
weighed by the sense of community identification it engen-
dered. As often as not in these cases, members of the
local aristocracy and gentry participated in the organisa-
tion and playing of these matches, not in order to transform
them into highly personalised "duels", but to derive a
measure of prestige, and probably satisfaction, from
identifying with these local teams. As descriptions of
the cricket played, for instance, at Hambledon will show,
the context in which such matches were played tended to be
less exclusive than in the case of previous types of contest.

Though the community-oriented type of contest chronologi-
cally pre-dated the class-oriented model, this is not to
say that the extent and complexity of the organisation of
the former did not increase in the eighteenth century.
Lord Harris has compiled a list of sixty-seven Kentish
villages who, on occasions between 1705 and 1799, were
recorded in the local press as supporting cricket teams.[1]
It appears likely that, as the general popularity of cricket

1   Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 34.

grew, certain villages and townships in south-east England
came to be associated with the playing of particularly
skilful cricket. Contemporary accounts suggest that these
reputations became salient features of local community
identities and, as such, were jealously defended in con-
tests over the length and breadth of these counties. A
reference to one such match is to be found in the Earl of
Oxford's description of his travels in Kent:

> "At Dartford, upon the Heath as we came out of
> the town, the men of Tonbridge and the Dartford
> men were warmly engaged at the sport of cricket,
> which of all the people of England, the Kentish
> folk are the most renowned, and of all the
> Kentish men, the men of Dartford lay claim to
> the greatest excellence." [1]

By the second quarter of the century, the participation
of members of the aristocracy and gentry, and in urban
centres, the local bourgeoisie, had added an elaborate
superstructure to this pre-existing organisational frame-
work. While the central axis of competition remained
rivalries between local communities, increasingly the
venue for these contests was not one or the other of the
villages but the Artillery Ground, where the reputations
of local teams were enhanced by an element of mystique
which derived from the comparative remoteness of the areas
they represented. In July, 1738, Chislehurst in the county
of Kent, played three matches against Horsmonden in the same
county, and two against a London XI. Similar matches were
played in 1741 and 1742, and in 1743, a combined Chislehurst
and Bromley team played a "London" side. All these matches
were played at the Artillery Ground. In 1747, a series of

1   Ibid., p. 12.

contests between teams representing such widely separated areas as Dartford, Hadlow, Slindon and Horsmonden were staged in London.

Several aspects of these matches suggest the involvement of members of the landed aristocracy, or of the bourgeoisie. First, in the absence of adequate systems of communication, the distances between the various towns involved must have posed considerable problems for those responsible for their organisation. Travel alone made this type of match a costly and time-consuming enterprise. The aristocracy, in particular, occupied a position in English society which not only guaranteed the requisite time and financial resources, but also, in the context of its public image, had a positive obligation to devote its time and energies to this type of leisure activity. Second, the actual form of these contests closely resembled those organised and played by members of the aristocracy. They were partly based upon a rivalry between London and the provinces; they were staged at the Artillery Ground, and they were the subject of substantial wagers. Even matches which concerned only country-based teams, playing in remote rural villages, were seen as opportunities to gamble. In June, 1747, it was recorded "four neighbouring parishes played a match on Appledore Heath against Romney for half-a-guinea a man".[1]

But perhaps the matches which best exemplify this second organisational variant were those played by teams representing the two small villages of Slindon (in Sussex)

1   Ibid., p. 22.

and Hambledon (in Hampshire). In both instances, it is
possible to indicate the way in which the interest and
active involvement of members of the aristocracy influenced
the development of a more elaborate organisation, but one
which remained founded upon inter-community rivalry and
intra-community solidarity. Slindon's greatest successes
were achieved during the 1740's. Since it was at this
time that teams playing under the direct patronage of the
Duke of Richmond disappeared from the sphere of competition,
and as the village of Slindon is located only three miles
from his estate at Goodwood, the assumption has been that
the Duke transferred his allegiance to the village team.
That he derived considerable pleasure from the successes
of the Slindon XI is evident from his own comments: after
one match, he noted that "poore Little Slyndon beat Surrey
almost in one innings".[1] Slindon's reputation transcended
the boundaries of the local community. Amongst the London
cognoscenti, it was hailed as the best team of its day, and
many of the players - above all, Richard Newland, - were
rated the best of their generation. Some idea of the levels
of excitement generated by their appearance in London can
be gained from the following advertisement placed in the
London press:

> "On Monday 6th September, 1742, will be played
> at the Artillery Ground, the greatest match at
> cricket that has been played for many years
> between the famous parish of Slindon in Sussex
> and eleven picked gentlemen of London. And as
> 'tis expected that there will be the greatest
> crowd that ever was known on the like occasion
> 'tis to be hoped, nay desired, that gentlemen
> will hot crowd in by reason of the very large
> sums of money which is laid if one of the

1   Marshall, The Duke Who Was Cricket, p. 51.

> Sussex gentlemen gets 40 notches himself. To
> begin exactly at 12 o'clock and if not played
> that day to be finished on the Wednesday.
> Wickets are to be pitched by 12 o'clock on the
> forfeit of 100 guineas. N.B. The above parish
> has played 43 matches and lost but one. The
> match between the county of Surrey and London
> that was fixed for the same day will be played
> next week." [1]

In one respect, the matches played by Slindon, and
later by Hambledon, constitute an important link between
the two major patterns of organisation we have described.
They represent an amalgamation of features of both the
more traditional local community contests and the newer,
relatively exclusive, intra-elite matches. The particu-
lar form they exhibited may be seen as the result of
transferring typically Gemeinschäftliche relationships -
the foundation of Slindon's rise to fame - into a
different sphere of competition where they combined
with the organisational capacity of members of the aristo-
cracy and gentry, to produce a spectacle which captured
the imagination of all sections of society. The crowds
attracted to these contests were sufficiently large and
volatile to warrant the insertion of a forfeit clause
into the conditions of the contest to prevent any delay
at the start of the match resulting from the failure of
one or the other of the teams to appear. Given a general
absence of effective methods of crowd control, such
delays could prove dangerous for players and spectators
alike. Again, the influence of gambling upon the struc-
ture of the matches can be seen in the provision of an
extra day's play, should the contest not be resolved on

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1   J. Marshall, Sussex Cricket: A History, p. 42.

the first day.

The decline of Slindon from 1750 onwards coincided with the death of the Duke of Richmond, and the ageing of Richard Newland. Nothing is known of the constitution of the team, nor of the type of relationships which developed between its players and its patrons. It is only with the rise to fame of the Hambledon team that details of this type become available. In addition to this, Hambledon retains a lasting significance as one of the only non-aristocratic institutions to exert a formative influence upon almost every aspect of the game's development. Many of the victories it achieved, together with the identities of the leading players, have been perpetuated as part of cricket's folk-lore.

From contemporary records, it is clear that cricket was already a relatively popular activity in Hampshire at about the time of the foundation of the Hambledon club.[1] In 1750, a Hampshire team played a London XI at the Artillery Ground. The participation of the Hambledon Club itself dates from 1756, when it played a match against a Dartford XI, again at the Artillery Ground. In 1764, it has been recorded that the "gentlemen of Hambledon called Squire Lamb's Club" met a team from Chertsey, with "great sums of money depending upon the match.[2]

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1   While the exact date of Hambledon's foundation is not known, the evidence of Beldham's conversation with the Rev. J. Pycroft, recorded in The Cricket Field, suggests 1750 as a reasonable approximation.

2   F.S. Ashley-Cooper, The Hambledon Cricket Chronicle, (Nottingham, 1924), p. 36.

Though during the following twenty-five years, Hambledon exerted an influence upon the game's development which has probably only been exceeded by the M.C.C., it is difficult to explain why this should have been the case. Both in an historical and geographical sense, the club's existence appears to be very much a freak rather than the predictable culmination of a long sequence of events,

The major stimulus to the establishment of a club at Hambledon was provided by members of the local gentry, particularly the Reverend Charles Powlett, a third son of the third Duke of Bolton, who remained a Steward of the club throughout its existence. The presence of gentlemen like Powlett, and Squire Lamb, both ensured the respectability of the club and established an important source of communication with other prominent patrons of cricket among the aristocracy. Once established, the prestige of Hambledon was, for a long time, self-perpetuating. By numbering among its members many of the leading cricket-loving aristocrats of the day, the Dukes of Dorset, Lennox and Albemarle, and the Earl of Tankerville, the club gained sufficient prestige to attract many of the local gentry who, unlike Powlett, had little or no direct interest in the game of cricket. Though there are no complete membership rolls extant, the list constructed by F. S. Ashley-Cooper suggests that members were recruited from every status gradation within the elite, while a minority came from the local urban middle classes. [1]

1   F. S. Ashley-Cooper, op.cit., pp. 42-47.

Out of a total of 157, eighteen were titled members of the
aristocracy, four were clergymen, twenty-seven held a
rank in either the Army or the Navy, six were M.P.'s, two
were county sheriffs, two were knights, two were wine-
merchants, and there was one lawyer, and a Clerk Assis-
tant to the House of Commons. From this admittedly
approximate estimate, it is possible to hypothesize
that the impetus behind the phenomenal success of Hamble-
don between 1760 and 1785 emanated from support received
from relatively diverse groups within the middle and
upper strata of English society, harnessed by the rela-
tively elaborate internal organisation of the club. As
a corollary to this, one can argue that the eventual
decline and demise of Hambledon can be directly attributed
to a loss of this balance between aristocratic patronage
and local support.

Of the two elements in this balance, the role of the
aristocracy has already been analysed in some detail in
a more general context. Here, it is enough to note that,
for those members of the aristocracy who supported
Hambledon, the activities of the club were another addition
to an already catholic inventory of pastimes. That this
category of members never gained a complete ascendancy in
the affairs of the club is the result, in the first place,
of the intensity of the local support given to the
Hambledon teams, and in the second, of the relatively
elaborate structure of the club itself - a factor which
effectively subordinated the influence of individuals to
the authority vested in specific offices.

In its early days, the existence of Hambledon was particularly dependent on the successes gained by its teams. On at least one occasion, a long string of failures nearly led to the affairs of the club being wound up. But this crisis was surmounted and between 1771 and 1781, "out of the fifty-one matches played by the same club against England etc.,[1] they (Hambledon) gained twenty-nine of that number". During these years, the focus of support for Hambledon was the team itself. Of its members, John Nyren, whose father, Richard, was "the chosen General of all matches", wrote:

> "So renowned a set were the men of Hambledon
> that the whole county would flock to see one
> of their trial matches."[2]

Unlike the teams assembled by the Duke of Dorset and Sir Horatio Mann, which contained a high proportion of "foreign" players, the members of the original Hambledon XI all lived within a twenty mile radius of that village. Between 1771 and 1881, the appearance of this team was a spectacle capable of attracting crowds of more than twenty thousand persons. If John Nyren's description is to be believed, matchdays must have amounted to local holidays, such was the support the team received.

> "There was high-feasting held on Broad-Halfpenny
> during the solemnity of one of our matches. Oh!
> It was a heart-stirring sight to witness the
> multitude forming a complete and dense circle
> round that noble green. Half the county would
> be present, and all their hearts with us. Little
> Hambledon pitted against All-England was a proud
> thought for the Hampshire men. Defeat was glory
> in such a struggle - Victory, indeed made us only
> "a little lower than angels". How those fine brown-
> faced fellows of farmers would drink to our success!

1   Quoted in Altham, op.cit., p. 43.

2   John Nyren, The Young Cricketers Tutor, ed.F.S. Ashley-
     Cooper, (Gay and Bird, 1902), p. 44.

> And then what stuff they had to drink! - Punch!
> - not your new Ponche a la Romaine, or Ponche a
> la Groseille, or your modern cat-lap milk punch -
> punch be-devilled: but good, unsophisticated John
> Bull stuff - stark! - that would stand on end -
> punch that would make a cat speak! Sixpence a
> bottle! We had not sixty millions of interest to
> pay in those days. The ale too! - not the modern
> horror under the same name, that drives as many men
> melancholy-mad as the hypocrites; not the beastli-
> ness of these days that will make a fellow's inside
> like a shaking bog - and as rotten! but barley-
> corn such as would put the souls of three butchers
> into one weaver: Ale that would flare like turpen-
> tine - genuine Boniface! - This immortal viand
> (for it was more than liquor) was vended at two-
> pence per pint. The immeasurable villainy of our
> virtues would get their march of intellect (if
> ever they could get such a brewing), drive a pint
> out of it into a gallon. Then the quantity! Two
> or three of them would strike dismay into a round
> of beef. They could have no more pecked in that
> style than they could have flown, had the infernal
> black stream (that type of Acheron) which soddens
> the carcass of a Londoner, been the fertilizer of
> their clay. There would be this company, consist-
> ing most likely of some thousands, remain patiently
> and anxiously watching every turn of fate in the
> game, as if the event had been the meeting of two armies
> to decide their liberty. And whenever a Hambledon-man
> made a good hit, worth four or five runs, you would
> hear the deep mouths of the whole multitude baying
> away in pure Hampshire - 'Go hard! - go hard! Tich and
> turn!' To the honour of my countrymen, let me bear
> testimony upon this occasion also, as I have already
> done upon others. Although their provinciality in
> general, and personal partialities individualities,
> were naturally interested on behalf of the Hambledon
> men, I cannot call to recollection an instance of
> them willfully stopping a ball that had been hit
> amongst them by one of our opponents. Like true
> Englishmen, they would give an enemy fair play." [1]

Though highly personalised, this account does give some

idea of the esteem in which the Hambledon club was held.

As Nyren points out, the source of much of the club's local

prestige derived from the fact that, first, its players were

essentially local men, and second, that the performance of

the teams was seen to exemplify the best traditions of

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1   John Nyren, The Cricketers of My Time (1833), in
     J. Arlott's From Hambledon to Lord's (1948), p. 26.

rural society. Both the club's players and spectators
are projected as the embodiment of those qualities of
honesty and integrity which, by implication, were disap-
pearing in the growing urban areas. The total way of
life, of which cricket was just a part, is contrasted
favourably with the rather effete, often bohemian, life
style characteristic of urban based members of the aristo-
cracy. The extent to which Hambledon established itself
as a relatively autonomous local institution, capable of
exercising a formative influence upon cricket at this
time, was in part a function of the distinctive, and
probably unique, character of the club.

From contemporary description, it is clear that one
dimension in this distinctiveness resulted from the fact
that Hambledon was more than a loosely structured collec-
tivity of cricketers. From the first, it possessed an
embryonic "club" structure. The central administrative
position was held by Richard Nyren, "the head and right
arm" of the club. He was for some time landlord of the
Bat and Ball Inn at Broadhalfpenny Down, but later moved
to the George Inn in Hambledon. In addition, he owned
a small farm close to the village. Members of the club
were elected, and paid an annual subscription of three
guineas. First Barber, and then Nyren, were deputed to
collect arrears, on which they received a commission.
Like modern professionals, the players were subject to
several regulations supported by fines. In June, 1773,
players were instructed to appear on Broadhalfpenny Down
at 12.00 a.m. on "Practice Days", when the sides would be
selected. However, the imposition of fixed monetary

penalties one month later suggests that certain players
were somewhat remiss in the attention they paid to this
directive. Those arriving after 12.00 a.m. were "to
forfeit three pence each, to be spent among those who
came at the appointed time." In June, 1787, this forfeit
was doubled, and it was stipulated that receipts were
"to be spent in punch for the benefit of the other players".[1]
The amount and manner in which players were paid is not
recorded, although a club minute of September, 1782, noted
that players should receive on "Practice Days, four
shillings if winners, and three shillings if losers", [2]
provided they attended by "twelve of the clock". The
club also undertook to cover the travelling expenses of
those players who lived beyond the immediate neighbour-
hood: a minute of 17th August, 1773, ordered "That James
Bayley be allowed the expense of his horse hire when he
comes to practise of a Tuesday meeting", [3] whilst a
similar minute of the 10th May, 1774, allowed Purchase
"two shillings and sixpence whenever he attends the
meeting". [4] Beldham and James Wells were allowed their
expenses at the discretion of the Stewards in 1785. The
club also provided a caravan to transport the team to
away matches, and paid the cost of hats for each playing
member.

The Bat and Ball Inn was the centre of the social
activities of members and players alike. Its proprietors

1   F. S. Ashley-Cooper, op.cit., p. 44.

2   Ibid., p. 52.

3   Ibid., p. 42.

4   Ibid., p. 46.

provided an "excellent cold collation" at special booths
during matches, and dinners for members in the evening.
It was at the gatherings of players at this hostelry
that the element of esprit de corps which was to play
such an important part in their continuing success,
became most apparent. In The Young Cricketers Tutor,
Nyren describes the musical evenings the players held:

> "Leer was a short man of fair complexion,
> well-looking, and of pleasant aspect. He had
> a sweet counter-tenor voice. Many a treat have
> I had in hearing him and Sueter join in a glee
> at the Bat and Ball on Broadhalfpenny." [1]

Members who attended the club "Practice" dined after-
wards at the Bat and Ball. To improve gastronomical
standards, they ordered a wine cistern and later built
on a bin. On these occasions, six standing toasts were
drunk, one of which "was of the most undisguised propriety".
The club held an annual dinner at which the President
traditionally provided venison. Port was obtained at
two shillings a bottle; dinner similarly cost two shillings.
Barber was responsible for collecting empty wine bottles,
and returning them to Smith, the wine merchant.

From 1780 onwards, fundamental changes were introduced
into the organisation of the Hambledon club which, by
weakening the particular local identity, in the long term
may be said to have precipitated its collapse. Of these,
the most important related to the composition of the team
itself. When, through advancing years, the original
members of the XI retired, their replacements were recruited
not from the immediate vicinity of Hambledon, but from such

1 John Nyren, The Young Cricketers Tutor, p. 48.

villages as Farnham in the western part of Surrey. As
a result, the great players who represented Hambledon
between 1780 and 1790, William Beldham, David Harris,
Tom and Harry Walker, and John Wells, shared a more
contractual and less emotional relationship, both with
the club and its supporters, than had their predecessors.
They were no longer bound by the same bonds of birth and
residence. The disappearance of its local "stars" signal-
led the start of Hambledon's decline as a club, for with
them went not only considerable skill and enthusiasm, but
also much of the local identity on which its first
successes were founded. As an indication of future trends,
this development had a significance beyond the specific
context of Hambledon. The emergence of clubs which were
concerned more with expertise than with retaining local
identity, disrupted the basis of community contests, as
well as indicating the context in which subsequent develop-
ments in the structure of the game were to take place.

Once initiated, Hambledon's decline was accelerated
by the intervention of other factors. The early 1780's
saw a gradual withdrawal from the club by some of its
most influential patrons, men like the Duke of Dorset,
Sir Horatio Mann, and the Earl of Tankerville. Once it
had lost the early magnetism, Hambledon's geographical
remoteness became a serious obstacle to the perpetuation
of its dominance. Apart from its obvious geographical
advantages, London was the centre of the aristocracy's
social world, and thus a ready source of employment for
the best players. The formation of the M.C.C. in 1787
sounded the final death-knell for the Hambledon club.

But as F. S. Ashley-Cooper has noted:

> "That the M.C.C. should at once have attracted
> the chief amateurs and patrons is not to be
> wondered at, seeing the Club had head-quarters
> in so convenient a centre as London: the
> surprising thing is that Hampshire organisa-
> tion should have remained supreme for so many
> years in a part of the country so difficult of
> access." [1]

In fact, Hambledon continued in existence until 1796, when an entry in the minutes of the 21st September recorded that "No Gentlemen" were present. An attempt was made to collect outstanding subscriptions, but this served only to hasten the decline, since many members, following the example of William Powlett, the Earl of Darnley, and the Hon. E. Bligh, paid their arrears and resigned.

1   F. S. Ashley-Cooper, <u>The Hambledon Cricket Chronicle</u>, p.162.

Chapter Five   The Marylebone Cricket Club:

its role in the development

of patterns of organisation

before 1830.

While London had ceased to be the organisational hub of

cricket during the heydays of Slindon and, in particular,

Hambledon, there are several indications that the game

retained its popularity among the London-based aristo-

cracy. The immediate context in which matches were

arranged and teams assembled was dominated by a number of

select social coteries which were flourishing in London

during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The

M.C.C.'s predecessor, the White Conduit Club, was formed

in 1782 by a number of gentlemen recruited from a still

older institution, the Je-ne-sais-quoi Club, [1] whose

perpetual chairman was the Prince of Wales, later George IV.

The presence of three, historically discrete clubs should

not be seen as implying that the aristocracy's influence

upon the organisation of cricket was, in any sense, dis-

continuous. That each of these clubs was essentially an

exclusive association is shown by their failure to establish

distinctive identities. To the outside observer, it

appeared, and indeed was often the case, that the same

individuals were members of all three groups. As late as

1786, the White Conduit Club was being confused with the

Star and Garter Club. In June of that year, it was

1 The Je-ne-sais-quoi Club was sometimes referred to as
   the Star and Garter Club because its meetings were held
   in a tavern of that name.

announced in the press that a match was to be staged
between teams representing Kent and the Star and Garter
Club, but reported later, the same contest was described
as being between Kent and the White Conduit Club.

There was, then, in existence before the foundation
of the M.C.C., a regular programme of cricket matches in
London organised within the milieu of exclusive, relatively
specialised, coteries. As an off-shoot of the White Con-
duit Club, there is no reason to suppose that the activities
of the M.C.C. during the first fifty years of its existence,
did not fit into this pattern: that is, to assume that it
did not consist of a loosely structured association of
gentlemen whose main purpose in gathering together was to
organise a series of cricket matches, either between them-
selves, or with another such group. Whether or not this
was the case must remain unproven since the early records
of the M.C.C. were destroyed by fire in 1825. However, in
the hiatus left by this loss, several historians of cricket
have interposed the assumption that, from the earliest days
of its existence, the M.C.C. possessed a total authority
over all facets of the game, and that, as a result of this,
has been responsible for all major structural and organi-
sational changes since. The following passages illustrate
the central importance given to this assumption in even
the most reliable histories of the game. The first, from
H. S. Altham's History of Cricket, credits the M.C.C. with
a total control over all aspects of the game:

> "By the year 1800, Lord's is an institution
> established high and dry beyond all rivalry.
> The Marylebone Club has twice again revised
> the laws of cricket, and is recognised to be

> the supreme authority on the game. All the
> leading amateur players are found on its
> members' list, and it is now strong enough
> to meet unaided such counties as Hampshire
> and Middlesex: its ground is the accepted
> venue for all the great matches of the year,
> the focus of ambition for every aspiring
> player." [1]

The second, an extract from R. S. Rait-Kerr's, The Laws of Cricket, confines its attentions more specifically to the M.C.C.'s influence on the elaboration and standardisation of rules.

> "We see therefore that 1787 is an important
> constitutional milestone, since that year
> marks the passage from an epoch in which
> revisions were carried out at irregular inter-
> vals by a committee appointed for the occasion,
> to one during which a single central authority
> has been in continuous session." [2]

If accepted at face value, the assumption, contained in both of these quotations, of the unquestioned, immediate transference of authority to the M.C.C. by 1800, resolves many of the problems which otherwise impede analysis of the game's development. But though it may contain vestiges of truth, on closer examination, this assumption, in fact, raises as many difficulties as it solves. In the first place, it is necessary to question the extent to which the establishment of the M.C.C. can be said to have led to any significant changes being introduced into the existing structure and organisation of the game. In the second, even if the answer to the first question is affirmative, one must still ask whether the M.C.C., by 1830, had emerged as a formally structured institution,

1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 52.

2   R. S. Rait-Kerr, op.cit., p. 26.

or whether, on the other hand, any influence it wielded
was not an extension of the status commanded by its
individual members in the wider society?

Any assessment of the innovatory significance of the
M.C.C. in the sphere of organisation must take account of,
first, the durability of those patterns of organisation
which pre-dated its foundation, and second, the role
played by Thomas Lord and later, James Dark, in the
staging of matches at Lord's. In connection with the
former, it cannot be gainsaid that the type of matches
played by the M.C.C. in the first quarter of the nine-
teenth century closely resembled the intra-elite matches
of the previous century, in that they were essentially
contests between individuals or groups of gentlemen drawn
from an extensive circle of cricket-loving aristocrats.
The particular form exhibited by these matches can be
divided into two distinct categories. In the first, a
team composed of members of the M.C.C. played another
group of gentlemen representing a "club" or a "county".
For example, in 1787, the M.C.C. played the White Conduit
Club, in 1804, Hertfordshire, and in 1820, Norfolk. The
precise titles under which the teams played are insigni-
ficant; they functioned simply to provide a means of
identifying different combinations of individuals drawn
from the same status group. Like the M.C.C., these "clubs"
and "counties" did not possess the formal organisation
associated with the modern cricket club; they did not
include formally defined positions whose incumbents were
entrusted with specific administrative or executive

responsibilities. The M.C.C. itself, did not appoint
its first secretary, Benjamin Aisalbie, albeit in an
honorary capacity, until 1822. In the second category,
matches consisted of one or two players competing against
a similar number over one or two innings.[1] These contests
were based upon the personal rivalries which existed
between many of the foremost gentlemen cricketers of the
day, conflicts which, in the case of Lord Frederick
Beauclerk, George Osbaldeston, and Lord George Bentinck,
frequently extended beyond the cricket field. One of the
most notorious duels of the early nineteenth century,
between Bentinck and Osbaldeston, was the aftermath of one
such cricket match. The precise circumstances leading up
to this confrontation are graphically described by Sir
Pelham Warner:

> "The Squire won a bet of 200 guineas from Lord
> George Bentinck, but Bentinck, on paying the
> bet, let slip from his lips, 'This is robbery'.
> 'This will not stop here', said Osbaldeston, and
> a challenge to a duel followed, which took place
> at Wormwood Scrubs. Two versions are given of
> the encounter - one that Osbaldeston fired in
> the air, the other that a ball went through
> Bentinck's hat, missing the brain by two inches."[2]

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1   One indication of the popularity of this type of direct,
    personal rivalry is to be found in the extent to which
    it was duplicated in other leisure activities over which
    the aristocracy exerted a controlling influence. For
    instance, the Jockey Club, founded between 1750 and 1760
    as an association of "noblemen and gentlemen admitting
    none but members with boots and spurs", instituted a
    similar type of contest, the Newmarket Challenge Cup,
    the running of which is still an annual event in the
    racing calendar.

2   Sir Pelham Warner, _Lord's, 1787-1945_ (1946), p. 25.

Upon an impulse, Osbaldeston resigned from the M.C.C. in 1818, but later attempted to be readmitted. His attempts, however, were permanently frustrated by Lord Frederick Beauclerk in spite of the support he received from two of the most eminent "amateurs" of the day, E. H. Budd and W. Ward.

The initiation of three annual matches, the Gentlemen versus the Players, Eton versus Harrow, and Oxford versus Cambridge, which, in later years, were to become the highlights of the Lord's season, is frequently cited as the example par excellence of the immediate innovatory impact of the M.C.C. But again, a closer examination of the history of these fixtures shows this not to be the case. Cricket had been played at Eton for much of the eighteenth century, though the first game against Harrow at Lord's did not take place until 1805. The first recorded inter-school match, between Eton and Westminster, took place in 1792, but in 1751, the Old Etonians had played the Gentlemen of England while the Cambridge Old Etonians had an annual fixture with the University from approximately 1760. Thus one can argue that not only had cricket been a familiar activity at various public schools, and at the universities, since the last quarter of the eighteenth century, but also that a rudimentary level of competition between representatives of these institutions existed at the same time. Like other intra-elite matches, these appear to have been organised on an ad hoc basis by individual members of the teams involved. The informality of such arrangements is

one reflection of the considerable autonomy possessed
by the pupils in eighteenth and early nineteenth century,
of the wide social gulf which separated scholars and
staff within the schools, and, more generally, of the
differing interpretations of the functions of education
held by these two groups.[1] One of the activities which,
in their quest for greater control over pupils, members
of the staffs of public schools sought to prohibit was
cricket. From experience, they had learned that cricket
matches, either within one school or between the pupils
of different schools, tended to become the occasion of
displays of unrestrained and often violent behaviour.
In 1792, the pupils of Westminster so provoked local
residents by their habit of breaking windows on the way
to their cricket matches that one incensed householder
was moved to fire a rifle shot over their heads. This
incident ended in court. Though several attempts were
made to prevent these matches taking place, the balance
of power within the schools was so disadvantageous to the
staff that their efforts were generally ineffectual. In
1796, the match between Eton and Westminster, prohibited
by the headmaster of Eton, Dr. Keate, resulted in victory
for Westminster by 66 runs. In the face of this blatant
disregard for his authority, Dr. Keate resorted to repres-
sive measures and flogged every member of the side on their
return. Though the first contest between Eton and Harrow
at Lord's was staged in 1805, it was not repeated until 1818,
and did not become an annual event until 1822.

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1 For a thorough analysis of the structure of public schools
   in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see E.G.
   Dunning,Early Stages in the Development of Football,Chap. 4.

The Varsity match presented a further example of the
way in which the early organisation of that type of contest
depended, not upon the initiative of the M.C.C., but upon
the enthusiasm of individuals. The first match, played
at Lord's in 1827, was very much the culmination of the
efforts of two players, Charles Wordsworth and Herbert
Jenner, who had first met when playing in the Eton versus
Harrow match in 1822. A second match was played the follow-
ing year, but from then until 1836, the Universities met
neither on the cricket field nor on the river.

But of the three matches, it is the development of the
Gentlemen versus Players contest which appears at first
sight the most obvious produce of the M.C.C.'s innovatory
influence. However, while it was always played at Lord's,
and was apparently a new type of contest based on rivalries
between rather than within social classes, the composition
of the teams indicates that, in fact, the match's raison
d'etre did not stem from the manifest class antagonisms
suggested by its title, At the time of its inception, and
for a generation after, it was a pervasive love of gambling
that exercised most influence upon the staging of this event.
Such was the difference in the standard of the two sides
that from 1806, to allow odds to be quoted, the Gentlemen
had to be "assisted" in various ways. In that year, the
most successful professionals of the day, Beldham and
Lambert, numbered among its ranks. When the Gentlemen won
in 1825 and 1827, they had sixteen and seventeen players
respectively. Their victory in 1829 was due entirely to the
efforts of the two Sussex professionals, Lillywhite and

Broadridge, who took nineteen wickets between them and the twentieth was "runout". In the notorious "Barn Door" match of 1837, the Players had to defend larger wickets, but still won by an innings. Far from reflecting the realities of class conflict in early nineteenth century society, the contest soon became a completely contrived affair, and, as such, eventually lost much of its appeal with players and spectators alike. Many individuals selected to represent the Gentlemen simply failed to appear, their places being taken by anyone available on the ground at the time.

In assessing the extent to which the formation of the M.C.C. can be said to have precipitated significant changes in those organisational patterns we have already described, the role of Thomas Lord and his successor, James Dark, in the establishment of the Lord's ground has been consistently overlooked. The precise motivations which prompted a particular group of aristocrats to establish the M.C.C. were not recorded, though H. S. Altham has surmised that their decision may have been the result of a growing resentment felt by members of the White Conduit Club at "the public and rather primitive surroundings of the Islington matches".[1] Similarly, the causes of this resentment have never been ascertained, though it is possible that it was stimulated by the fact that public rights to the White Conduit Fields may have led to matches being consistently interrupted. That one of Thomas Lord's first acts was to install a high fence around his ground suggests that the desire for privacy, or at least some measure of control

1   Altham, op.cit., p. 50.

over the large crowds attracted to matches, was uppermost in the minds of the members of the new club. Whatever the reasons, however, with a guarantee against financial loss provided by the Earl of Winchelsea and Charles Lennox, later the forth Duke of Richmond, Lord leased the land on which Dorset Square now stands, and in May 1787, opened the first Lord's Ground.

It was the disdain shown by members of the new club for mundane organisational and administative tasks which gave Thomas Lord the opportunity to play such an active role in the organisation of matches in the London area. A brief analysis of this career shows Lord to have been an archetypal example of the upwardly mobile, late eighteenth and early nineteenth century entrepreneur. Born in Yorkshire in 1755, the son of a former property owner who had lost his possessions after supporting the Young Pretender's cause in 1745, Lord first came into contact with cricket-playing aristocrats while employed as a bowler and general factotum by the White Conduit Club. His earliest business transactions suggest that, in agreeing to provide those recalcitrant members of the White Conduit Club with a suitable arena for their activities, he was motivated more by profit-making considerations than by any love of the game. Before the purchase of the first "Lord's", the Rate Books of St. Marylebone indicate that he was the lessee of the "Allsop Arms". Apart from his attempts to secure a permanent home for the M.C.C., he was also involved in a series of transactions involving property in Gloucester St., Orchard St., and Wardour St. The

success of these transactions evidently allowed Lord to become a respected citizen in the neighbourhood of St. John's Wood, for in 1807 he was elected to the Marylebone Vestry. To his property transactions, he added later a flourishing business in wines and spirits. After selling Lord's in 1825, he retired to West Meon in Hampshire where he died in 1829.

Apart from taking very little part in the organisation of the new venture, the enthusiasm shown by members of the M.C.C. for playing at their new ground fluctuated considerably. It was particularly low during the years spent at the second of the three grounds acquired by Lord. In the three years of its existence, only three matches were played by M.C.C. teams, and in none of these did they achieve a victory. It was possibly to counteract this lack of support and to guarantee a constant revenue that both Lord and James Dark introduced other forms of spectacular entertainment to Lord's. The former arranged military parades in the Dorset Fields, and it was from here that Monsieur Gamelin made his celebrated ascent in an hot air balloon. Dark introduced such varied events as canary shows, hopping races and pigeon-flying, as well as displays of archery and dancing by a troupe of Ioway Indians, and a marathon by John Joseph Grandserre on his velocipede.[1]

The facts presented here reveal that the M.C.C. did not play a decisive role in initiating those paths of development cricket was to follow in the first half of

1   The M.C.C., A History of Lord's and The M.C.C. (1968), p. 2.

the nineteenth century. The club's existence served to
provide a framework within which traditional patterns of
organisation, dependent on the energies of individuals,
could be effectively maintained. The first members of
the M.C.C. were, in fact, those aristocrats, or their
direct descendants, who, as members of exclusive social
coteries, had established one of the earlier patterns.
In this, they had neither a conception of an overall
plan of development, nor an organisation to implement
it. It cannot be said that the authority over the game
of cricket possessed by the M.C.C. from its very founda-
tion, emanated from the formal institutional structure
of the Club because there is no evidence to show that any
such structure existed. It was an extension of the tradi-
tional authority exercised by the aristocracy and gentry
as a corporate social elite in pre-industrial, and to a
lesser extent, in early industrial British society. Even
in those cases which, it is claimed, provide unambiguous
evidence of the immediate assumption of authority by the
M.C.C., in particular, the establishment of a standardised
code of Laws, the issue seems not to be beyond question.
It was not until 1828 that alterations in these Laws were
referred to a General Meeting of the Club. Earlier, it
seems probable that changes and revisions in the Laws were
enacted by more-or-less ad hoc "committees" incorporating
many of the most powerful aristocrats of the day, as had
been the case in 1744 and 1754. On both of these occasions,
the authority of the particular code of Laws was based
upon the status of the individual members of these "committees".

It is enough to note at this point that it was directly
as a result of attempting, later in the nineteenth
century, to maintain existing Laws in the face of far-
reaching changes in technique - particularly the intro-
duction of "round-arm" bowling - that the M.C.C.'s lack
of overall authority at this stage becomes evident.

Chapter Six   The Emergence of an Embryonic

Occupation

Whilst cricket remained a folk-game lacking a standard-
ised form, code of rules, and organisational structure, it
could not have developed a distinctive occupational struc-
ture. For the same reasons, its participants could not
have been described as following a career; that is, a
series of "adjustments made by the individual to the
'network institutions, formal organisations, and informal
relationships' in which the work of the occupation was
performed." [1] It was not until the "adoption" of the
game by members of the aristocracy and gentry in the eight-
eenth century that conditions favourable to the develop-
ment, albeit, of a rudimentary occupational structure were
established. The central part played by the aristocracy
in this respect meant that it was in a position to exert
a decisive influence upon the particular structure and
identity which the occupation of professional cricketer
was to develop in the eighteenth and early nineteenth
centuries. The significance of this formative role is
best illustrated by contrasting another occupation over
which the aristocracy had considerable influence but for
which they were not totally responsible. In the case of
the artist, the extent to which members of the aristocracy

1   H. S. Becker, "The Career of the Chicago Public
     Schoolteacher", American Journal of Sociology, LVII
     (March, 1952), pp. 470-477.

could determine the structure of the occupation was
restricted by a pre-established framework defined in
terms of recognised expertise. The Royal Academy was
formed after the patronage of the aristocracy, represen-
ted by the Society of Dilettanti, had been denied control
over a previous academy by the artists themselves, united
in an association known as the Society of Artists of
Great Britain.[1] The public status of his occupation gave
the artist a degree of autonomy which the cricketer, with
the exception of the twenty years from 1846, did not
acquire until after the Second World War.

It was in the context of intra-elite matches, of
personal prestige rivalries, large audiences, and never-
ending gambling, that technical expertise first began to
be recognised as an important criterion in selection for
a cricket team. The time at which this occurred - around
1730 - may be said to mark the birth of cricket as an
occupational category. Though teams were still dominated
by the presence of members of the aristocracy, batting,
bowling, and to a lesser extent, fielding, became accepted
as separate skills, the possession of which, within the
limited context of cricket, partially offset the stigma
of non-aristocratic birth.

In analysing the salient features of the early
occupational structure of cricket, a central distinction
may be made between "retained" and "independent" players.
Though in their relationships with their patrons, players

1   I am indebted to Mr. G. J. Fyfe, of the University
     of Keele for this observation.

of both categories were more-or-less totally subordinate,
nevertheless they can be distinguished by, first, the
degree of autonomy they enjoyed within the confines of
the game itself, and second, their occupational status
in the wider society. "Retained" players were employed
by patrons of the game in nominal positions as estate or
household servants. The earliest recorded players who
come into this category were Thomas Waymark, Stephen
Dingate, Joseph Budd, Pye, and Green, all of whom were
employed by the Duke of Richmond at Goodwood. Waymark
worked as a groom and Dingate as a barber. The former,
often described as "the father of cricket professionals",
was a decisive factor in the successes gained by the Duke's
teams between 1720 and 1740. In a match at Penshurst in
1729, it was reported that:

> "a groom of the Duke of Richmond signalled
> himself by such extraordinary dexterity and
> agility.... and 'tis reckoned he turned the
> scale of victory which for some years past had
> been generally on the Kent side." [1]

Later patrons followed a similar policy in constructing
their teams. Sir Horatio Mann engaged Aylward, and George
and John Ring, as his bailiff, huntsman, and whipper-in;
Boxall and Craute were in the service of Mr. Stephen
Amhurst, while the third Duke of Dorset employed Miller
and Brown as gamekeepers, and Minshull as a gardener.
Though these cricketers have frequently been described as
"professionals", their position differed considerably from
that of the modern professional. As retainers, they were
bound by a contractual relationship but the basis and

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1   Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 13.

extent of this relationship was very different. The
eighteenth century "retained" cricketer was, in every
sense, a "lord's man"; it was not just his cricketing
talents but his whole being which was owned by his patron.
When not required to play cricket, he reverted to his
duties as an estate servant, though it is possible that
he may have been given special privileges in comparison
to "ordinary" servants. In this secondary role, his
ability was often limited: Aylward, for instance, was
described as "the best batsman, but a poor bailiff". [1]

In contrast, the "independent" players were not
bound to any one team, or patron. Because their skills
were in considerable demand, they could "free-lance" for
any number of teams, regardless of the identity of the
patrons. In one sense, the relative autonomy of these
players did not alter their relationship with members of
the aristocracy. Like "retained" players, they were still
bound by that level of deference and obedience generally
accorded to gentlemen. But the two categories of players
differed in one further, crucial respect. While retained
players tended to be recruited from amongst the ranks of
unskilled labourers, their independent counterparts were,
in general, drawn from higher status occupations. This
difference can be illustrated by an examination of the
Kent XI which played an All-England XI at the Artillery
Ground in 1744. The players involved were, in batting
order, Lord John Sackville, Long Robin, Mills, Hodswell,
Cutbush, Bartrum, Danes, Sawyer, Kipps, Mills, and Romney.

1   Quoted in Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 39.

Lord John Sackville, the First Duke and Eigth Earl of
Dorset, was the patron of the side. Long Robin appears
to have been a "drop-out" from the ranks of the aristo-
cracy. An issue of The Connoisseur of 1746 contains the
following description:

> "A young fellow of family and fortune, who was
> born and bred a gentleman, but has taken great
> pains to degrade himself, and is now as complete
> a blackguard as those he has chosen for his
> companions. He will drink purl in the morning,
> smoke his pipe in a night cellar, and eat black
> puddings at Bartholomew Fair, for the humour of
> the thing. All the while, he is reckoned by his
> friends to be a mighty good-natured gentleman
> and without the least bit of pride in him. In
> order to qualify himself for the society of the
> vulgar, Bob has studied and practised all the
> vulgar arts under the best masters.... his great-
> est excellence is cricket playing, in which he is
> reckoned as good as bat as either of the Bennets,
> and is at length arrived at the supreme dignity
> of being distinguished among his brethren of the
> wicket by the title of 'Long Robin'." [1]

Of the others, Mills of Bromley was a bootmaker; Hodswell
came from Dartford and was a tanner; Cutbush of Maidstone
was a clock maker. All that is known of the other members
of the XI is their place of residence: Kips was from Eltham,
Sawyer from Richmond in Surrey, and John Mills from Horsmon-
den. Two features of this team are worth noting. In the
first place, Mills, Hodswell and Cutbush, as skilled crafts-
men, were not dependent upon their cricketing skills to
provide a livelihood, as was Romney, a retained player.
They were members of what Professor Tawney has shown to be
a significant non-agricultural proportion of the occupational
groupings of provincial urban centres of that time. Through
functioning as distributive and retailing as well as manu-
facturing agents, they maintained close connections with

1   Ibid., p. 342.

the rural community and thus were ideally placed to participate in both rural and urban cricket matches. Long Robin possessed a similar degree of independence as a result of "being born and bred a gentleman". The fact, moreover, that players could be recruited from diverse geographical locations tends to confirm the existence of a relatively highly organised system of communication between the foremost patrons of the day and also tends to confirm the fact that there was, in this period, a rapidly increasing number of local centres in which cricket was a particularly popular activity.

By 1750, a degree of role differentiation had become a common feature in many of the leading teams. Both "retained" and "independent" players were selected on the basis of their skill as batsmen, like Romney and Waymark, or bowlers, like Hodswell and Bartrum. From the reference in James Love's heroic poem, composed on the occasion of Kent's victory over England, it is clear that Hodswell's forte lay in fast-bowling:

> " 'Observe', cries Hodswell, to the wondrous Throng,
> 'Be judges now, whose arms are better strong,'
> He said, then pois'd and rising as he threw,
> Swift from his Arm the fatal Missile flew,
> Nor with more Force, the Death-conveying Ball,
> Springs from the Cannon to the Batter'd Wall,
> Nor swifter yet the pointed Arrows go
> Launch'd from the Vigour of the Parthian Bow.
> It whizzed along, with unimaginable Force,
> And bore down all resistless in its Course
> To such Impetuous Might compelled to yield
> The Ball, the mangled Stumps bestrew the Field." [1]

1   James Love, "Cricket: An Heroic Poem", Book III (1.9 -20) quoted in Lord Harris, op.cit., pp. 485.

In the poem, there is a further testament to Waymark's ability as a fielder: he was, according to Love, "as sure a Swain to catch as was ever known".[1] The reference to Kips indicates that he fulfilled a role similar to that of the modern wicket-keeper, and in the 1744 match, was responsible for the "stumping of Bryan".

If, in the intra-elite type of contest, the numbers of "retained" and "independent" players were approximately equal, in those matches in which a local community orientation predominated, the latter constituted a large majority of the total complement of players. In the case of the Hambledon club, where intense local support centred primarily on the performance of the players, there developed a network of relationships which incorporated the existence of "manifold gradations of rank" within the club itself. A high proportion of the Hambledon players were drawn from occupations which, within the context of a local community, were relatively prestigious. Peter Stewart was a publican; Edward Aburrow, William Barber, and John Small were shoemakers, though Barber later became a publican; Thomas Sueter was an architect and surveyor, and in the tower of Hambledon Church there is a stone recording "Tho. Sueter, and Rich. Flood: Builders A.D. 1788". George Lee was a brewer in business at Petersfield; Richard Nyren, Thomas Brett and Lambert were farmers.[2] Of the later generation of players who were recruited from beyond the immediate locality of

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1   Ibid., p. 486.

2   That Nyren was also at some time a publican is indicative of the relatively low level of occupational specialisation in eighteenth century England.

Hambledon, the pattern remains the same. Noah Mann was
a shoemaker and an innkeeper in his native village; Richard
Purchase was a blacksmith; Tom and Harry Walker were des-
cribed by John Nyren as farmers, whereas in the Hambledon
Cricket Chronicle, they were referred to as the keeper of
a grocers shop and a maltster; John Wells was a baker;
Andrew Freemantle was a carpenter and an innkeeper, whilst
his elder brother, John, was a master-builder. George
and William Beldham were farmers, while David Harris was
a potter.

One reason for producing this relatively detailed
inventory of the occupations of the Hambledon players is
to illustrate a popular fallacy which can be found in
innumerable histories of cricket.[1] In these, the relation-
ships between aristocrats and non-aristocrats in the eigh-
teenth and early nineteenth century cricket teams have
been typically explained in terms of a model of industrial
society in which the central differentiating principle was,
and still is, the horizontal distance between classes.
Given this conceptualisation, the appearance of members
of different social classes is seen as nothing short of
miraculous - an irrefutable indication of the uniquely
egalitarian properties of England's national sport. However,
it is not difficult to see that this interpretation contains
one fundamental conceptual and empirical fault. It fails
totally to take account of the fact that relationships
between aristocratic and non-aristocratic cricketers were
but one facet of a wider structure in which the dominant

1   For instance, F. Lillywhite, op.cit., p. XI.

factor was the paternal authority of the landed aristo-
cracy. Within this overall framework, the example of the
Hambledon club does suggest that relationships were to
some extent determined by one's status in the local
community. Since, as we have shown, many of the Hambledon
players were members of relatively prestigious occupations,
the fact that they developed close informal relationships
with several of the aristocratic patrons is not so surpris-
ing. But it is important to note that even relationships
of this type incorporated several deferential behaviour
patterns. In this respect, the position of Richard Nyren
was central to the framework of relationships linking
player and patron. As a representative of the once highly
respected yeoman stock, as a player of considerable ability,
and as captain of the Hambledon XI, he commanded an excep-
tional degree of respect even from members of the aristo-
cracy. The observations of his son, though naturally
biased, still provide a valuable insight into Richard
Nyren's position:

> "I never saw a finer specimen of the thorough-
> bred old English yeoman than Richard Nyren. He
> was a good, face-to-face, unflinching, uncompro-
> mising, independent man. He placed a full and
> just value upon the station he held in society,
> and he maintained without insolence or assumption.
> He could differ with a superior, without tren-
> ching upon his dignity or losing his own. I have
> known him maintain an opinion with great firmness
> against the Duke of Dorset and Sir Horatio Mann;
> and when, in consequence of his being proved
> right, the latter has afterwards crossed the
> ground and shaken him heartily by the hand." [1]

As a result of this comparative familiarity, Nyren was
able to act as an independent liaison between players and

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1   John Nyren, The Cricketers of My Time, p. 45.

patrons, a role which is illustrated by another event

described by John Nyren:

> "It may be worthwhile to mention a circumstance
> connected with poor Noah Mann.... as it will tend
> to show the amenity in which men of lower grade
> in society lived in those good old times with
> their superiors; it may prove no worthless example
> to the more aristocratic and certainly less be-
> loved members of the same rank in society of the
> present day. Poor Noah was very ambitious that
> his new born son should bear the Christian name,
> the santion of Sir Horace Mann. Old Nyren, who
> being the link between the patricians and plebe-
> ians in our community - the 'justice milieu' -
> was always applied to in cases of similar emerg-
> ency, undertook upon the present occasion to bear
> the petition of Noah to Sir Horace Mann, who, with
> winning condescension, conceded to the worthy
> fellow's request. [1]

It is a comment upon both the supreme confidence of

members of the aristocracy and the stability of this overall

structure of relationships, that occasional infractions of

the accepted codes of behaviour could be tolerated, and

indeed, overlooked. That in moments of extreme tension

and excitement, players would forgo the standard conven-

tions and lapse into a mood of complete informality, gave

rise to one of the most memorable incidents in cricket's

history.

> "He (Lambert) was once bowling against the Duke
> of Dorset, and delivering his ball straight to
> the wicket, it curled in and missed the Duke's
> leg stump by a hair's breadth, The plain spoken
> little bumpkin in his eagerness and delight, and
> forgetting the style in which we always accustomed
> our aristocratical playmates with our knowledge
> of their rank and station, bawled out - 'Ah, it
> was tedious near you, Sir!' The familiarity of
> his tone, and the genuine Hampshire dialect in
> which it was spoken set the whole ground laughing." [2]

1   Ibid., p. 67.

2   Ibid., p. 54.

For these eighteenth century cricketers, retirement from the game did not pose the problems that it does for the generation of players who are our own contemporaries. For the "independent" player, it simply involved a return to his previous career. For the "retained" player, there is some evidence that his patron either continued to support him directly, as was the case with Thomas Waymark, or indirectly, by assisting him to find a job elsewhere: for instance, after fifteen years as a bowler, Boxall was found "a place as tide-waiter at Purfleet"[1] by Stephen Amherst, his patron. Though unfortunately no further examples of this type have been discovered, it does seem reasonable to argue that, for most of the eighteenth century, the skills required of the cricketer were not so specific as to render their exponents unemployable in any other occupational context.

1   Quoted in Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 30.

Conclusion   Signs of Change

In writing this conclusion, it is not intended merely
to recapitulate in an abbreviated form what has already
been written about the type of cricket played in the
eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but rather to
attempt to highlight the existence within this situation
of certain factors making for changes in the organisational
structure of the game. In particular, it will be argued
that the initiation of long-term processes of change in
the position and structure of two major social groups, the
landed aristocracy and the bourgeoisie,[1] created a situation

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1   The use of concepts like "bourgeoisie" in an analysis
of processes which extend over several hundreds of years
creates distinct problems of specificity and clarity.
Such is the complexity of the phenomena they describe,
and such is the extent of the changes occurring within
these phenomena over time, that some elaboration of the
original concept is often required if a dangerous element
of blurring is to be avoided. Though a more detailed
discussion of the nature of the 'middle-classes' in
England is introduced in Part Three, the opportunity is
taken here to point out that the bourgeoisie was not, in
this period, a homogeneous class. From the first, it
consisted of a variety of levels of prosperity and an
equally distinctive, internal hierarchy of prestige. The
presence of such divisions meant that "insider" and "out-
sider" groups developed within the bourgeoisie in the same
ways as they developed within, and between, other major
social groups. This is not to say that the bourgeoisie in
the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth century
was so diversified internally as to lose all semblance of
group structure. But it does mean that in order to under-
stand the role of the bourgeoisie in the development of
cricket during this period, one must take cognizance of the
possibility of conflicting attitudes towards cricket, and
leisure activities in general, existing within that group.
From the point of view of the development of cricket, the
crucial division within the bourgeoisie during the eigh-
teenth and early nineteenth centuries seems to have been
between those relatively established groups who had
achieved something approaching parity with the aristocracy
in economic terms and thus were in a position to become
involved in its elite leisure activities, and on the other
hand, these aspiring, less well-established, "outsider"

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in which the value of many functions attributed to cricket
was questioned, and in which the greatly expanded popular-
ity of the game led to the emergence of a type of event,
and a category of player, which were not so totally
dominated by the aristocracy and its conception of the
game as before.

At the time of the foundation of the M.C.C., processes,
the full significance of which were only to be revealed
during the next century, were beginning to affect the
political and economic status of the aristocracy in
British society. Partly of their own volition, and
partly through force of circumstance, members of the
aristocracy in ever growing numbers were coming to accept
an involvement in matters of commerce, finance and industry,
as a legitimate form of activity, and as a corollary to
accept the presence of the most prosperous members of the
bourgeoisie within their own social institution. In 1761,
fifty-one merchants were returned to Parliament: by 1768,
Lady Sarah Osborn was driven to conclude that,

> "The landed interest is beat out, and merchants,
> nabobs, and those who have gathered riches from
> the East and West Indies stand the best chance
> of governing this country." [1]

To the likes of Lady Osborn, the future may indeed have
seemed threatening. Yet, in different light, her anxiety

1   /cont'd. from previous page:

groups who saw in the growing popularity of cricket
amongst all sections of society a challenge to the
work-centred ethic on which their hopes of attaining
lasting prosperity and high status rested.

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1   Lady Sarah Osborn, The Political and Social Letters of a
     Lady of the Eighteenth Century, ed.E.F.D.Osborn, (London 1890)
     p. 178.

was without foundation. It has been one of the unique,
and as such frequently noted, characteristics of British
society during the past three centuries that while
considerable changes in the distribution of power and
status between various groups may have occurred, the
overall structure has remained comparatively stable.
So it has been in the case of the M.C.C. One of the
paradoxes revealed by an analysis of the development of
patterns of organisation in cricket is that, though the
real influence of the aristocracy may have declined, its
symbolic and ideological legacy has been jealously guarded
by those representatives of the upper-middle classes upon
whom its authority devolved. As was shown earlier, the
ambitions of the most upwardly-mobile sections of the
bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century and earlier centred
upon gaining admittance to the circles of the existing
elite, rather than on destroying its dominance. Where
powerful criticisms have been levelled at the established
structure of cricket, their purpose for the most part was
not the removal of inequality, but to extend the sphere
of its exclusiveness. Before the present century, change,
where it occurred, involved the gradual, often reluctant,
incorporation of the values of newly-established groups
into an existing framework.

It is possible that the preceding analysis has con-
veyed the impression that the organisation of cricket in the
eighteenth century was another manifestation of the consensus
which accompanied the "natural order" of pre-industrial

But, in fact, the regular presence of members of the aristo-
cracy on the cricket field did provoke a significant volume
of written criticism, most of which emanated from within
the bourgeoisie. By examining some examples of this oppo-
sition, it is possible to lend substance to the observations
of the previous paragraph. The foci of contemporary
criticisms, on the one hand, the religious, moral, and
political inadequacies of specific members of the aristo-
cracy, and on the other, cricket's association with gambling,
reflect both the bourgeoisie's concern with the preservation
of an elite, and the particular ideological perspective
espoused by that group. In the first example, an anonymous,
distinctly puritanical broadsheet published in 1712, entitled,
The Devil and the Peers, or a Princely Way of Sabbath Breaking,
consisted of "a true account of a famous cricket match
between the Duke of M......, another Lord and two boys -
for twenty guineas",[1] and denounced as well as Sabbath-
breaking, corruption of the electoral system, and the
prevalence of gambling. It is said that the following
quotation, taken from a poem composed thirty years later
by Alexander Pope, refers to the lack of concern for their
political responsibilities shown by certain members of
Parliament:

> "Truants midst the Artillery Ground.....
> With Shoe-blacks, Barber's boys, at Cricket
> Playing."[2]

1   Anon, The Devil and the Peers, or a Princely Way of
     Sabbath Breaking, (1712), p. 5.

2   Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 33.

To the author, the appearance of members of the aristocracy in such undistinguished surroundings could only bring that entire body into disrepute and result in a loss of the social and moral superiority it still maintained. And, come the Day of Reckoning,

> "When Death (for Lords must die) your doom shall
> seal,
> What sculptured Honors shall your tomb reveal?
> Instead of Glory, with a weeping eye,
> Instead of Virtue pointing to the sky,
> Let Bats and Balls th'affronting stone disgrace,
> While Farce stands leering by, with Satyr face,
> Holding, with forty notches marked, a board -
> A noble triumph of a noble Lord!" [1]

While these criticisms refer to specific persons, a passage in an essay which appeared in The Gentleman's Magazine, in September, 1743, draws attention to the belief that the growth in the popularity of cricket amongst all sections of society had resulted in a corresponding neglect of work. As an example of the type of work ethic isolated by Max Weber as an integral element in the growth of capitalism in Western Europe, it is particularly apt, and hence, worth quoting at length:

> "In diversions as well as business, circumstances
> alter things mightily, and what in one man may
> be decent, may in another be ridiculous; what is
> innocent in one light may be quite the contrary
> in another: neither is it at all impossible that
> exercise may be strained too far. A journeyman
> shoemaker may play from five o'clock on Saturday
> until it is dark at skittles, provided he has
> worked all the rest of the week. Yet I can't
> but say it would shock me if I saw honest Crippen
> tipping against a member of either House of
> Parliament. All diversions at exercise have
> certain trends as to expense and when they exceed
> this, it is an evil in itself and justly liable to
> censure. Upon what reasons are all the laws against
> gaming based? Are not these the chief - that they
> break in upon business, expose people to great dangers and cherish a spirit of covetousness in a way

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1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 37

directly opposed to industry? The most wholesome
exercise and the most innocent diversion may
change its nature completely if people, for the
sake of gratifying their humour, keep unfit com-
pany. I have been led into these reflections
which are certainly just in themselves, by some
odd stories I have heard of cricket matches which
I own, however, to be so strange and incredible
that, if I had not received them from an eye
witness, I could not have yielded to them any
belief..... Would it not be extremely odd to see
lords and gentlemen, clergymen and lawyers, asso-
ciating themselves with butchers and cobblers in
the pursuit of their diversions? Or can there be
anything more absurd than making such matches for
the sake of profit, which is to be shared amongst
people so remote in their quality and circumstances.
Cricket is certainly a very innocent and whole-
some exercise, yet it may be abused if either
great or little people make it their business.
It is grossly abused when it is made the subject
of public advertisements to draw together great
crowds of people who ought all of them to have
been somewhere else. Noblemen, gentlemen, and
clergymen, have certainly a right to divert them-
selves in what manner they think fit: nor does it
dispute their privilege of marking butchers,
cobblers, and tinkers their companions provided
they are gratified to keep their company. But I
very much doubt whether they have the right to
invite thousands of people to be spectators of
their agility at the expense of their duty and
honesty. The time of fashion may be indeed of
very little value, but in a trading country, the
time of the meanest man ought to be of some worth
to himself and to the community. The diversion of
cricket may be proper in holiday time and in the
country: but, upon days when men ought to be busy,
and in the neighbourhood of a great city, it is
not only improper, but mischievous to a high degree.
It draws numbers of people from their employments
to the ruin of their own. It brings together
crowds of apprentices and servants whose time is
not their own. It propogates a spirit of idleness
at a juncture when, with the utmost industry, our
debts, taxes, and decay of trade, will scarce
allow us to get bread. It is a most notorious
breach of the laws, as it gives the most open
encouragement to gaming - the advertisements most
impudently reciting the great sums that are laid
out, so that some people are so little ashamed of
breaking the laws that they had a hand in making
that they give public notice of it." [1]

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[1] Extract from The Gentleman's Magazine, (September, 1743);
quoted in F. W. Lillywhite, op.cit., Vol. 1, p. ix.

In many respects, the attitudes reflected in this
passage anticipated an approach to life which was not to
find its fullest expression until the nineteenth century.
It is not difficult to see in the author's criticism of
wasted time and wasted money, integral features of what
was to become a dominant bourgeois ideology. Yet, this
passage is part of an article written in 1743. Several
aspects of the quotation are of particular interest. In
the first place, it contains a clear affirmation of the
position of the aristocracy in society. It is not the
existence of a leisured elite which is called into question,
but the fact that, as a result of being performed in a
relatively popular context, its leisure activities attracted
many individuals who did not possess this privileged status.
In other words, the author advocates the establishment of
a clear separation between the spheres of "work" and "play".
Unlike the seventeenth century Puritan divine, he counten-
ances both, but seeks to define the differing degrees to
which various groups in society were free to indulge in
the latter. That, on the occasion of "great matches", a
significant section of the working population neglected
their responsibilities could not be reconciled with the
existence of what Weber described as the "spirit of
capitalism". By way of illustrating the nature of this
ideology, Weber quoted one of Benjamin Franklin's classic
canons:

> "Remember that time is money. He that can earn
> ten shillings a day by his labour, and goes
> abroad, or sits idle, one half of the day, though
> he spends but sixpence during his diversions or
> idleness, ought not to reckon that the only expense;
> he has really spent, or rather thrown away, five
> shillings besides." [1]

It was the idleness encouraged by the spectacle of a "great match" which most offended the early eighteenth century capitalist. That this criticism of the "business" of cricket should appear at this time demonstrates not only the growing influence of mercantile and commercial interests, but also the extent to which these groups' acquisitiveness was already linked to a strongly chauvinistic conception of England's proper role in international relations. Though work for its own sake was a powerful motivation when related to England's ability to compete successfully in world trade, it became an imperative for the majority of the population.

But there are other respects in which the participation of the aristocracy was considered to have an undesirable influence on the game of cricket. Gambling, like idleness, involved a dissipation of human resources, and as such, was anathema to the entrepreneur. Divested of its associations with gambling, cricket was a morally and physically beneficial activity. But since it had become the medium for increasingly large wagers, cricket had come to exert a harmful influence, not only upon its immediate partici-pants, but also upon society at large. In delivering judgement on a case arising out of a disputed wager on a cricket match, one early eighteenth century magistrate said

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1   M. Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capit-alism, p. 48.

> "It (cricket) is a manly game, and not bad in
> itself, but it is the ill-use that is made of
> it, by betting above £10, that is bad and
> against the law, which ought to be constructed
> largely to prevent the great mischief of exces-
> sive gambling." [1]

There is some evidence to suggest that the criticisms
made of this aspect of the "great matches" were not without
substance. For example, in the St. James Chronicle of May,
1765, the following report appeared:

> "Monday last; a young fellow, a butcher being
> entrusted with about £40 by his mistress to
> buy cattle in Smithfield Market, instead went
> into the Artillery Ground and sported away the
> whole sum in betting upon the cricket players." [2]

However, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest
that the disapprobation of sections of the bourgeoisie
contributed to a reduction in the amount of gambling
associated with cricket, or in the number of matches
involving members of the aristocracy to which large crowds
were attracted. In fact, by the end of the eighteenth
century, wagers involving thousands of pounds were a normal
feature of the "great matches" played in London. To some
extent, this expansion of gambling activities was facili-
tated by significant changes in the structure of these
contests, which can only be seen as a reflection of a more
general change in the position of the aristocracy in the
wider society. As the power and influence of the aristocracy
relative to that of the bourgeoisie tended to decline, so
the nature of their involvement in cricket matches changed.

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1   Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 23.

2   G. B. Buckley, Fresh Light on Eighteenth Century
     Cricket, (1935), p. 28.

From playing alongside individuals drawn from every
stratum of society, at venues to which the general
public was freely admitted, cricket-loving aristocrats
fast developed a preference for matches between others of
like status, played in relatively confined surroundings,
by teams selected on the basis of expertise. As the basic
axis of competition in this type of match came to rest
more firmly within the boundaries of the aristocracy, and
as single and double wicket contests, in which the element
of direct personal rivalry was maximised, gained popularity,
the custom was for patrons to engage the services of an
expert either to represent or to play alongside them. By
the turn of the century, it was common for the rivalries
present in these matches to become so intense as to out-
weigh all considerations of honour and sportsmanship. In
1810, for example, Lord Fredrick Beauclerk refused to
consent to a double wicket match against Squire Osbaldeston
being cancelled on account of the latter's indisposition.
In the event, Osbaldeston's partner, William Lambert, one
of the ablest professionals of the day, defeated Beauclerk
and his partner, T. C. Howard, single handed.

It is possible to point to ways in which, even at this
early stage, changes in the nature of aristocratic parti-
cipation in cricket affected both the occupational
structure of the game and the career patterns of its
professional players. Though the popularity of single
and double wicket matches created a market situation in
which the leading professional players could exploit the
economic value of their skills, the substitution of a
contractual form of employment for the earlier "retainer"

relationship left the players far more exposed to a series of occupational contingencies. Of these, perhaps the most significant was the heavy gambling which the game provoked. Because they constituted a small group, yet, on the other hand, possessed an often decisive influence over the course of a match, professionals were an obvious target for the unscrupulous gambler, bent on reducing to an absolute minimum the element of risk involved in his wagers. His control over the player was achieved most frequently by employing one of two devices; a false report or a bribe. William Ward once recalled that "one artifice was to keep a player out of the way by a false report that his wife was dead." The susceptibility of professionals to the corrupting influence of the "legs" was increased by the fact that their playing lives were becoming increasingly patterned. Because it was known that most professionals spent the winter in Hampshire, it was a relatively easy task for the "legs" to visit this area at the beginning of each season and, as Beldham noted, "buy them up". Once in London, the professionals were equally accessible. Again, it was Beldham who recalled that:

> "....these men (the 'legs') would come down
> to the 'Green Man and Still', and drink with
> us, and always said that those who backed us,
> or the 'nobs' as they called them, sold the
> matches." [1]

The Green Man and Still, a public house situated on Oxford Street, was the hub of the professional cricketer's

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1 The Rev. J. Pycroft, op.cit., p. 34.

life during the season. Here he stayed whilst in London

and here it was that he could be contacted by potential

employers - or the "legs". Many of the problems with

which players were frequently confronted during their

careers stemmed from this fact. For the style of life

to which they grew accustomed while based at the "Green

Man and Still" could not be supported by match fees alone.

As Beldham recalled,

> "The best of wine and beef was their normal
> fare, living such as five guineas for a win
> and three guineas for a loss could never pay
> for, and many a young countryman fresh to,
> and dazzled by the glamour of London life,
> must have fallen easy victim to the free
> drinks and the wiles of the 'legs'." [1]

The implications of Beldham's comments is that, at an

early stage in his career, the cricketer was placed in a

potentially anomic situation. As a result of possessing

some natural athletic ability which could easily be con-

verted into an aptitude for cricket, the young player

was offered the opportunity to move from what, in the

majority of cases, was a rural home into a metropolitan

work environment where his status was defined by contract,

not tradition. The relationships he formed were not with

family or kin but with fellow cricketers and potential

employers. In this situation, he rapidly discovered that

his previous life experience did not provide a reliable

guide to the new demands placed upon him. The occupation,

itself, did not possess an ideology in which caution was

advocated as a safeguard against becoming enmeshed in that

web of corruption organised by the "legs". For the

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1   Quoted in H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 59.

inexperienced player,

> "the temptation really was very great, too
> great by far for any poor man to be exposed
> to, who was no richer than ten shillings a
> week, let alone at harvest-time." [1]

The career of at least one famous professional was
destroyed as a result of his having succumbed to the
temptations offered by the "legs". William Lambert was
permanently barred from Lord's after it had been alleged
that he had "sold" the match between England and Notting-
ham in 1817. While less dramatic, the effects of the
prevalence of corruption upon relations between profession-
als, and upon their occupational image, were no less
damaging. The frequency and ease with which several
players were known to allow themselves to be bribed
seriously questioned the basis of trust, both between
players, backers, and the audience, and within the commun-
ity of players. Fennex, in a conversation with the Rev.
J. Mitford, described how mistrust reached such a pitch
that even the most innoccuous of actions could seem
suspicious:

> "You may hear that I sold matches. I will
> confess I was once sold myself by two men -
> one of whom would not bowl, and the other would
> not bat his best - and lost £10. The next match
> at Nottingham, I joined in the selling and got my
> money back. But for this once, I could say I was
> never bought in my life, and this was not for want
> of offers from C.... and other turf men, though
> often I must have been accused. For where it was
> worthwhile to buy, no man could keep a character,
> because to be without runs or to miss a catch was,
> by the disappointed betting men, deemed proof as
> strong as the Holy Writ." [2]

1   Quoted in E.W. Swanton's The World of Cricket, (1966)
    p. 538.

2   John Arlott, op.cit., p. 141.

For whatever reason a cricket career might have
terminated, its conclusion almost inevitably exposed the
early contract professional to considerable financial
difficulties. Unless the support of a patron was extended
to cover retirement, the prospects of the cricketer were
scarcely encouraging, for his skills were of no value in
any other context and the occupation itself did not then
bestow the status upon its members that it came to do in
the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On retiring, the
majority of professionals pursued one of two options. On
the one hand, they might return to the occupation to which
they had belonged before the move to cricket. William
Lambert, for instance, returned to Nutfield, his birth-
place, where he worked as a miller, "but he was also in
the fuller's earth trade, having several men in his employ".[1]
For players who did not possess any other occupational skills,
the alternative was to stay a cricketer as long as was
physically possible. Thus William Fennex obtained employ-
ment as coach to the Ashford family, of Eye in Suffolk.
The insecurities involved in pursuing this type of pro-
longed cricket career are signified by the fact that Fennex
died a pauper in a London work-house. But it is Pycroft's
description of the fate of the once renowned Thomas Beagley
of Hampshire which best captures the sense of frustration
and neglect attendant upon the final retirement of a
professional cricketer:

> "Yes, we have a painful recollection of poor
> Thomas Beagley - one of the finest batsmen of
> Lord Frederick's day, and the very model of a
> long-stop - sitting neglected and alone under
> the lime trees at Lord's, while the ground was

1   W. Dennison, op.cit., p. 36.

resounding with just such cheers for others
in his day yet unborn, that had been raised
for him. At length a benefit was attempted
in acknowledgement of his former services,
but the weather rendered it of little wealth
to him, more threadbare and more pitiful,
till at last a notion in Bell's Life told us
what Thomas Beagley had been and what, alas,
he was." [1]

1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 71.

Part Three: Cricket in Britain, 1800-1873.

Cricket: The Pride of the Village

"Good Match old Fellow?
Oh yes! Awfully jolly.
What did you do?
I 'ad a hover of Jackson.
The first ball 'it me on the hand:
the second 'ad me on the knee:
the third was in my eye:
and the fourth bowled me out!" [1]

Introduction

From 1830 to 1870, the type of cricket which emerged
within the extended milieu of the landed aristocracy began
to be superceded by another distinctive variant which, in
terms of its organisational structure, represented a more
complex stage in the overall development of the game.
Though, in fact, a multi-faceted process, involving differ-
ential rates of change between rapidly expanding urban and
more traditional rural locations, nevertheless its ramifi-
cations were sufficiently distinctive to be noted by con-
temporaries. In general, such commentaries on cricket were
motivated by the regret experienced by their authors at the
passing of pre-industrial society. In this mood, few
resisted the temptation to idyllicize their subject. Cricket
was presented in the same light as "Merrie England" - a
remnant of the "inherent goodness" of a society as yet
unafflicted by the "evils" of industrialisation. In an
essay entitled "A Country Cricket Match", written in 1819,
Miss Mary Mitford sets out in no uncertain terms her

1   Punch, August 29th, 1863.

preference for an earlier type of cricket:

> "I doubt if there can be any scene in the world
> more animating or delightful than a cricket
> match. I don't mean a set match at Lord's for
> money, hard money, between a certain number of
> gentlemen and players as they are called - people
> who made a trade of the noble sport and degrade
> it into an affair of betting and hedgings and
> cheatings: nor do I mean a pretty fete in a
> gentlemen's park, where one club of cricketing
> dandies encounters another such club and where
> they show off to a gay marquee of admiring
> belles; No! the cricket I mean is the real
> solid, old fashioned match between neighbour-
> ing parishes where each attacks the other for
> honour and a supper for glory and a half-crown." [1]

Nearly fifty years later, in 1867, an anonymous author, after making a comparison between the states of cricket in 1838 and 1867, which, in every respect, was distinctly favourable to the former, provided the following valedictory:

> "But village cricket greens are much as village
> greens were, and squire and peasant meet on
> equal terms on the time-hallowed turf, and
> steady old men sit by and smoke their pipes
> and say that good cricket is played in our
> time as in theirs - 'Vixere fortes ante
> Agammenon'." [2]

The key to an understanding of these passages rests in recognizing the way in which they project into the past a gemeinschaft - like structural stability, the disappearance of which is most clearly lamented. Processes of industrialisation and urbanisation initiated in the previous centuries had, by the early decades of the nineteenth century, significantly loosened the bonds which had integrated diverse social groups within the all-encompassing

1   Mary Russell Mitford, Our Village; Sketches of Rural Character and Scenery, (1879), p. 171.

2   Anon, "The Siege of the Wicket", Once a Week, (July 1867), p. 228.

framework of traditional society. Previously, where
changes had occurred, they were contained within the
systemic boundaries of that type of society and, as such,
rarely constituted a threat to its perpetuation. Upwardly
mobile individuals, families and groups were, for the most
part, successfully assimilated into the existing class
structure, leaving the underlying hierarchy unchallenged.
In Victorian England, however, the dominance of the landed
aristocracy and gentry, based on the ownership of land
and the possession of a distinctive life-style, was
challenged by a number of rising social groups - the
"middle classes". Composed of industrialists, manufac-
turers, financiers, and members of the various professions,
these groups, whose power derived initially from wealth
and socially acquired skills rather than an ascribed status,
very soon lost, or perhaps never possessed, the degree of
homogeneity imposed on them by Marx. By comparison with
the two other major social classes, the aristocracy and
the proleteriat, the "bourgeoisie" was a collectivity
constructed of various status levels which may have
displayed the relatively high degree of integration asso-
ciated with classes in the struggle for political enfran-
chisement, or in opposition to the nascent forms of organised
labour movement, but which, nevertheless, on the majority of
occasions was characterised by interdependence rather than
corporate harmony. Not only this relative lack of interaal
cohesion but also the fluidity of its boundaries meant that
the identities and ideologies of the early members of this
collectivity did not acquire the degree of precision and

consistency as had existed in the comparative stability of pre-industrial England.

But changes in the composition and interelationships of classes, however defined, was only one facet of a transformation, the ramifications of which left few aspects of British society unaffected. One necessary complement to the onset of industrialisation was the freeing of labour from the traditional personal obligation, ties, and paternalistic ideologies around which it had previously been organised. As contractual employment became the norm, conditions of work and employers' expectations became more rigorous and demanding. The goal of self improvement, via hard work and occupational and/or career mobility, replaced paternal dependence as the dominant injunction in the motivation of workers, bourgeois and proletarian alike. Career structures, within which promotion was based on achieved rather than ascribed status, developed as a means by which this socially designated goal could be planned, realised, and recognised by others. It was in the context of this redefinition of the status and functions of work that fundamental changes in the concept of leisure were introduced. In the face of the demands made of the industrial labour force by entrepreneurs intent upon maximising profits by increasing production, the typical complementarity of work and leisure in pre-industrial society was irreparably disrupted. By the inculcation of an entrepreneurial work-ethic into the ideologies of Victorian society, leisure came to be accorded only a supplementary status - it was seen as extraneous to

work, which was considered the real business of life. No summary of the redefinition of the relationship between work and leisure in early nineteenth century society can better that provided by Karl Marx:

> "The industrialist has to be 'hard-working', sober, economical, prosaic: his enjoyment is only a secondary matter; it is recreation subordinated to production and thus a calculated, economic enjoyment for he charges his pleasure as an expense of capital and what he squanders must not be more than can be replaced with profit by the reduction of capital. Thus enjoyment is subordinated to capital and the pleasure-loving individual is subordinated to the capital-accumulating individual whereas formerly (in feudal society) the contrary was the case." [1]

To the Victorian entrepreneur, leisure had three central attributes: first, its capacity to stimulate the work appetite of both employers and employees; second, in the case of specific activities, the opportunities it provided for association with members of the upper-strata; and finally, again in the case of specific activities, the part it played in imbuing future generations with that sense of high moral integrity which, to many, was the hall-mark of the upper-middle classes.

At the same time as these factors were affecting radical changes in the structure of the wider society, the game of cricket began to acquire a more complex organisational structure, and its players, more elaborate techniques. In addition, the status of its "professional" participants, and the requirements and responsibilities of

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[1]   T.B. Bottomore, Early Writings of Karl Marx, (New York, 1964), p. 172; quoted in A.G. Giddens, Capitalism and Modern Social Theory, p. 15.

their role in the game, were more precisely established.
From being no more-or-less than a game which had achieved
a notable popularity amongst the landed aristocracy and
gentry, by the second quarter of the nineteenth century,
cricket was in the process of developing an occupational
structure in the sense to which E. C. Hughes referred,
when he noted that each occupation,

> "tends to have its peculiar realm of sacred
> and secular objects. The sacred objects are
> its interests and prerogatives. Its secular
> objects are within the realm of its technique."[1]

In this section, attention will focus upon the relation-
ship between these two instances of change; that is, on the
extent to which the increasing elaboration of cricket's
organisational structure, together with the emergence of
an occupational framework, can be attributed to changes
in the class structure and the distribution of work and
leisure obligations in British society during the first
half of the nineteenth century. From the first, it must
be recognised that to construct a fully satisfactory answer
to this question would require not only a detailed knowledge
of the development of cricket, but also a similarly compre-
hensive understanding of that fundamental restructuring of
social relationships which accompanied the related processes
of industrialisation and urbanisation. However, within the
context of an analysis of this type, to record the minutiae
of social change would be exceedingly difficult and possibly
confusing. At this level, analysis of this aspect of our
problem must be restricted to relatively general observations.

1   E. C. Hughes, "Institutional Office and the Person",
    American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 43, (1937), p. 406.

Chapter One   Changes in English Society, 1800-1860

If the stability of eighteenth century society was the result, to a large extent, of the dominance exercised by landed interests, the relative fluidity of early nineteenth century social structure can be related just as certainly to, on the one hand, what Thomas Carlyle described as the "abdication on the part of the governors",[1] and on the other, to that process which, later that century, was to culminate in the "triumph of the plutocracy".[2] Carlyle's phrase refers to the gradual abandonment by members of the aristocracy at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century of that obligation to protect their dependents, in return for which they had demanded, and received, obedience and loyalty. As formal evidence of this process, one can point to the passing in 1799 and 1800 of the Combination Acts, by which workers were denied the right to negotiate wage increases, despite the fact that Parliament had previously refused to regulate wages so as to prevent them declining to levels at which starvation became a real threat. A similar tendency is revealed in the repeated attempts to abolish Poor Laws during this period. While isolated examples of individuals who maintained an allegiance to the traditional conception of noblesse oblige occur later in the nineteenth century -

[1]   T. Carlyle, Chartism (1889), Ch. vi.

[2]   The naming, if not the timing, of this process is based on H. A. Perkin's analysis, contained in his The Origin of Modern English Society

notably Lord Shaftesbury - those essentially personal
relationships which formed the basis of the authority of
the local magnate in the eighteenth century were never
again to dominate English society. At the level of
individual and group inter-action, the consequence of
this change of role may be seen in the increasing social
isolation of the aristocracy and, closely related to this,
in the growing exclusiveness of the events and activities
in which its members chose to participate. The social
distance by which the aristocracy came to be separated
from the rest of society was the subject of considerable
consternation amongst contemporaries. Even a contributor
to the conservatively-inclined Blackwood's Edinburgh
Magazine, in 1820, was forced to conclude that:

> "Everywhere, in every walk of life, it is too
> evident that the upper orders of society have
> been tending, more and more, to a separation
> of themselves from those whom nature, providence
> and the law have placed beneath them....The
> rich and the high have been indolently and
> slothfully allowing the barriers that separate
> them from their inferiors to increase and
> accumulate....Men have come to deride and
> despise a thousand of those means of communi-
> cation that in former days knit all orders of
> men together."[1]

If this description of the changing position of the
aristocracy in the early nineteenth century seems too
simplistic, let it be said immediately that a partial
relinquishing of the authority derived from the system
of paternal dependence - itself a precondition of the
creation of a large mobile labour force - did not offend
the dignity of many members of the aristocracy and gentry

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1   Quoted in H. A. Perkins, op.cit., p. 183.

who were themselves just as committed to many aspects of industrialisation as their bourgeois counterparts. In this light, an attempt to explain changes in social stratification in the course of industrialisation by attributing a deterministic importance to any one dimension of power, be it wealth, control of Parliament, or a monopoly of honour, and which assumes the decline of the aristocracy to have been an exactly parallel process to the rise of sections of the middle classes, must be seriously questioned. That the English aristocracy retained a measure of political and social dominance long after the economic foundations of their eighteenth century pre-eminence had weakened was the central point of a quite unambiguous observation by Joseph Schumpeter:

> "The aristocratic element continued to rule the roost right to the end of the period of intact and vital capitalism. No doubt that element - though nowhere so effectively as in England - currently absorbed the brains from other strata that drifted into politics; it made itself the representative of bourgeois interests and fought the battles of the bourgeoisie; it had to surrender its last legal privileges - but with these qualifications, and for ends no longer its own, it continued to man the political engine, to manage the state, to govern. The economically operative part of the bourgeois strata did not offer much opposition to this. On the whole, that kind of division of labour suited them and they liked it." [1]

While accepting the overall validity of Schumpeter's observation, it is nevertheless likely that his explanation of the prolongation of aristocratic influence tends to understate the significance of the bourgeoisie's quest

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[1] Joseph Schumpeter, _Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy_ (New York, 1947), pp. 136-137.

for social honour. By far the most popular method by
which members of the bourgeoisie sought to overcome the
absence of any hereditary transmission of social status and
which involved the translation of wealth into a more desirable
social currency - land. The continuing acceptance of a
direct relationship between land ownership and high status
not only conferred a lasting value on landed property, but
also ensured that the emulation of a life-style reminiscent,
if not identical to, that pursued by members of the landed
aristocracy and gentry would remain a central pre-occupation
among the bourgeoisie. It was this element of continuity,
as Samuel Coleridge realised, which prevented the "triumph
of the plutocracy" from precipitating a radical transform-
ation in the identity of the English ruling class.

> "It will not be necessary to enumerate the
> several causes that combine to connect the
> performance of a state with the land and the
> landed property. To found a family, and to
> convert his wealth into land, are twin thoughts,
> births of the same moment, in the mind of the
> opulent merchant, when he thinks of reposing
> his labours. From the class of novi homines
> he redeems himself by becoming the staple ring
> of the chain, by which the present is connected
> with the past, and the text and evidence of
> permanence can be afforded." [1]

At this point, it would be more than legitimate to ask
how it was that Coleridge's "opulent merchant" could be
developing an affinity with a landed aristocracy which, at
the same time, was becoming more exclusive and aloof. Why
did the relationship between these two groups become, as
Schumpeter has indicated, one of interdependence rather

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[1] S. T. Coleridge, On the Constitution of Church and
State (1838), p. 27.

than of conflict? The simple answer, insofar as one
exists, lies in the presence of an intermediate group,
which, while founded on the possession of landed property,
retained a far more "open" structure than the aristocracy.
In the gentry, F. M. L. Thompson has identified,

> ".....a more fluid class than the aristocracy,
> permitting easier exit and entry, and as a
> result of the provincial limits prescribed by
> their resources and way of life, fundamentally
> a more conservative class.
>
> Taken together, these two factors played a
> substantial part in the prolongation of the
> aristocratic control of society." [1]

In one respect, the gentry may be said to have occu-
pied a uniquely marginal position in the class structure
of the mid-nineteenth century. While neither aristocratic
nor bourgeois, in any one generation it was composed of
individuals and families whose wealth may have been derived
from entrepreneurial sources, but who, in taste, were
strongly inclined toward the aristocracy. As Max Weber
noted,[2] the continuous process of assimilation of parvenus
into the gentry contributed significantly to the perpetu-
ation within an otherwise rapidly changing society, of an
established, relatively exclusive, style of life which had
as its basic unit of organisation, the county. Purchase
of land and gaining admittance into the social circles of
the county gentry were standard steps in the "opulent
merchant's" pursuit of respectability. If successfully
negotiated, they led to a status sufficient to satisfy

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1   F.M.L. Thompson, English Landed Society in the Nine-
     teenth Century (1963), p. 20.

2   H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills, op.cit., p. 192.

his own aspirations, and beyond that, one on which
later generations could build an identity which, in
every respect, - birth, education and life-style - was
in accord with the ideals of provincial gentility.

However, the assimilations of sections of the bourge-
oisie did not leave the county gentry an entirely unchanged
body. Though, with respect to its typical life-style, this
process acted to reinforce the existing format, the parvenu
origins of many of the new members did necessitate some
changes in the eighteenth century concept of gentility.
At that time, gentility had referred to a collection of
qualities associated with a particular status group, the
possession of which was still at that time more an attri-
bute of birth than an extension of wealth. Literally
applied, this definition effectively precluded members
of the bourgeoisie from attaining that status which repre-
sented the summit of their aspirations. Resolution came
in the form of a compromise in which the definitive qualities
of gentility were expanded to include ownership of property,
wealth, and various qualities of personality, such as loyalty
and self-discipline. By 1860, it was the social utility of
the role of the gentleman that was most emphasized!

> "It is by the everyday action of the English
> gentleman that lasting influence must be
> obtained; not by sporadic demonstrations, nor
> by any temporary influence purchased by money
> and presents." [1]

These "everyday actions" consisted of administrative
and judicial duties within the framework of the counties

W. L. Burn, The Age of Equipoise (1964), p. 261.

of England. The individuality of the gentleman constituted a safeguard against the incursions of an increasingly powerful, centralized bureaucracy, whilst at the same time, providing a relatively inexpensive, efficient system of local government. Ideally, the incumbents of this role were expected to possess,

> "a sense of honour (which) would generally make expensive and cumbersome supervision unnecessary: his personal status would supply him with the power he might officially lack: his standards would be those of the manor house, the rectory, the club, so that he would never push professional zeal to inconvenient or dangerous lengths." [1]

During the nineteenth century, the authority vested in the county gentlemen by virtue of the saliency of his role in local administration gradually pervaded the organisation of several leisure activities, including cricket. But if the intention was to emulate aristocratic styles of leisure activity, the result was a type of involvement very different from that established by eighteenth century members of the aristocracy. While this body had found in the unquestioned acceptance of their authority a sufficient condition for their participation, the nineteenth century county gentlemen saw in the development of a particularly exclusive mode of participation in leisure activities one method of securing what was, in many cases, a relatively new-found status. This they achieved either by disavowing a particular form of leisure activity completely, or by incorporating into it two distinctive roles, one of which was typically performed by a member of the upper strata, and the other,

1   Ibid., p. 264.

by a very much less prestigious group. In cricket, as in
other games, performers of these roles came to be described
as "amateurs" and "professionals". Though, in the case of
cricket, this distinction originally referred only to the
"market situation" of the player, during both this and
the next stage in the game's development, being described
as "amateur" or "professional" gradually came to define
the player's "work situation", and beyond this, his "status
situation". [1] It is hardly coincidental that many of the
sports which became popular during the nineteenth century -
for example, cricket, rugby, and tennis, - have the county
as the basic unit in their competitive infra-structure,
and the amateur-professional distinction at the centre of
their ideologies.

But, for both county gentry and the urban bourgeoisie,
these games, and cricket in particular, had a value beyond
that of conferring or securing a particular status. As
their place in the curricula of public schools suggests,
it was held that such games played a significant part in
the perpetuation of those values and standards of behaviour
which lay at the centre of what was to become a new ruling-
class ideology. Sporting prowess and intellectual develop-
ment were not considered to be mutually exclusive. When a
member of the 1864 Royal Commission on the Public Schools
asked an assistant master at Eton "whether or not boys who
excel at games are commonly pretty good at work?" he
received the following reply:

1   For a definition of these concepts, see D. Lockwood's
    The Blackcoated Worker (1958), pp. 15-16.

> "I think you could not say that there was regular tendency
> for intellectually distinguished boys to come to
> the top in other things; I do not think you will
> find that; but at the same time, I do not think
> you will find that the eight and the eleven were
> particularly stupid fellows, or that they did
> not care about intellectual distinction."

The questionner then asked:

> "Is there any difference between games in that
> respect? Do you think that cricketers are less
> well up in the school-work than others?"

And to this the master replied,

> "No, I do not think so: I think they are on a
> par with the others." [1]

Through participating as a member of a team in a game
like cricket, the sons of the upper and upper-middle classes
acquired those qualities of self-discipline and loyalty
which formed the core of the self-image of members of
these privileged groups. That successive generations of
public school boys learnt and accepted the value of sub-
ordinating personal ambitions to the greater good of the
collectivity, be it "Mother England" herself, the military
force of which they were a member, or the social class to
which they belonged, was an important factor in maintaining
the dominance of that class. Perhaps the best description
of these values, and of cricket's role in their inculcation,
is to be found in a famous extract from Tom Brown's School
days, where Tom and a group of boys are in conversation
with a master at Rugby:

1   Report and Evidence of the Royal Commission on the
     Public Schools, Parliamentary Papers (1864): quoted
     in W. L. Guttsman's The English Ruling Class (1969),
     p. 201.

> "What a noble game it is too."

> "Isn't it? But it is more than a game. It's an institution," said Tom.

> "Yes," said Arthur, "the birthright of British boys old and young, as habeas corpus and trial by jury are of British men."

> "The discipline and reliance upon one another which it teaches is so valuable, I think," went on the master, "it ought to be such an unselfish game. It merges the individual in the eleven: he doesn't play that he might win, but that his side may." [1]

In the following quotation, taken from an article published in Belgravia in 1871, the character-building qualities of cricket are again singled out for praise, but it should be noted that the type of cricket referred to is that in which the participation of professionals does not intrude.

> "Cricket is the purest of all games,for the simple reason that it is followed up for itself alone, and no material reward is held out as an inducement to play..... It is free from the evils of betting. It encourages obedience, discipline, tact: it engenders health and strength, and it leads to no possible ill results except the spending of a summer's day in the summer air rather than an inky desk." [2]

The importance of this relationship between a specifically "amateur" form of cricket and a belief in the character-building properties of the game cannot be overstated. Throughout the Victorian era, it exercised an influence on the organisation of the game, and the development of its occupational structure and ideology, which can only be compared with that of the landed aristocracy in the

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1   Thomas Hughes, Tom Brown's Schooldays (1858); St. Martin's library (1958), pp.301-302.

2   Anon, "Cricket and Lord's", Belgravia (September, 1871) p. 219.

eighteenth century, or the mass audience and demands

of economic viability in the second half of the

twentieth.

Chapter Two   The M.C.C. and the Rise of

"Amateur" Cricket

Signs of change in the pattern of upper-class
participation in cricket have already been observed in
the growth of the M.C.C. at the end of the eighteenth
century. In the first place, an increasing proportion
of cricket's aristocratic devotees were attracted to the
game primarily because of its association with gambling,
and in the second, their preference was increasingly for
playing in enclosed, more exclusive, surroundings rather
than on common land, as had previously been the case. The
establishment of a central venue at Lord's contributed to
the reduction of those elements of spontaneity and individ-
uality which had characterised the typical eighteenth
century match. The intrusion of bourgeois personnel and
values into this changing situation during the nineteenth
century served to increase the degree of exclusiveness
incorporated within the structure of cricket, while cur-
tailing its gambling connections.

In a wider sense, the case of the M.C.C. provides a
particularly apt example of the way in which the changing
positions of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie affected the
development of many institutions in Victorian society.
That, by 1833, out of a total membership of 202, only
twenty five could claim to be members of the aristocracy,
implies that the basis of the M.C.C.'s authority was under-
going a fundamental change. Whilst retaining its status,
there are indications that, from around 1820, the foundation

of its domination was coming to depend increasingly upon the presence of a formal institutional structure within which decision-making was a more rational and democratic process. At the same time, non-aristocrats began to play an important role in the administration of the Club. It was William Ward, a prosperous City banker, who, in 1825, purchased the leasehold of the Ground from Thomas Lord, thereby preventing it being sold to property developers. In 1822, Benjamin Aissalbie, a wine merchant by trade, became the Club's first secretary, albeit in an honorary capacity. Mr. G. T. Knight's move to alter the "no-ball" rule in 1828 was the first occasion on which a proposed change in the Laws of cricket was submitted to a General Meeting of the M.C.C. In 1835, it was decided that, henceforth any proposed revisions were to be published in The Sporting Magazine at least seven months before the meeting at which they were to be presented.

In part, the introduction of these changes was facilitated by the fact that, at this time, the concern shown by the M.C.C.'s members in the day-to-day administration of the Club, and also in the performance of its teams at Lord's, was declining. In 1835, James Dark purchased the leasehold of Lord's from Ward who had "experienced a reverse of fortune". For almost thirty years, he remained the "Proprietor of the Ground", and, at one stage, "Dark's" and "Lord's" became synonomous in popular parlance. At the beginning of Dark's period of control, "Lord's was more like a field pure and simple":[1] there was "a cottage-like pavilion with a few shrubs in front of it..... a miniature hill and a

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[1] Quoted in Sir Pelham Warner's Lord's, 1787-1945, p. 29.

valley between the farthest corner of the pavilion and the lower wicket",[1] as well as two ponds and, penned in one corner, a flock of sheep who were brought on to the ground before a match was due to be played. Dark was responsible for several improvements in the Ground's facilities, and in the match list. The M.C.C. Committee Minutes of 1850 recorded that "Lord's was drained by Mr. Dark at his sole expense". He was responsible for assembling the Players' team and, on the occasion of the 1835 match against the Gentlemen, himself represented that side. In 1853, the Mnutes recorded that "Mr. Dark receives all subscriptions and Entrances and undertakes the expense of all matches made by the Committee". This is confirmed four years later by a Minute which reported that,

> "....owing to the proposal made four years ago by Mr. Dark, and accepted by us, viz., that he should receive the whole amount of the subscriptions and provide for every expense, matches have been paid for by him at an annual cost of £507.0s. Those of last year cost £583. 15s., the largest sum ever expended in one year."[2]

It was thus, not until 1866 that the M.C.C. came to own the Lord's Ground. For eighty years, members were content to leave much of the Club's administration to a man who was ostensibly their servant, but who, in reality, exercised a considerable influence over their activities.

In the years immediately prior to 1830, it is likely that the most highly skilled displays of cricket were to be found within a thirty mile radius of London. Towards the end of this period, however, as a direct consequence of the gradual breakdown of that system of benevolent

1   Ibid., p. 30.
2   Minutes of the M.C.C., 1857, (unpublished).

paternalism by which members of the aristocracy had
justified their dominance of eighteenth century English
society, matches in which these advanced skills were
displayed tended to be played in increasingly exclusive
surroundings. That little diffusion of these skills
occurred can be attributed almost entirely to the diffi-
culty and cost of travelling long distances. From 1830
onwards, far-reaching improvements in transport facilities
not only increased the number of matches which could be
played, it also increased the complexity of the overall
organisational structure of the game. Whereas previously
nearly all of the most popular and famous matches had
involved teams of gentlemen, playing for the sake of
enjoyment or to resolve a wager, after 1840, superior
techniques and more complex patterns of organisation
gradually appeared in matches played outside of the south-
east corner of England. These involved players not
recruited from or patronised by, members of the aristocracy
and gentry. Between 1838 and 1848, the number of cricket
matches reported in Bell's Life during five weeks in mid-
summer increased from approximately 130 to nearly 400.
That this increase may have represented a rise in the number
of matches reported rather than the number played does not
seriously detract from the significance of these statistics
since, in either case, it reflects the growing popularity
of the game.

It was in this rapidly changing situation that the M.C.C.
first acquired the reputation and the image of an increasingly

conservative, parochial, and exclusive institution, possessing neither the inclination nor the capacity to recognize the long-term significance of this extension of cricket's popularity. Salient features of this image were the Club's attitude toward the organisation of matches and toward the employment of professional players. With regard to the former, the M.C.C. was playing both the same number and the same type of matches in 1863 as it had been in 1836, a period in which the total number of matches played in England had approximately trebled. The three most popular fixtures staged at Lord's, the Gentlemen versus the Players, Eton versus Harrow, and Oxford versus Cambridge, had, by the 1850's, acquired distinct ideological undertones. The first was based on the rivalries between upper class amateurs and working class professionals, while the other two were, both in spirit and composition, the apotheosis of the amateur ideal. Though perhaps unintended, James Dark's dedication to the pursuit of profit added another dimension to the growing exclusiveness of the M.C.C. The cost of going to Lord's became high, a fact which tended to increase the proportion of upper and middle class persons among the spectators. By the end of this stage, a report of the Annual General Meeting of the M.C.C. held on May 8th, 1875, implies that the raising of admission fees was seen as a method of producing a restricted, predominantly elite audience, which, of course, would add to the dignity of the event.

> "The increase of the price of admission at the
> Public Schools match tended to lessen the
> number of visitors, but the good order which
> to some extent is due to this measure, coupled

to the fact that no objection was raised by the
regular audience to Lord's Ground, encouraged
the Committee to maintain the minimum price this
season (2/6d per person)." [1]

By the 1860's, the popularity of the Public Schools
and Varsity matches had led to them being included in the
annual calendar of events which made up the "London Season".
For those involved, the season consisted of a series of
more-or-less obligatory appearances at social functions.

"Many go to Lord's as they do to Ascot simply
for the pleasure of enjoying a picnic, and as
at Ascot those who are utterly ignorant of
racing, and never even bet to the extent of a
pair of gloves, are numerous, so at Lord's
there are hundreds who come to see or be seen,
without any ulterior object of watching the
play." [2]

For the socially ambitious member of the upper-middle
classes, the ability and the opportunity of participating
in the Season set the seal upon his upward mobility. For
the upper classes, the social elite, the Season provided
a number of structured situations in which visual identi-
fication defined group membership and increased its internal
cohesion.

In the engaging of its first professionals in 1825,
"four practice bowlers and two boys", the M.C.C. initiated
a form of employment which was to be perpetuated throughout
the first seventy years of the nineteenth century in clubs,
public schools, and universities. Earlier, the development
of a distinct occupational structure had been restricted
by the rudimentary level of organisation which the game

1   Reported in Bell's Life, Saturday May 8th, 1875,
    quoted in the unpublished notebooks of R. A. Fitzgerald,
    one-time Secretary of the M.C.C.

2   Anon, "Cricket at Lord's", p. 216.

possessed. At any one time, the number of players who
could find employment in teams or matches sponsored by
members of the aristocracy and gentry was small, and in
individual patronage, there existed a means by which they
could be recruited which did not depend on the existence
of such a structure. However, by 1825, the gradual weaken-
ing of the pre-industrial bond of paternal dependence,
together with the establishment of relatively permanent
sources of employment related to institutions rather than
individuals, had created a situation favourable to the
expansion and elaboration of the occupation. By 1835, the
M.C.C. had increased its permanent, professional staff to
ten - five bowlers, and five boys. Little is known of the
conditions under which they were employed other than the
amounts they received for playing in matches. An extract
from the Minutes of the M.C.C. Committee of 1827, records
that,

> "Players at Lord's on the winning side (would
> receive) £6 per head; on the losing side, £4.
> It was settled that after this year, players on
> the winning side should receive £5 and on the
> losing side, £3 per head, except in the case of
> a match lasting over two days, when the old pay
> would be given." [1]

These became the standard rates of pay for professionals
in England, and were not to be radically altered until the
introduction of the County Championship when seasonal rather
than match-by-match remuneration became the norm. In one
respect, the operation of a piece rate system of payment
may be said to have typified bourgeois attitudes toward
employment, and self-employment in general. It allowed

1   Notebook of R. A. Fitzgerald, op.cit., p. 18.

the employers, in this case, the M.C.C., to exercise a completely arbitary control over players, whilst in theory at least, giving the player the opportunity to maximize the economic value of his skills on an open labour market. In several cases, incentive payment clauses were added to the basic rates. For example, players representing Surrey received £1 talent money for scoring over fifty runs. In 1846, the M.C.C. decided that,

> "all players on the winning side (were to be paid £1 in addition to the foregoing scale, except in a one-day match at Lord's in which the remunerator shall never exceed £1." [1]

Thus, it can be seen that the central principle on which payment was based was self-dependence. High wages could be earned providing the player possessed the requisite skills and used them to his best advantage. This required of the professional, like the industrial labourer, a willingness to live a peripatetic existence, playing wherever and as often as was possible. Before this dominant work injunction, all other considerations, particularly the family and the home, were of secondary importance. Actions such as the lowering of pay scales introduced by the M.C.C. in 1827, served only to reinforce the authority of the employer in this relatively fluid situation. It must be remembered that this action took place at a time when many believe that the overall living standards of the working class were declining. [2]

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1   Ibid., p. 20.

2   On the "standard of living" controversy, see E.J.Hobsbawm, Labouring Men (1964), Phyllis Deane, The First Industrial Revolution (1965) and E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (1963).

Apart from playing in matches, the M.C.C. required
their professionals to occupy their time by bowling to the
members, while "the boys" acted as fieldmen.[1] When employed
in this capacity, the professional found little opportunity
to acquire skills in any other aspect of the game. At a
time when class and status distinctions were becoming in-
creasingly significant in the wider society, it was not
long before the roles of batsman and bowler, initially
differentiated according to playing techniques, came to
reflect the distribution of authority within the game. By
1850, the pattern of amateur batsmen and professional bowlers
was firmly established. Though successful professional bats-
men were not unknown, they were a comparative rarity. As
one contemporary put it:

> "The batting of professionals was not likely to
> be strong because, as Corbett said to me, 'We
> have no practice but in bowling; our batting
> must come of itself, except with Pilch and one
> or two of the others'." [2]

Any discussion of the power and status of the profes-
sional cricketer during the first half of the nineteenth
century is complicated by the lack of cohesion and consen-
sus which characterised the actions and beliefs of both
amateur and professional categories of player. It can be
argued that to create a model in which amateur cricketers,

1   By 1862, the M.C.C. had 620 members, and Lord's was
    said to be "devoted exclusively during the months of
    May and June to the matches and practices of the Club."
    ("Lord's and Players", Temple Bar, November 1862, p. 272).

2   W. Denison, op.cit., p. 46.

from upper and middle-class backgrounds are seen as being
in continuous conflict with professionals from the lower
classes, would be to perpetuate a myth which had its
origins in the various confrontations, real and fictitious,
which took place, or were claimed to have taken place
later in the century.[1] Among professionals, the presence
of a highly individualistic work ethic, and a general
scarcity of opportunities led to the development of a set
of attitudes in which the value of cricket was seen in
largely instrumental terms. Far from being a corporate
body, professionals saw themselves as involved in a
permanently competitive situation. Among amateurs, the
same lack of consensus was apparent. Though they were
becoming increasingly dominant, the attitudes of the M.C.C.
were not representative of the upper classes in general.
In particular, it did not represent the opinions of a more
liberally inclined group which neither abhorred the idea
of cricket as a profit making activity nor merely suffered
the presence of professionals. In practice, members of
this group adopted the typical attitudes of an employer
towards his contracted employees and saw their value
primarily in terms of the success that they achieved.
Beyond the observation that they were not members of the
working classes, the precise class composition of this group
cannot be ascertained. That its principal spokesmen, men
like Mr. G. T. Knight, were established members of the
county gentry, suggests that it was in, at least one respect,
the predecessor of that diverse collectivity which, in the

1   This is not to say that spectators did not see matches
    such as the Gentlemen versus the Players as symbolic
    representations of this type of conflict.

1860's and '70's, was responsible for establishment of the County Cricket Championship. That its members gave support to the professionals - William Lillywhite and James Broadridge in particular - who were in constant dispute with the M.C.C. during the second quarterof the nineteenth century does not indicate a desire to reduce the extent of that body's authority over cricket, but rather that it should allow the game to progress. It is exceedingly difficult to assess the extent to which this persistent bickering and feuding between professionals and the M.C.C. should be seen as a specific example of the sort of bitter and often violent conflict which characterised relationships between parts, if not the whole, of the working class and the rest of mid-Victorian society. While, to some extent, the conflict between Lillywhite, Broadridge and other professional cricketers and the M.C.C. was a reflection of a more generic type of class conflict, it is equally true that one cannot explain what happened in cricket during this period totally in these terms. The particular type of relationships which existed between some groups of players and the M.C.C. was, in many respects, peculiar to the game and its structure: it was at least in part a result of attempts to legitimize new techniques, in this case bowling. One can only say that it may have been significant that most controversy centred on innovations in bowling techniques at a time when amateurs were increasingly confining their role in cricket matches to batting.

Disagreement over what constituted a legitimate bowling action was probably the major single source of dispute

between these two factions. The longer the controversy

raged, the more the M.C.C. became cast in the role of

the defenders of an outmoded style, and in turn, the more

intransigent became their opposition to the introduction

of any change not initiated by one of their own number.

Members of the M.C.C. interpreted the controversy as a

question of whether that institution had sufficient

authority to prevent a style of bowling, practised pre-

eminently by professionals, from becoming generally accepted.

The origins of this dispute, outlined by Mr. G. T. Knight

of Godmersham Park in Kent, in a series of letters published

in The Sporting Magazine in 1827 and 1828, have been con-

veniently summarised by H. S. Altham.

> "(i)   It is universally admitted that batting
>   dominates bowling to an extent detrimen-
>   tal to the best interests of the game.
>
> (ii)   The new style is not really new at all: the
>   Kent bowlers (i.e. John Willes and Ashby)
>   practised it twenty years earlier, and it
>   was only because they raised their arm too
>   high that the M.C.C. went too far in the
>   opposite direction and condemned all scien-
>   tific progress by demanding that the hand
>   should be kept below the elbow.
>
> (iii)   There has been no attempt to regulate the
>   new style reasonably by law.
>
> (iv)   The proposal to redress the balance of the
>   game by increasing the size of the wicket is
>   retrograde: it would reduce not stimulate
>   the science of the game.
>
> (v)   To describe the new style as "throwing" is
>   nonsense: the straight arm is the very anti-
>   thesis of a throw: moreover it makes it
>   quite impossible to bowl fast and dangerously.
>
> (vi)   Let us keep a middle course, avoiding the
>   tameness of the old chuck-halfpenny school
>   and the extravagencies of the new alike." [1]

The M.C.C.'s case in answer to these claims was put by

Mr. W. Denison.

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1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 62.

"(i)   The new style is fatal to all scientific
        play, putting a premium on chance hits, and
        placing a scientific defence at a discount.

(ii)   It is throwing, pure and simple.

(iii)   It must lead to a dangerous pace, such as
        cannot be faced on hard grounds, save at
        the most imminent peril." [1]

In an attempt to prove that the advantages of "round-arm" bowling outweighed the disadvantages claimed by its opponents, Knight organised three "experimental" matches between Elevens representing England, and Sussex. After the Sussex team, including Lillywhite and Broadridge, the foremost protagonists of the new style, had won the first two matches, nine members of the England team, including all the professionals, signed a declaration, later withdrawn, that they refused to play in the third game "unless the Sussex bowlers bowl fair - that is, abstain from throwing". In this, they appear to have been motivated, not by class or occupational allegiance, but by a resentment of the advantages possessed by a minority group in the establishment of a successful career.

On this occasion, the M.C.C. succeeded in maintaining the status quo by passing an amendment to Rule 10, which reaffirmed the illegality of any bowling action in which the arm was above the elbow at the point of delivery. But, in the long term, the M.C.C. failed to prevent Lillywhite and Broadridge from continuing to bowl round-arm, and the successes they achieved resulted in this style being adopted by a far larger number of professional bowlers. The M.C.C.'s failure in this instance highlights their inability to assert their authority upon particularly the most famous,

1   Loc. cit.

or notorious players. This weakness stemmed from three
factors: the low status of the umpire, the difficulties
in interpreting Rule 10, and lastly, the growing autonomy,
and hence power, of the most highly skilled professional
players. Apart from a few exceptions, it was generally
accepted that umpires were both unfamiliar with many of
the game's Laws, and partial in their implementation.
Even at Lord's, umpires found it impossible to apply Rule
10 as a general principle, because of the difficulty of
defining a round-arm action. In a match at Lord's in
1829, Lillywhite and Broadridge were "no-balled" during
the first innings, but in the second, were allowed to
bowl as they wished. Once admitted at Lord's, umpires
found it impossible to prohibit the round-arm action
elsewhere. In the Bury and Norwich Post of July, 1831,
it was noted that,

> "....as throwing was tolerated at Lord's, the
> umpires (Bentley and Matthews) did not dare
> call 'no-ball' in the country." [1]

By 1835, the M.C.C. were forced to admit the normality
of round-arm action, and to alter Rule 10 accordingly. In
its new form, this action was deemed legitimate provided
that the ball was not "thrown or jerked", or that the hand
did not rise above the level of the shoulder. By this time,
the obvious inability of the M.C.C. to command a total
acceptance of its Laws was further aggravated by a gradual
increase in the popularity of cricket and by a diffusion
of it throughout the country. That matches played in the
provinces were, to all intents and purposes, beyond the

1   F. Buckley, op.cit., p. 87.

jurisdiction of the M.C.C. is indicated by a phrase
inserted in the rules of the St. Austell Club in Cornwall,
which states that the games should

> "... be played according to the rules of the
> Marylebone Club, but if the majority of the
> members wish to play the rough game, they may
> do so." [1]

Secure in the knowledge that he was "a law unto himself",
Lillywhite extended his repertoire of skills to include an
over-arm bowling action, which enabled him to bowl more
accurately without reducing the speed of his delivery. So
great was his reputation by this time that few umpires were
prepared to challenge the legality of this new style. As
William Caldecourt, one of the foremost umpires of the day,
observed;

> "if Lillywhite was not watched as by country
> umpires who thought that what Lillywhite did
> must be right, he bowled one hundred times better
> than any man did bowl: it was cruel to see him
> rattle about the knuckles of the stumps." [2]

As before, the M.C.C. reacted by trying to out-law
this advanced style. In 1845, Rule 10 was reformulated
and umpires were henceforth required to call

> "no-ball whenever the bowler shall so closely
> infringe this rule as to make it difficult for
> the umpire at the bowler's wicket to judge
> whether the ball has been delivered within the
> true intent and meaning of the rule or not." [3]

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1   R. S. Rait-Kerr, op.cit., p. 62.

2   Quoted in W. Denison, op.cit., p. 122.

3   R. S. Rait-Kerr, op.cit., p. 65.

A month later, the M.C.C. attempted to isolate the
transgressors by prohibiting their participation in any
match in which the "Laws of Cricket" were disputed. For
the next eighteen years, the issue was held in abeyance,
a situation which was facilitated by the rapid growth in
the number of opportunities open to professionals as a
result of the formation of the touring professional Elevens,
and the growing exclusiveness of the M.C.C. in the face of
this development. However, before proceeding to analyse
the circumstances surrounding the rise of the Elevens, it
is first necessary to describe the extent to which the
pattern of development traced by the M.C.C. during this
period was, far from being a unique example, in fact a
reflection of the incorporation within the overall organi-
sational structure of cricket of an almost dichotomous
distinction between, on the one hand, matches played by
amateurs within relatively exclusive surroundings, and
on the other, those played and often organised by profes-
sionals whose primary purpose was the realisation of a
financial profit. By examining in detail changes in the
organisation of cricket in one county, Kent, it is possible
to show, as was suggested earlier, the extent to which the
rise of the latter type of match was supported by members
of the upper and middle classes. It was largely as a result
of the involvement of this group that the County Cricket
Clubs, and later, the County Cricket Championship, were
established. With Gloucestershire and Derbyshire, also
founded in 1870, Kent was the last of the nine original
participants in this annual competition to be founded. Of

the remaining six, Sussex was founded in 1839, Surrey in
1845, Nottinghamshire in 1859, Yorkshire in 1863, and
both Lancashire and Middlesex in 1864.

From the earliest years of the nineteenth century, the
organisation of cricket matches and clubs in Kent incor-
porated elements of two, historically distinct, patterns.
Alongside the spontaneity and individuality typical of
eighteenth century matches, there had developed a degree
of formality and status differentiation. In the West
Kent Club, founded in 1812, with the exception of two
professionals or "Scouts", all the members were gentlemen.
Here, as at Lord's, members practised regularly and, if
enough were present, a double wicket match was played, after
which all adjourned to dinner. The organisation of club
matches was the responsibility of individual members.
Therefore, the composition of the teams rarely reflected
the strength of the Club. Indeed, on several occasions,
the teams fielded by the club were composed mainly of non-
members. Both this, and the happy-go-lucky spirit in which
most matches were played, are recalled in the following
account by Herbert Jenner-Fust, later President of the M.C.C..

> "I once arranged (in 1834) to take a team
> representing the West Kent Club to play
> Norfolk.....I got promises of a full team,
> but when the day came close those who had
> promised all cried off except for a man who
> was subject to fits and not good enough for
> a run..... I set off to play the county match
> determined to make up a team on the way as best
> I could. At one place.... I came across three
> young men who seemed nice fellows, and as they
> said they could play cricket I pressed them
> into service for my match. Then we went on to
> Cambridge and I ransacked King's College and
> found four more men to join me. Two others were
> met on the ground in Norfolk, and with this
> strange combination, we won the match." [1]

1 A.V.Pullin, <u>Talks with Old English Cricketers</u>,(1900), p.10.

Formed fifteen years later, the Town Malling Club was to become the focus of cricket in Kent for players and spectators alike between 1836 and 1845. It owed its foundation to the efforts of Thomas Selby, like William Ward, a successful businessman who had used part of his wealth to purchase an estate outside Town Malling. As a player and an organiser, Selby led sides as far as Hyde Park, Sheffield, where he played against a team assembled by a Mr. Barker. Through his cricketing activities, Selby made the acquaintance of the second Lord Harris, a relationship which led to the establishment of a small syndicate of devotees from Mid-Kent which was responsible for inducing Fuller Pilch, one of the most celebrated players of the day, to move to Town Malling. The conditions of Pilch's employment are, in themselves, significant. Unlike the retained players of the previous century, he was not supported by the beneficence of a wealthy patron. Instead, he was employed as a ground attendant at a salary of £100 a year, and at the same time, became manager of a local public house. To assist him in his duties at Town Malling, Pilch "brought in Martingell", a Surrey-born professional, for a salary of £60 a year. What is important to note at this point is that, although Pilch's well-being depended as much on his success as a publican as it did on patronage, members of the Club were accustomed to being treated with the level of deferential obedience which had typified the master-servant relationship of the eighteenth century. In a reference to the cricket matches in which he played, Pilch himself testified to this fact:

> "Gentlemen were gentlemen, and players much in
> same position as a nobleman and his headkeeper
> maybe."[1]

As early as 1835, the matches played at Town Malling
were described as "county" matches, though they bear
little resemblance to the contests which constitute the
modern County Championship. Since no central organisation
existed, and travel was both difficult and costly, they
were, for the most part, semi-impromptu affairs, arranged
on a regional basis. Kent, Surrey, Sussex and occasionally
Middlesex and Hampshire, played each other, while other
groupings included Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire,
and finally Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire.
Between 1835 and 1842, Kent played eleven matches at Town
Malling, three of which were against "England" XIs organ-
ised by the M.C.C. The comparative rareness of these
matches and the appearance of many of the most famous
players of the day, combined to make them immensely popular
as forms of entertainment. To maintain some control over
the crowds, one Thomas Bennet, like Smith in James Love's
description of the encounter in 1744, "proudly acted as
ring-keeper using his long lash with energy and some noise."
Some idea of the excitement generated by one of these matches
can be gained from the following account by Frederick Gale:

> "It is five o'clock in the monning and after a
> restless night, from axiety and excitement, we
> are off in a trap of some kind for a twenty mile
> drive to the match, and as we leave Rochester and
> get to the Malling Road, we find no dearth of
> company, and the road is much like a Derby-day
> at an early hour as the old hands know very well
> that if they are to get any stabling they must be

1   Quoted in Rev. J. Pycroft's, op.cit., p. 152.

> early. Nor are the pedestrians less numerous
> than the riders. We pass many a poor fellow
> on the tramp, who has started over night, per-
> haps, to be on the ground in time to see the
> first over, and witness with his own eyes the
> feats of the mighty men of whom he has heard
> so much." [1]

The rapid decline in the Town Malling Club after 1842 was largely a consequence of the fact that the cost of staging matches was higher than the receipts from admission. During the period which intervened between its demise and the establishment of the County Club in 1858, much of the impetus behind the organisation of matches derived from the efforts of a number of closely related, cricket-loving, county families - the Nortons, Normans, Jenners, Deedes, Knatchbulls and the Knights. Their support for the game led to the emergence of a number of local centres, which were to provide the venues for future "county" matches. At Gravesend, Mr. Harman Brenchley and his brother, Captain Henry Brenchley, promoted matches between 1849 and 1859, while, at Canterbury, matches were played at the Beverley Club, on the estate of the Baker Family. John Baker and his brother, William de Chair Baker, were the prime movers behind the organisation of the annual Cricket Week held at Canterbury. The first Canterbury Week match, Kent versus England in 1842, was played on the Baker's private ground, but from 1847, the venue became the Saint Laurence Ground - now the headquarters of the Kent County Cricket Club.

It was to the service of the Baker family that Fuller Pilch moved in 1842. The Beverley Club, which became his responsibility, remained distinct from the Kent County Club

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1   F. Gale, op.cit., p. 59.

until 1870. The latter was founded in 1859 at a meeting
held in the Mitre Hotel, Maidstone, and presided over by
the 6th Earl of Darnley. One of the resolutions accepted
at this meeting stipulated "that the matches to be played
shall not be confined to any particular locality, and they
shall be matches in which Kent as a County, without the
assistance of 'given men' shall always be concerned on
the one side". That this resolution, with its emphasis
on the preservation of a distinctive County identity,
should have been accepted by a committee composed of
representatives of a number of the leading gentry families
- Captain Brenchley, Edward Leigh-Pemberton, W. W. Knatch-
bull-Hugessen - lends support to the earlier analysis of
the significance of this non-urban social unit in the social
life of the provincial gentry. It is also interesting to
note that the original committee of the Kenty County Club
included two of the county's leading players, Alfred Mynn
and Edward Wenman. Taken at face value, the acceptance of
a professional player such as Wenman as an equal in the
administration of a highly prestigious club indicates the
relatively high status which could be conferred on a man
of humble origins by a successful career in cricket.
However, after only seventeen days, Wenman decided that
he "preferred not to act" and was replaced on the committee
by the Honourable G. W. Milles. Wenman's withdrawal can
be interpreted in at least two ways: it may have been
that such a disparity existed between the ideal of equality
represented by his original appointment and the realities
involved in his acting in this capacity, that his continued

presence was rendered pointless; or on the other hand, Wenman's self-conception was perhaps too fixedly traditional to adjust to such sudden and radical changes in personal status.

Though nominally a "County" institution, this Club's activities were confined to East Kent. The number of matches for which it was responsible was restricted by a lack of financial support, and as far as is known, no attempts were made to recruit and train any professional staff. The organisation of matches still depended to a considerable extent upon the enthusiasm of individuals. For example, in 1863, Mr. J. Walker assembled a Middlesex team at his own expense to play the Kent Club on his private ground at Southgate. When in 1870, the amalgamation of the Beverley Club and the Kent Club led to the formation of the Kent County Cricket Club, it was as much the consequence of the declining fortunes of the former, and of Kent cricket in general, as a conscious desire on the part of both bodies to expand the scope of "County" cricket in Kent. Since the retirement of Mynn and Pilch, the rate of Kentish victories had dramatically declined. The Canterbury Week, which had as its centre-piece a match between Kent and England, had lost much of its popularity, and hence, its profitability through the inability of the Kent teams to compete on equal terms. From 1860 to 1864, the Kent side included from thirteen to sixteen players. In six of the ten seasons between 1864 and 1873, gate money failed to cover expenses.

The outstanding success achieved by Kent teams
between 1830 and 1850 can only be attributed to the ex-
ceptional expertise of such players as Mynn, Pilch, Wenman,
Hillyer, and Willsher. In those days, it was unusual for
the XI to include more than one amateur - Mynn. Only Pilch
maintained the practice of "keeping a couple of places in
the Kent Eleven for the young amateurs from the public
schools or universities". That no comparable successors,
amateur or professional, were found, was not, however,
purely fortuitous; nor was it the consequence of a dramatic
decline in the level of skill possessed by Kentish cricketers.
In part, this lapse must be seen as the result of an increas-
ing preference shown by members of the upper strata in
county society for socially and spatially exclusive leisure
milieux. As expressions of this preference, one can cite
the rise during the second half of the nineteenth century
of "country-house" cricket, and the formation of the wandering
Elevens, In the former, matches were played between teams
composed solely of gentlemen at the private residence of
one of their number. In the latter, exclusiveness was
maintained, first, by stringent control over the admission
of members, and second, by the cost of participating - a
factor which effectively limited the number of potential
players. Of the wandering clubs, I Zingari, founded in
1845 was the first, and organisationally, probably the
most elaborate. Others included the Quidnunc (1851), and
Incogniti (1862). Preference for these two types of
cricket, which represent the complete antithesis of the
"great" matches of the previous century, was in itself,

an indication of the extent to which an awareness of
the insecurities of their status in a rapidly changing
society led many members of the county gentry to attempt
to differentiate themselves even more precisely from the
lower strata.   There can be little doubt that this situ-
ation was detrimental to the best interests of "county
cricket".   That contact between amateur and professional
was thereby reduced to a minimum, effectively blocked
the principal method by which potential professionals had
been recruited to higher levels of cricket.   In an article
in the National Review, one ardent county cricketer des-
cribed the problems caused by the growing popularity of
"country-house" cricket and the wandering Elevens.

> "In the coaching days, young Hopeful, the
> squire's son, was at home for most of the
> summer's of his cricketing career after he
> had left college, and having seen good cricket
> there and at school and perhaps taken a glance
> at the headquarters on his way down for the
> vacation, his style was probably one which it
> did the villages good to emulate. So would it
> be now, but the village cricketers..... never
> see the young master play, unless it be for
> three or four days after the London season is
> over, when the great house is filled with his
> friends..... He is always playing with one or
> the other of the dozen wandering clubs, whose
> gorgeous colours he has permission to wear." [1]

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[1]   Lord Harris "The Development of Cricket", National
      Review (September 1883), p. 164.

Chapter Three   William Clarke and the

Professional Elevens, 1846-1870

When William Clarke assembled the first All-England

Eleven in August, 1846, there can be little doubt that his

motives were primarily acquisitive. Apart from the fact

that it was almost certainly the first example of a peri-

patetic team of professional sportsmen in England, and

possibly anywhere, much of the lasting significance of the

Eleven attaches to the fact that it represented a new

conception of cricket. Previously, the game had functioned

as a form of entertainment for a privileged elite. Both

the organisational structure and the ideology it had

developed bore witness to the paramount influence of this

section of society. After 1846, however, though it con-

tinued to fulfill this function, cricket developed as a

highly organised sport and its ideology grew to resemble

that of a business enterprise, the existence of which

depended on its capacity to retain that level of popularity

needed to attract a fee-paying audience to a regular

programme of matches.

In establishing an Eleven composed of the best players

in the country, Clarke's idea was to tour England, playing

a series of matches against local teams. To offset the

obvious difference in standards, which otherwise would have

divested the matches of any competitive element, these local

sides numbered up to twenty-two players. He did not believe

that the collective ability of the members of the All-England

Eleven would deter other teams from making a challenge but,

on the contrary, that the opportunity to play against many
of the most famous cricketers of the day would stimulate
teams to challenge regardless of their chances of victory.
And the result would be not only a great increase in the
popularity of cricket, but also considerable profit for
Clarke and others connected with the game. In a conver-
sation with another of cricket's entrepreneurs, James Dark,
Clarke is reported to have said:

> "It is a-going to be, Sir, from one end of the
> land to the other, you may depend upon that; and,
> what is more, it will make good for cricket - it
> will make good for you as well as me: mark my
> words, you'll sell cartloads of your balls where
> you used to sell dozens."[1]

During its hey-day, between 1850 and 1870, the All-
England Eleven played matches in such diverse locations
as Truro, Oldham, St. Helens, Hull, Leicester, Maccels-
field, Bristol, Melton Mowbray, Canterbury, Glasgow, Dublin,
Maidstone, and Sheffield. The popularity of the Eleven
confirmed Clarke's judgement. Far from being deterred by
its reputation, clubs competed for the honour of playing
the Eleven - a factor which ensured its financial success.
As the Rev. Pycroft has noted,

> "So proud are provincial clubs of this honour,
> that, besides a subscription of some £70 pounds
> and money at the field gate, much hospitality is
> exercised wherever they go."[2]

One of its members, Richard Daft, described the excite-
ment which a visit of the Eleven to a provincial centre
provoked

1   Richard Daft, <u>Kings of Cricket</u> (1893), p. 84.

2   Rev. J. Pycroft, <u>op.cit</u>., p. 20.

> "Certainly one never sees such holiday-making
> and high jinks as we used to in the old All-
> England days. The match was the topic of
> conversation months before the event took place.
> Special committees were formed to get up enter-
> tainments in the evenings, and when the day
> arrived, the excitement was often intense."[1]

Because, in many of these rural locations, the type of
cricket played had barely altered in two centuries, the
conditions under which the match was played were, at best,
rudimentary. Pitches, in the modern sense of the term,
were rare. It was common for matches to be played in
places which were barely distinguishable from fields. This
meant, as George Anderson, another of the members of the
Eleven, recalled:

> ".....that before we could begin, old Pilch had
> to borrow a scythe and mow the wicket....Then
> once at Truro, one of our men, in fielding a ball,
> ran into a covey of partridges."[2]

Of the circumstances which led up to the formation of
the All-England Eleven, two have been discussed earlier;
first, the tendency of the M.C.C. to confine its interest
to predominantly amateur forms of cricket, and to adopt
hostile attitudes towards changes in the techniques and
rules of the game; and second, the great improvement in
transport and communications which permitted journeys over
long distances to be made relatively easily and cheaply.
In addition to these, however, it is also necessary to
consider the state of cricket as an occupation and as a
career at this time of the formation of the All-England
Eleven.

[1] Quoted in A V. Pullin, op.cit., p. 32.

[2] Ibid., p. 33.

Before 1846, the only sources of employment open to
the professional cricketer were the predominantly "amateur"
cricket clubs, of which the M.C.C., though the most
prestigious, was only one of a growing number, and
individual patrons, who became noticeably rarer as the
century progressed. In general, the number of matches
played in any one area was not sufficient to support the
employment of a full-time professional throughout the year.
With this in mind, it is not surprising to find that until
the second half of the nineteenth century, a high proportion
of cricketers did not enter the occupation before acquiring
other occupational skills. Evidence to corroborate this
statement is contained in Denison's Sketches of the Players.
Of a sample of thirty-five cricketers active between 1820
and 1850, eighteen were born, and spent their entire working
career in South-east England, eight came from Nottingham-
shire and Leicestershire, and eight from Cambridge. Only
in the case of those players born in the vicinity of Notting-
ham is it possible to establish a significant correlation
between birthplace and occupational skills. Of the eight
players in this group, five had worked in a branch of the
textile industry. Of those players born in Cambridge, two
were college servants, two had no recorded occupation besides
cricket, and the remaining four worked as a cook, a tobac-
conist, a licensed victualler, and a brazier. The largest
group in this sample, those born in the south-east, con-
tained representatives of fifteen different occupations.
Only two occupations, gardening and game-keeping, could
claim more than one representative. The remainder included

a butcher, a breeches-maker, a licensed victualler, a
sawyer, a tailor, a plumber, a painter, a bricklayer, a
carpenter, a confectioner, and a calico printer - an
inventory which is indicative of the type of occupational
structure to be found in areas of England as yet little
affected by industrialisation. The players in question
lived and worked in the small urban centres which functioned
as retailing, distributive and service centres in a pre-
dominantly agricultural region.

In the light of the knowledge that a high proportion
of those individuals destined to become professional
cricketers had previously acquired alternative occupational
skills, and that as far as one can tell, they were well-
integrated members of local communities, it becomes more
than relevant to ask what motivated these persons to
exchange a stable, relatively secure, work career for the
instability and imponderability of cricket, and by what
methods they were recruited. To some extent, the formu-
lation of these questions exaggerates the magnitude of this
change. In the first half of the nineteenth century,
performance of work tasks and participation in leisure
activities outside of the major urban-industrial complexes
had yet to be subjected to those stringent controls which
were to develop in response to the demands of large-scale
industrial organisation. The level of flexibility afforded
by their absence facilitated seasonal changes in employment,
especially within a localised context. It was in this
context that the majority of professionals first became
acquainted with the game,and through playing in local

village cricket that they acquired a knowledge of the
skills of the game. As a result of displaying an unusual
ability at this stage, they were "spotted" by established
professionals and introduced to higher levels of competition.
For example, Denison records that James Dean "was brought
up as a sawyer, but discovered when very young by Jem
Broadridge, and was consequently taken under his wing in
London." [1]

The incentive to become a professional cricketer lay
primarily in the opportunities for upward social mobility
which, even at this relatively early stage in its develop-
mant, the career ideally afforded. The continuing upsurge
in the popularity of cricket gave every indication that,
in the future, the scope of these opportunities could only
increase. Contemporary reports indicate that thousands
of spectators were willing to travel relatively long
distances to watch a match in which famous players were
involved. For the match between the Northern and Southern
counties, played at Leicester in 1836,

> "hundreds of Nottingham enthusiasts, unable to
> procure conveyances (all of which had been
> bespoken a week ahead) walked the whole way
> to view the game, and finding all the inns
> full on arrival, tramped back to Loughborough
> at the end of each day for sleeping accommoda-
> tion." [2]

If the glamour of this kind of contest, the short-term
financial rewards, and, in the long term, the opportunity
to establish a profitable relationship with a member or
members of the upper-classes, were the major attractions
of a cricket career, the occasions on which they could be

1   W. Denison, op.cit., p. 47.
2   Quoted in F.S.Ashley-Cooper's Nottinghamshire Cricket
     and Cricketers (Nottingham, 1924), p. 63.

translated into lasting prosperity appear to have been
strictly limited. Of the small proportion of players who
were successful in this respect, the large majority were
the most famous players of the day. For the majority of
players, a career in cricket involved spending approxi-
mately twenty years in the employment of one or more clubs
or institutions, playing up to twenty games a season.
Because of the dearth of opportunities, particularly out-
side of south-east England, players were obliged to accept
offers of employment which involved either long, arduous
journeys, or a more-or-less permanent absence from their
homes. The careers of northern professionals show a
particularly high rate of job mobility, combined with a
general tendency to migrate towards the south. For example,
Samuel Dakin, born at Sileby in Leicestershire in 1808,
made his first recorded appearance for that county in
1829, and was subsequently employed by the South Derby-
shire Club, by the Kingscote Club in Gloucestershire, and
from 1847 to 1855, by the M.C.C.. After 1855, he became
an "extra bowler" at Lord's until being engaged as a coach
by Charterhouse School. He died at Cambridge in 1876.
The career of Fuller Pilch fits the same pattern. Born
in Horningtoft in Norfolk in 1803, he "migrated into the
north for bread and water at an early age, and learnt how
to handle bats and balls at Sheffield where he became dis-
tinguished, and where he was found by a Suffolk spirit". [1]

1   From a match report published in the Sporting Magazine
     September 10th, (1825).

Between 1825 and 1829, he played with the Bury St.
Edmunds' Club, before moving to Norwich, where he became
the proprietor of a public house and lessee of the Norwich
Cricket Ground. In 1835, he was induced to move to Town
Malling in Kent, from where, in 1842, he moved to the
Beverley Club in Canterbury. Here, apart from a few months
spent at Oxford, he remained until his death.

Even for the most famous players, the social and
financial deprivations associated with retirement were
hard to avoid. Pilch established himself as a tailor in
Canterbury, but went bankrupt. Lillywhite suffered two
financial reverses before accepting a job at Lord's.
Both Alfred Mynn and Edward Wenman, members of the highly
successful Kent team in the 1840's were reported to have
found themselves in finacial difficulty after retiring.[1]

Regardless of the number of contacts made with members
of the upper classes, or the esteem in which the professional
was held during his playing days, the difference in status
represented by the amateur and professional identities
posed an almost insurmountable barrier to mobility in the
wider society. It was also the case that a professional's
earnings during his career were usually insufficient to
enable him to retire completely from all forms of work.
As in the past, many returned to their previous trade or
craft. But as the overall occupational structure became
less flexible in this respect, an increasing proportion
were compelled to prolong their career in the game as long

1 A. V. Pullin, op.cit., p. 58.

as was physically possible. In a growing number of cases,
the last recorded occupation of a professional was a
member of the "Ground" at Lord's. Of those non-skilled
occupations into which professional cricketers moved on
retirement, running a public house was the most common.
But, as Samuel Dakin noted, even this was not without its
hazards.

> "....not a few find that the usual recourse of
> keeping a 'Bat and Ball' public house brings
> more temptations to drink the return for their
> little investment." [1]

The problems confronted by these retired cricketers
were aggravated by the absence of any form of social wel-
fare other than that provided in terms of the Poor Laws.
Mid-Victorian conceptions of welfare were, to all intents
and purposes, subsumed within the more general belief in
the desirability of individual success. Assistance to
the financially and morally destitute, it was believed,
should be the result of the growing prosperity of society
at large. Only private philanthropy offered any relief
from the spectre of the work-house. In cricket, this was
introduced in two ways, the benevolent fund, which will be
discussed at a later stage, and the "benefit" match. The
latter, generally organised by a player's friends and
admirers in acknowledgement of the entertainment he had
provided, constituted an _ex gratia_ payment made up of
individual donations, collections, and the receipts of
the match. But, in the main, it was only the best-known
players who were deemed worthy of receiving this honour.

1   _Ibid._, p. 33.

At this time, records of cricketers who succeeded in advancing their financial well-being through a playing career alone do not exist. The number of players who attempted to diversify their interests to include owner- ship of a profit-making business is small, those who actually succeeded, minute. In the case of such a success, William Caldecourt, it is possible that the direction of his career was influenced by the presence of a father who had also been a professional cricketer. Like his father, Caldecourt established a prosperous bat-making business while on the Ground at Lord's, and later became "one of the first instructors of the younger branches of our nobility and gentry."[1] A more common method of in- vesting in cricket was to buy, or become lessee of a ground. Thomas Box, born in Ardingley in 1809, became lessee of the Royal Gardens and the Cricket Ground at Brighton. Frequently, the leasing of a Ground was com- bined with the running of a public house. In this, the career of William Lillywhite was archetypal. Born in 1792, and by trade, a bricklayer, he was thirty-five be- fore his reputation spread beyond the boundaries of his native Sussex. Denison records that,

> "after he had taken up his position as the
> first bowler of the day, somewhat unwisely
> because he could not attend to it, he became
> the landlord of a public house in Brighton,
> in addition to his proprietorship of the
> cricket ground. Both were financial failures
> and Lillywhite became one of the ground at
> Lord's."[2]

1   W. Denison, op.cit., p. 31.

2   Ibid., p. 63.

Lillywhite remained at Lord's until his death in 1854, though for a period he also occupied the position of the first professional coach at Winchester College. The similarities between the career of Lillywhite and that of his contemporary, William Clarke, are striking. Coming from a similar social background, and originally following the same trade, Clarke was a bowler, who at various stages in his life, owned a public house and a cricket ground. But there is one respect in which the careers of the two men differed fundamentally. Though for much of his career, Lillywhite was the source of constant irritation to the M.C.C., nevertheless he did not present a challenge to the existing organisational framework of cricket. Clarke, on the other hand, was directly responsible for the appearance of a radically different conception of cricket. As a result of organising and leading the first professional touring Eleven, Clarke achieved a level of lasting financial prosperity unmatched by any of his predecessors, and most of his contemporaries. He was born in Nottingham in 1798, the son of a bricklayer, a trade which he followed for several years before becoming landlord of the "Bell Inn", a hostelry described in The Sportsman as the "headquarters of Nottingham cricketers." [1] In 1838, he moved from the Bell to "The Trent Bridge Inn", where, on an adjacent site, he laid down and opened the Trent Bridge Ground. Designed as a profit-making venture, the Ground was initially unpopular since, unlike the Forest Ground which it superceded, entrance was not free. Clarke

1   Quoted in F. S. Ashley-Cooper, op.cit., p. 28.

remained at the Trent Bridge Inn until 1847, when he retired from that business to devote himself to the organisation of the All-England Eleven. Previous to this, he had laid down other cricket grounds, most notably at Bedale where he also coached. Though his playing career lasted for over forty years, he did not play at Lord's until twenty years after he had first represented Nottingham. He did not play for England until 1844 or for the Players until 1846. He lost the sight of his right eye before he was thirty, and broke his arm in 1852 when fifty-four. He recovered to play for another three years, but died a year after finally retiring.

There can be little doubt that in planning the All-England Eleven, Clarke was motivated by a desire to extend the scope of the professional cricketer's career, and hence his earning capacity. As a Nottinghamshire player, he could not have been unaware of the limited opportunities open to northern professionals as compared to those based in the south-east. In 1842, for instance, the Nottinghamshire team played only one match, and in 1845, only five. Apart from the scarcity of matches, opportunities for professionals were still further reduced by the presence of a regular complement of gentlemen amateurs.

> "Several of the Nottinghamshire Elevens were weakened by an infusion of gentlemen, who though they acquitted themselves well in some departments of the game, were inadequate in other respects to the task they undertook." [1]

Between 1846 and 1870, when the popularity of the professional Elevens was at its height, other sources of

[1]   J. F. Sutton, Nottingham Cricket Matches, Nottingham (1852), p. XV.

employment for professionals existed, but particularly
in the north of England and the Midlands, in numbers too
small to support a full-time career in the game - a point
made by Alfred Shaw, one of the leading players of that
period:

> "It was, of course, impossible for a profes-
> sional to make a livelihood out of county
> cricket in the sixties - at least not out
> of Nottingham cricket - so few in number
> were the matches played." [1]

The All-England Eleven played between twenty and
twenty-five matches in a season, and "could have had three
times as many if we could have found the dates."[2] The
addition of this programme of fixtures to the existing
number increased both the immediate earning capacity,
and in the long term, the occupational security, of its
members. It was now possible for the best players to
obtain full-time employment, at least during the cricket
season. Richard Daft recalled that when he

> "began to play for All-England, we used to play
> six days a week for five months, and never had
> a days rest except on Sundays and when it was
> wet..... If we had not the All-England matches,
> there were matches at Lord's or elsewhere." [3]

Though the general prestige of the All-England Eleven
made the career of the professional cricketer appear highly
desirable in contrast to the deprivations experienced by
the majority of unskilled industrial workers, the large
number of matches it played involved the players in

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1 Albert Shaw, _Reminiscenses of a Cricket Career_, p. 10.

2 Richard Daft, quoted in A. V. Pullin, _op.cit._, p. 88.

3 _Ibid._, p. 89.

frequent, long, arduous journeys. To them, it was
unquestionably a more demanding career than that pursued
by later generations of professionals:

> "Cricketers who now go about the country in
> saloons and express trains have a much easier
> life than we were accustomed to. Dublin to
> London, London to Glasgow and Edihburgh and so
> on - these were the journeys we often had to
> do, often in one night, to be ready for the
> next day's match." [1]

In addition, the rough, unprepared pitches, and the
rudimentary skills possessed by many of their opponents,
were a constant threat to the players' well-being. On
occasions, attempts to improve playing conditions created
unforeseen dangers, as, for instance, that which confronted
Job Greenwood at Hull:

> "They used to let the 'lunies' from the local
> asylym roll the ground. On the occasion I
> speak of one of the imbeciles was seized with
> a sudden frenzy, and taking an iron cross
> handle out of the roller, he hit Job a terrific
> blow on the head with it. I believe lunatics
> have not been allowed to roll wickets at Hull
> since." [2]

Though the increased number of matches played swelled
their annual earning capacity, the All-England players were
paid on the same basis, and at the same rate - five pounds
per match - as earlier professionals. They were also
responsible for all the expenses incurred in travelling.
In the case of particularly long journeys, the match rate
was increased to six pounds, but, all-in-all, George Ander-
son concluded that "after paying expenses there was not
much left to get fat on."

1   George Anderson, quoted in Pullin's Old English Cricketers,
     p. 28.

2   John Jackson, quoted in Pullin's Old English Cricketers,
     p. 61.

It was as a result of what many felt to be the exces-
sive miserliness shown by Clarke in his management of the
All-England teams that a rival professional concern, the
United Eleven of England, was formed in 1862. Though
his general irascibility may have been the factor which
precipitated the final split, the conflict was more than
a clash of personalities. It had its origins in the
existence of a peculiarly influential work ethic in which
financial success and security was seen to be a function
of the efforts of the individual. The internalisation of
this ethic gave rise to a situation in which, within a
profit-making enterprise such as the All-England Eleven,
a group of individuals were required to compete for a
share in these profits in order to secure their own future.
In a situation in which one man, Clarke, monopolised all
profits, it was perhaps inevitable that this inherent
source of conflict should manifest itself in the break-
down of the original organisation. And this was exactly
the position at the time of the formation of the United
Eleven of England. The leading members of the break-
away group, led by John Wisden and James Dean, resolved,

> "not to play in any match of cricket, for or
> against, wherein William Clarke may have the
> management or control (county matches excepted),
> in consequence of the treatment they have received
> from Clarke at Newmarket and elsewhere." [1]

From 1852 until 1870, when the professional Elevens
were both the most popular and the strongest teams in

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[1]   F.W. Lillywhite, op.cit., (1865) Vol. IV, p. 430;
      The exception of county matches may be significant
      since by this time, certain county clubs, notably
      Surrey, were already playing a leading part in the
      organisation of matches in which professionals and
      mass audiences were integral aspects.

England - a factor which is revealed in the failure of the "Gentlemen" to beat the "Players" once between 1846 and 1865 - two factors, in particular, exercised a significant influence on the development of the occupation of professional cricketer. The first was this group's implacable opposition to the influence of such amateur institutions as the M.C.C. over the organisation of matches. The second was their collective belief in the right of the individual to act according to his own best interests. In the presence of these potentially contradictory notions, one has a partial explanation of the otherwise confusing capacity of cricketers to display, on different occasions, both high levels of group solidarity and strongly individualistic tendencies.

Occupational solidarity developed in the face of the repeated attempts of the M.C.C. to restrict the technical progress achieved by professionals earlier in the nineteenth century. The sequence of events which had preceded the legalisation of "round-arm" bowling in 1835 was repeated in the case of "over-arm" bowling. After several attempts by the M.C.C. to out-law the new style had failed, matters came to a head when Edgar Willsher was no-balled six times in succession by John Lillywhite in 1862. Willsher, together with the seven other professional members in the England team, walked off the field, and the match did not recommence until Lillywhite had been replaced by another umpire. It was reported at the time that Lillywhite had been prompted in his action by pressures from Lord's. One sequel to this incident, however, was the legalisation of over-arm bowling at a General Meeting of the M.C.C. in 1864.

The controversy over bowling actions was not the only example of the M.C.C.'s attempt to gain a more complete control over the actions of professional cricketers. At a meeting, in 1840, the club accepted a motion which proposed,

> "that any paid player, umpire or scorer, failing to appear at his post one moment after play shall have been called, do forfeit two shillings and six pence for such an offence. The Committee are earnestly desired to enforce the payment of the penalty." [1]

The following report in Bell's Life indicates that a similarly motivated measure was adopted in 1848:

> "That in future, all matches shall commence punctually at 11 o'clock. That all players engaged in every match at Lord's ground shall be in readiness to take their place at that hour, or be excluded from playing in that match: (or if belonging to the Lord's Ground, pay for a substitute, if a substitute be allowed by the manager of the side.)" [2]

Until 1848, in addition to receiving a basic match fee, professionals playing at Lord's could receive an extra sum, taken from a "reward fund", which had been established to recognize outstanding performances. But in that year, the following motion was passed at a General Meeting of the M.C.C.:

> "That in order to encourage good conduct on the part of professional players, both of the Ground, and who may have been engaged in matches by the M.C.C., a fund be raised, to be called 'The Cricketers Fund' (in lieu of the present reward fund, which shall be abolished) for the purpose of giving donations in cases of illness and accident: the fund was to be under the sole control of the Committee of the M.C.C. and that

1   Extracts of the Minutes of the M.C.C., p. 21.

2   Loc. cit.

              the sum of £10 be annually taken from the
              funds of the Club, in the hope that members
              might be induced to add their contributions."[1]

By this measure, the M.C.C. introduced in place of rewards for individual achievements, a system which, by relating the long-term occupational security of the professional to his continued "good conduct" - a term which the M.C.C. reserved the right to define - increased their control over the day-to-day performance of this category of player. It was in the context of these actions, and the attitudes they represented, that professional cricketers were prompted to support the action of Willsher.

But this was not the total picture. As early as 1860, there were indications that the overall cohesion among professional cricketers was disintegrating. In its place, two conflicting sub-groups were forming, composed of southern and northern professionals, each maintaining a high degree of internal unity and a set of antipathetic attitudes towards the other. The root of this polarisation lay in the belief, subscribed to by both groups, that the opportunities open to professionals were differentially, and hence, unfairly, distributed. In 1852, it was the southern professionals who objected to the action of William Clarke but, throughout the 1860's it was the turn of northern players to express their dissatisfaction at the ways in which matches were organised and players remunerated. In their case, the sense of relative deprivation experienced was heightened by a considerable increase in

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1   Loc. cit.

the number and type of opportunities by which a professional cricketer could hope to make a financial success of his career.

To explain how this came about, it is necessary to examine briefly the gradual growth in the size and prestige of certain County Cricket Clubs, a process which was to culminate in the formation of the County Championship in 1873. That the attitudes of the M.C.C. towards the organisation of cricket were not representative of all shades of upper-class opinion has been suggested earlier. There were many who had openly expressed their disapproval at the way in which the M.C.C. had responded to the development of over-arm bowling. In the middle of the final crisis over that issue in 1864, an attempt was made to replace the M.C.C. as the sovereign authority in the game:

> "an agitation was set going in one of the leading
> sporting newspapers which had for its aim, the
> formation of a 'cricket Parliament' to depose
> the Marylebone Club from its position as the
> authority on the game: but it met with little
> countenance, and the old club, which had now
> played on its present ground for fifty years,
> was allowed to carry on the work which it and it
> alone seemed to be able to do with firmness and
> impartiality."[1]

While the obvious bias of the writer should not be allowed to diminish the intrinsic importance of this event, from the point of view of the career of the professional cricketer, the significance of the ill-fated "Parliament" lay in the fact that it occurred at the same time as many figures influential in the rise of the County Cricket Clubs

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1   W. G. Grace, Cricket (Bristol, 1891), p. 128.

were beginning to voice their opposition to the policies
of the M.C.C..   In 1863, W. South Norton, the first
Secretary of the Kent County Cricket Club, wrote,

> "I understand the M.C.C. have left Law 10
> exactly as it was which means, I am afraid,
> 'vengeance on Willsher' - I begin to be
> jealous of the M.C.C. as lawgivers and am
> inclined to favour the suggestion of a congress
> of representatives for the cricketing counties
> with a view to superceding their authority." [1]

But it is not to Kent but to Surrey that one must look
in order to discover the source of the majority of those
innovations in the organisation of cricket which, between
1860 and 1873, led directly to an expansion of the range
of opportunities open to professional cricketers. Profit-
ing from the inactivity of the M.C.C., the Surrey County
Cricket Club had attained, by 1860, a position which, in
several respects, compared favourably with that of the
former institution. Between 1851 and 1861, its membership
rose from approximately 230 to nearly 1000, at which point
it became larger than the M.C.C.. The facilities offered
at the Club's ground, the Kennington Oval, and the strength
of its representative teams, were superior to those of the
M.C.C.. In 1858, the Surrey Eleven was unbeaten, a record
which included an innings defeat of an All-England Eleven.

Apart from its highly successful record, the other
significant feature of the Surrey Eleven was the relatively
high proportion of professionals it included. Seldom
fewer than eight, the number often rose to eleven - the
whole team. As a majority group, Surrey's professional

1   Quoted in Col. R. S. Rait-Kerr, op.cit., p. 38.

cricketers were able to exercise considerable control
over their work and market situation. For example, two
players, Julius Caesar and H. H. Stephenson, refused to
take part in a match against Sussex in 1859 "without a
further increase in pay." But the relative gains in power
and status made by these professionals cannot be explained
simply in terms of a corresponding decline in the power and
status of their employers. In the case of the Surrey pro-
fessionals, it was the initiatives taken by leading members
of the Club which resulted in the addition of a new
dimension to the structure of the cricket career. The
idea of overseas tours was, perhaps, the most spectacular
manifestation of a widespread entrepreneurial ideology
to which both players and administrators subscribed. The
first such "tour", to Canada and the U.S.A., took place
in 1859. The touring party was composed of six members
from both the All-England Eleven and the United Eleven of
England. As H. S. Altham has noted,

> "its territorial composition is not a bad index
> of the relative county strengths of that period.
> From Notts. came Parr, Grundy, and Jackson;
> from Sussex, Wisden and John Lillywhite; from
> Cambridge, their two famous 'cracks', Hayward
> and Carpenter, with Ducky Diver, while Surrey
> contributed no less than four - Stephenson,
> Julius Caesar, Lockyer, and Caffyn." [1]

If the composition of this party appears to have been
acceptable to all professionals, that of its successor, the
first to visit Australia, most certainly was not. Like
the North American venture, the 1861 tour was organised as
a profit-making exercise. In the selection of the party,

1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., p. 129.

the promoters, Messrs. Spiers and Pond, a firm of tea
importers, were persuaded by the Secretary of the Surrey
Club, W. Burrup, Esq., to include seven members of the
Surrey County Eleven, and to place the whole team under
the captaincy of H. H. Stephenson. The choice of Stephen-
son in preference to George Parr proved more than the
northern professionals could tolerate and, in 1865, the
conflict between the two groups became overt. In the
ensuing feud, the Surrey County Cricket Club was singled
out by the northern players as the target for major
recriminations. Nottinghamshire players refused to play
at the Oval with the result that no match was played
between the two counties from 1865 until 1868. Five
Yorkshire professionals, Anderson, Atkinson, Iddison,
Rowbotham, and Stephenson, similarly refused to play against
players with whom disagreement had arisen in 1862 over the
no-balling of Willsher. The last move in this saga took
place at the end of 1865 when the southern professionals
withdrew from both the All-England Eleven and the United
Eleven of England, and subsequently formed the United
South of England Eleven.

The consequences of this rupture were both far-reaching
and long-lasting. From being a relatively localised dis-
pute between professional cricketers, it rapidly assumed
the proportions of a confrontation in which all sections
of cricket's "establishment" were involved. Many saw in
the actions of the northern professionals a deliberate
attempt to change the status quo. From its reaction, it
is clear that the M.C.C. saw their stand as a direct

challenge to its authority, and implicitly, to the
dominant position in society at large held by those
strata from which the M.C.C. recruited the majority of
its members. The action of the northern professionals in
1866 in dissociating themselves from all cricket played
in the south served only to confirm the M.C.C. in their
suspicions. An entry in the Committee Minutes of May 21st,
1866, suggests that the withdrawal of the northern profes-
sionals appeared to many of its members as an event
comparable to the action of the Confederate States in the
U.S.A. in 1862:

> "Northern players secede from Lord's on the day
> of the Two Elevens match, played for the benefit
> of professionals, the ground being given to them
> for that purpose - Gratitude!" [1]

By spurning the benificence of the M.C.C., northern
professionals seriously jeopardised the already precarious
position held by professional players as an occupational
group. The following article, published in The Times in
August 1866, confirms just how quickly such a marginal
occupation could antagonize public opinion:

> "The evidences are many that cricket is making
> rapid progress both in London and in the country.
> Matches, players, and spectators, grow more
> numerous every year: prince and pauper alike are
> proud of being one in an eleven; and the good
> cricketer is almost as famous as an eminent poli-
> tician. But with this prosperity, a power has
> sprung up to which we wish to call attention.
> Two years ago, it was written that Lord's had
> plenty of players, but no ground to play on whilst

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1   Extracts from the Minutes of the M.C.C., op.cit., p. 28.
     The Two Elevens match referred to was the annual fixture
     played at Lord's over Whitsun between the All-England
     Eleven and the United Eleven of England.

the Oval had a good ground, but no players to
play on it. Now, however, Lord's has its ground,
but the players have left. The evil has arisen
in this wise. Some years ago, a quarrel sprung
up between the representatives of Surrey and
Nottingham: it arose, we believe, in relation to
the visit of Stephenson's Eleven to Australia,
George Parr feeling himself aggrieved at the
selection that was made of a captain. The merits
of this original dispute have become immaterial.....
the northern men were irritated: they refused to
play at the Oval. The southern men separated from
the All-England and United Elevens, and so open
war was proclaimed. Thus matters stood at the
commencement of the season. The usual matches
between the two Elevens were played at Lord's upon
Whit-Monday, for the benefit of the Cricketers'
Fund. The Marylebone Club gave the ground grat-
uitously, and the Players Association received
the whole of the gate money. During the course
of that match, Mr. Fitzgerald applied to Carpenter
to play in the coming match of North against South
.....the request was refused and all the northern
players, except the ground men, supported him in
his refusal.... The men were on strike, and the
Committee had to decide what should be done.
Wisely they determined not to be beaten, and with
the aid of Grundy and Wootton, they chose the best
northern Eleven they could..... it was determined
that the players who had refused to play should
not appear at Lord's only when they chose, and
that for the future they should play in the old-
established matches or none..... the northern
players refused to let a southern player bowl for
a Twenty-Two against them, banished Wootton and
Grundy from the ranks of the All-England Eleven,
and although invited, absented themselves from
Canterbury.... The cause of this unfortunate
position of things is to be found in the too pros-
perous condition of the players. So long as they
can earn more money by playing matches against
Twenty-Two's than by appearing at Lord's - so long
as they can be 'mistered' in public houses, and
stared at at railway stations, they will care very
little for being absent from the Metropolitan
Ground. But they are wrong. They may be certain
that the 'Gentlemen' will not give way in this
struggle." [1]

And so the lines of battle were drawn. As the tone

of this passage indicates, for that section of public

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[1]   The Times, August 19th, 1866.

opinion represented by the pronouncements of the M.C.C.
and The Times, the secession of the northern professionals
was seen as nothing less than a strike. At this time, the
merest mention of this word was sufficient to invoke the
spectre of massive working-class insurrections aimed at
precipitating revolutions. Immediately, the professional
cricketer was included in an ever-hardening stereotype of
the industrial worker, and the basis of his relationship
with the gentleman amateur became class difference rather
than occupational similarity. Disturbances in this rela-
tionship were thus perceived as instances of class conflict.

The M.C.C.'s response to the action taken by the
northern professionals was predictable. In The Times of
May 2nd, 1867, it was reported that, at a special General
Meeting of the Club,

> "The Earl of Sandwich, in an eloquent speech,
> (then) brought forward the motion relating to
> the establishment of a Marylebone Club Cricketers'
> Fund.....It was finally proposed and carried 'That
> a fund be established called the Marylebone Cricket
> Club fund; that the fund be in the first instance
> available for professionals on the Lord's Ground:
> secondly for the relief of all cricketers who,
> during their career shall have conducted themselves
> to the entire satisfaction of the Committee of the
> M.C.C..'
>
> The Secretary then read: 'The Committee whilst
> deploring the existence of any misunderstanding
> among players, have adhered to the course adopted
> by them last season on the secession of certain
> of the northern players:- i.e. that of asking
> only those players who are willing to play together
> in a friendly manner. In reference to the match
> (England versus Middlesex) to be played on Whit-
> Monday, the proceeds of which will be devoted to
> the M.C.C. Cricketers' Fund, the Committee remember
> with great regret that a secession of the northern
> players last season occurred on the day which, for
> several years, has been given by the M.C.C. for
> the benefit of the Cricketers' Fund." [1]

1   The Times, May 2nd, 1867.

Banished from Lord's, to all intents and purposes excluded from the benevolence of the M.C.C. and strongly attacked by their own county clubs, this group of northern professionals acquired what was, in effect, a pariah status. Contact with the "established" sphere of cricket was reduced to a minimum. Since 1865, both the All-England and the United England Eleven were composed entirely of northern professionals, their annual match for the benefit of the Cricketers' Fund was played at Manchester.

However, this schism was not destined to jeopardise the overall organisation of cricket for more than three years. When the matches between Surrey and Nottingham were resumed in 1868, it was a clear indication of the extent to which the matches played by the professional Elevens, northern and southern, were losing public support, and with it went the foundation on which the professionals' domination of the game's organisation was based. Though the Elevens remained in existence until the close of the next decade, it was clear by 1870 that the general public were coming increasingly to favour the spectacle of inter-county contests. As organisational units, the Elevens contained two major weaknesses. First, their technical superiority gave rise to degrees of inequality in playing terms which, no matter how much they were compensated for by inequalities in the size of teams, removed much of the interest and excitement from the matches they played. Secondly, the Elevens lacked all but the vaguest geographical

identity about which popular support could rally.[1]
It was precisely this aspect of their identity that
the newly-formed County Club emphasized. While these
clubs were never popular foundations, they nevertheless
were responsible for organising a type of cricket which
contrasted both with the matches played by the professional
Elevens and with the highly exclusive "county-house" and
peripatetic amateur Eleven contests. As a brief analysis
of the Kent County Cricket Club will show, this type of
club owed its foundation to the impetus provided by a
body of opinion located within the upper strata of Vic-
torian society which had consistently opposed attempts to
make cricket either a completely amateur or completely
professional game. The decision to form a County Cricket
Club in Kent was prompted by the financial and organisational
difficulties being experienced at this time by the Kent
County Club and the Beverley Club, the two most influential
supporters of the idea of spectacular, profit-making, but
amateur-dominated contests. Acting independently, neither
was powerful enough to counteract the declining support
for the existing type of spectacular match played in Kent.
In the face of public disaffection with the professional
Elevens, and a growing upper-class preference for more
exclusive forms of cricket, the two clubs were more-or-less
obliged to merge.

1   The fate of the professional Elevens highlights a
     characteristic of many sports which has become increas-
     ingly important during the twentieth century. Exper-
     ience has shown that regular contests between teams of
     approximately equal ability, plus teams which represent
     social and geographical units which are meaningful to
     spectators are essential for the long-term viability
     of professional sports dependent on admission charges.

On the 6th December, 1870, following overtures made
by the Kent County Club to the Beverley Club, the following
resolutions were accepted by both parties:

> "(i)   That the Kent County Club and the Beverley
>   County Cricket Club be amalgamated into one
>   club, to be called the Kent County Cricket
>   Club; and that the St. Laurence Ground,
>   Canterbury be the County Cricket Ground.
>
> (ii)   That the entire management of the Canterbury
>   Week be retained by Mr. W. De Chair Baker, the
>   amalgamation being affected on the basis that
>   no change whatever take place in this Annual
>   Meeting at Canterbury.
>
> (iii)   That Mr. W. de Chair Baker act as the Hon.
>   Secretary of the Club.
>
> (iv)   That a President be chosen alternatively from
>   East and West, and a Committee consisting of
>   ten gentlemen from East Kent, and ten from
>   West Kent, be formed to conduct the business
>   of the Club." [1]

Because attention has been focused on the foundation
of one particular County Cricket Club, it need not be
assumed that this example is totally representative of
all Clubs. It is possible that the chronological sequence
of events leading up to the establishment of the nine Clubs
differed in each case. In providing a description of the
emergence of the Kent County Cricket Club, the intention
was to introduce an empirical example which would serve to
stress the existence of three common factors in the forma-
tion of all nine clubs. First, the initiative behind the
formation of these clubs came not only from within any one
particular class, but from a collectivity consisting of
individuals from the aristocracy, the county gentry, and
the most prosperous section of the urban middle-classes.
Second, each Club incorporated a distinction, which was

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1   Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 77. THE HISTORY OF KENT COUNTY CRICKET, p. 77

to become increasingly rigid, between members who played
as amateurs and their professional playing staff.
Finally, none of the nine Clubs was a completely new
foundation. They had developed either as an extension in
size and complexity of one pre-existing club, or from an
amalgamation of two or more clubs which had previously
exercised only a relatively local influence.

It is difficult to discern exactly why public opinion
should have come to favour the type of contest staged by
these County Clubs. In the case of the upper and middle
class devotee, the actions of the northern professionals
may have had the effect of prejudicing his attitude toward
their matches. But it is more likely that this served to
confirm what an increasingly large number of people had
come to suspect. That amateurs and professionals came to
conceive of each other in terms of narrow, rigid stereo-
types is but a further indication of the increasing extent
to which the typically "professional" approach to cricket
was seen as a complete contradiction of the values implicit
in the dominant Victorian conception of sport.

In the first place, the position of the professional
cricketer was incompatible with those ideological and real
barriers by which work and leisure were separated in
society at large. By introducing a work ethic into the
sphere of leisure, games such as cricket lost one of their
primary functions, that of providing a source of healthy
relaxation. To the author of the following passage, this
threat was imminent:

> "Play is now-a-days becoming a mere matter of
> hard work, and what should be amusement is very
> often the reverse of it. A match is really
> quite a serious and solemn piece of business,
> and grave faces are seen in it more frequently
> than grinning ones....Play is too cut-and-dried
> a piece of work to please. A ball is bowled
> and hit and fielded as by steam; and if the
> players fail to do precisely that they do not
> get jeered as much as sneered at. To my mind,
> this is not a wholesome alteration. When I am
> at play, I like to laugh and enjoy myself and
> half the pleasure of sport is gone if you abstract
> the fun from it." [1]

In the second place, to the upper or middle class amateur, the professional was guilty of introducing an orientation to cricket, indeed to life in general, which was both individualistic and instrumental. In this approach, the "self" gained an ascendancy over the best interests of the "team". "Average hunting" and "record breaking", examples par excellence of unbridled professionalism, were anathema to the amateur. The professional's pre-occupation with success disrupted the esprit de corps and sense of subordination to higher interests which were central pillars of the Victorian ruling ideology. Gone was that sense of purpose and solidarity which, it was held, had contributed so much to Britain's rise to global supremacy in the face of opposition from physically and demographically larger states. Writing of professionals, one contemporary commentator concluded that:

> "They do not look upon themselves as part of
> a little army, who are fighting on equal terms
> against another army, and they are apt to go
> away before the match is over, and get a man to
> field for them if they have had the great desider
> atum - their innings. "Self" has taken a great
> hold on cricket, and public cricket too often

1   H. Silver, "Our Critic upon Cricket", Once A Week (June,
     1861), p. 665.

> looks as if it was contracted for at so much
> per day..... The average mania is as fatal to
> cricket as trade unions are to commerce, and
> Jones, Robinson, and Brown go about playing in
> scratch teams, in matches in which they have
> little interest beyond their innings." [1]

The analogy drawn between the place of professionals in cricket and trade unions in commerce is significant. Both sport and commerce were spheres in which the presence of members of the Victorian ruling class was a particularly dominating one; both were activities which lay at the heart of their identities and self-conceptions. Professionalism and the growth of trade unions constituted a challenge to the hitherto largely unquestioned assumption that this domination was in the best interests of society. In the case of cricket, the impact of the professional's challenge was intensified by reason of the fact that it coincided with the game's rise to the status of a "national" sport. If there was to be something peculiarly British about cricket, it could not be supplied by a largely working class body. Though this aspect of the game's development is discussed at greater length in the following chapters, it is perhaps appropriate to close this chapter with a quotation which expresses perfectly the symbolic importance attached to the game of cricket by the upper strata of Victorian society.

> "Cricket! There is a wholesome English smack
> about the word which no-one but an Englishman
> can relish. To my notion, a cricketer nascitur,
> non fit. Men must be British born to play it and
> like it. Your French man is too volatile, your
> German too phlegmatic for it, and as for the other
> nations, they are mostly too lazy, or else too

1   Anon., "The Siege of the Wicket", p. 225.

luxurious. Cricket requires steadiness as well
as strength and quickness, and the union of these
qualities distinguishes the English. I repeat
then, none but the English know how to play
cricket and only in their ears will the reaction
to it waken any pleasurable response." [1]

1   H. Silver, op.cit., pp.666-667.

Chapter Four   The Cricket Career in 1870

By the culmination of the third stage in the overall
development of cricket, though the ranks of professional
cricketers were deeply divided, the viability of a
career in cricket had been more-or-less finally established.
Perhaps the professional would never recapture the autonomy
that he had possessed as a member of a professional Eleven,
but to all but a minority of traditional elitists, his
role in the game had become an indispensable one. As yet,
the numerical size of the occupation was restricted by the
lack of opportunities available to professionals. Apart
from the matches played by the professional Elevens, in
which it is unlikely that more than sixty people were
involved in any one season, only the new county clubs,
public schools and the few remaining individual bene-
factors offered the possibility of employment.

Before the county clubs emerged as the organisational
centre-pin of first-class cricket and took upon themselves
the task of finding players, the recruitment of professionals
depended, by and large, upon the efforts of the players
themselves. Most learnt the basic skills of cricket through
playing as children. Certain areas, particularly in
Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, became famed for the except-
ional quality of their cricketers. Within these local
communities, the traditional popularity of the game gave a
particular status to the members of the cricket team. In
many cases, it was possible to trace a direct relationship
between the standard of a local cricket team and the

existence of a relatively undifferentiated occupational
structure. The occupations most frequently cited in this
connection were related to the textile industry. At
Arnold in Nottinghamshire, and Lascelles Hall in York-
shire, both renowned for the expertise of their cricketers,
a large proportion of the male labour force were engaged
in handloom weaving.

Unlike the majority of the industrial labour force,
whose conditions of work were dictated by the require-
ments of a factory system of production, handloom weavers
retained a high degree of control over their work situa-
tion. A native of Arnold, William Oscroft, later captain
of the Nottinghamshire County team, said of these weavers
that,

> "When they had spare time, they occupied it
> playing cricket and when they had not time to
> spare, put their work aside and made it so that
> they could still play cricket." [1]

From participating in this type of cricket, the career
path of the professional player led to an appointment with
one of the exclusive cricket clubs. Previously, this
initial move had depended upon being "spotted" or on being
personally recommended by an influential member but, by
1870, it had become common for positions as cricket pro-
fessionals to be advertised in the sporting press. Luke
Greenwood described how, at the start of his career,

[1]   A. V. Pullin, op.cit., p. 153.

> "(he) saw an advertisement in the papers that
> a young man was wanted as a bowler by the Duke
> of Sutherland in Staffordshire.... and stayed
> there for four years." [1]

One important respect in which the situation of the members of the professional Elevens differed from earlier professionals was closely related to the fact that a larger proportion of the former did not possess any alternative occupational skills. As a result, they were exceptionally vulnerable to any interruption of a stable career passage. In the event of a premature termination of the career, the professional cricketer typically reverted to the status of an unskilled manual worker. But an awareness of this likelihood does not appear to have deterred the aspiring player. To such a person, a cricket career afforded a means of earning amounts of money far beyond the typical expectation of a manual labourer, and an opportunity to rise in social circles from which they would normally have been excluded. Or, put in another way, in a society in which individually achieved success was a dominant goal, the opportunities offered by a career in cricket out-weighed those which resulted from its indeterminacy.

Limited data make it impossible to estimate the number of professional cricketers of this period whose careers were successful; i.e. who did not suffer a sudden and lasting decline in financial and social status on retirement. But by combining data from a number of individual career histories, it is possible to describe a profile of the career of the typical professional.

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1   Ibid., p. 75.

The majority of professional cricketers were recruited from a working-class background. For those embarking upon a career in the middle of the nineteenth century, the future contained only two possibilities, complete success and an extended playing life, or abject failure and a rapid departure from the occupation. To this situation, a number of factors contributed. The game's limited extent and the correspondingly relatively low level of organisational complexity restricted the number of matches played, and by the same token, the number of players who could participate. If success was not immediate, then it was not at all. These objective contingencies were complemented and probably emphasized by the player's perception of the nature of his career. In this respect, the aspirations and goals which motivated and guided his actions were strongly influenced by a peculiarly Victorian ruling ideology in which failure was seen as the only alternative to success.

But the evaluation of success was not at all an easy exercise. Even for the established professional, the inherent indeterminacy of the career posed a challenge. Because his skills were unrelated to the requirements of other occupations, the cricketer was often forced to prolong his playing career past the stage at which his physical capacity - an integral dimension of his expertise - began to decline. If forced to reduce the number of games in which he played, either because of physical disability or advancing years, the professional's earnings fell immediately. Of the members of the professional Elevens,

organisations, which, it must be remembered, were established
to improve the financial status of the player, only a small
proportion were able to terminate their working careers
and cricket careers simultaneously. George Parr, Clarke's
successor as leader of the All-England Eleven, played for
twenty-six years before retiring at the age of forty-five,
to live for another twenty years on his earnings from
cricket. But this was clearly the exception. In general,
the career histories of professionals point to the existence
of two patterned responses to the problems of retirement.
A minority were able to end their playing careers and
devote the capital they had managed to save toward creating
a business, while the majority were compelled to prolong
their connection with the game, by, for instance, obtaining
a post as coach to a public school or a private club. In
the first category, one can cite the examples of Richard
Daft and John Wisden, both of whom established businesses
specializing in the production and sale of sports equipment.
As the creator of the annual Cricketers' Almanack, Wisden
has achieved perhaps a more lasting fame than any of his
contemporaries.

The development of the position of cricket coach, the
major alternative to adopting the entrepreneurial role,
was stimulated by a belief, common among the Victorian
upper-classes, that participation in games such as
cricket was an important aspect in the inculcation of those
qualities of personality required of a ruling class. It
was not a coincidence that coaches came to be an integral
part of public school life at the same time as the concept

of education represented by these institutions was being
redefined to take account of the growing influence in
society at large of a parvenu middle class. It is thus
somewhat paradoxical to find that coaches like H. H.
Stephenson at Uppingham acquired an influence within the
confines of an elite institution totally inconsistent
with a working-class social background. That this may
have appeared so to contemporaries is suggested by the
rise in the 1860's and 1840's of a body of opinion which
advocated a reduction in the amount of time and energy
devoted to sport in the public school curriculum. Sub-
scribers to this opinion held that excessive attention was
devoted to what ought to have been relaxation; "that the
modern Apollo exercises all his strength, not in bending,
but in unbending his bow." [1] That at one school, three
cricket coaches were employed, was taken as a clear indi-
cation that the cultivation of outdoor exercises was
pursued at the expense of more academic pursuits. But
while, in a limited sense, the cricket coach may have
achieved a relatively high status, it is very unlikely
that this was ever sufficient to overcome the stigma of
working-class origins, or the deference both to adult
and adolescent members of the upper-classes displayed by
the coaches themselves. There can be little doubt that
the first type of career passage, involving the establish-
ment of a successful business enterprise, was more likely
to lead to a substantial and permanent increase in status
in the wider society.

1   An Old Harrovian, "Cricket Worship", National Review (1900)
    p. 96.

Should the professional fail to follow one of the other of these passages, in all probability he would succumb to the miseries typically associated with the elderly, unskilled manual labourer. In this predicament, his only recourse was to play as long as he remained physically capable. The case of John Jackson, in his prime one of the most famous cricketers in England, illustrates precisely the hazards to which the professional could be exposed. Jackson was born in Suffolk in 1833, but moved to Nottingham before he was fifteen. He obtained five professional engagements, two at Southwell, and one each at Ipswich, Newark and Edinburgh, as well as representing Nottinghamshire and the All-England Eleven between 1855 and 1870, when a ruptured blood vessel prematurely terminated his career. Though subsequently he obtained a number of short-lived coaching positions, by 1900 he had become,

> "a bent and grisly man of 67, with the remnants
> of a fine presence, subsisting for a pittance
> on five shillings and six-pence a week, willing
> to work, but elbowed out by younger and more
> vigorous competitors in the battle of life,
> having no permanent address and always hovering
> on the thresh-hold of the work-house." [1]

1   Daft, op.cit., p. 167.

Part Four: Cricket and Empire

> "Is it wrong to pray to beat the Australians?"
> "My dear Warner, anything which tends to increase
> the prestige of England is worth praying for."[1]

Introduction

In their history of Surrey cricket, Viscount Alverstone

and Mr. C. W. Alcock reached the conclusion that:

> "Modern first-class cricket has become for good
> or evil, almost exclusively county cricket: what
> the novel is now to literature, county cricket
> is to the game."[2]

By "county cricket", the authors were referring to that

series of matches played annually between teams representing

the first-class county cricket clubs; that is, those clubs

which participate annually in the County Championship, a

competition which is generally held to date from 1873.

Originally embracing only nine counties, by 1922 this

Championship was contested by seventeen, a situation which

has remained unchanged to the present day. Although from

the last decades of the nineteenth century, it has been the

event on which the attention of the majority of cricketers

and spectators alike has been focused, the extent to which

it can be said to have dominated all other forms of the

game has varied. To say that the years from 1890 to 1950

1   Bishop Welldon, in conversation with P.F. Warner; quoted
     by the latter in his Long Innings - An Autobiography,(1951)
     p. 74.

2   Viscount Alverstone and C.W. Alcock, Surrey Cricket: Its
     History and Associations, (1902), p. 97.

represented the apogee of county cricket is to imply
nothing controversial but, by the same token, such a
statement over-simplifies the role of the Championship
in the development of the game. It also ignores the extent
to which, even within this period, its importance first
increased and then declined in response to the impact of
radical changes in the structure of the wider society.

While the existence of the County Championship gives
a unity and a motif to this stage in the overall develop-
ment of cricket, it cannot be gainsaid that, in itself,
this stage appears as possibly the least monolithic and
homogeneous of the five. To describe it as transitional
is to pre-empt the issue since, at the present time, the
organisation of the game has yet to re-crystallize around
a modern core; that is, one which incorporates the novel
demands placed upon cricket in contemporary society. It
is conceivable that this will never occur, that the gradual
weakening of the economic and ideological foundations upon
which the original County Championship rested is but a
prelude to the total disappearance of the game as a pro-
fessional sport, or perhaps more generally, rather than
a necessary precursor to any form of regeneration. The
factors underlying the fluidity of this stage will be
discussed later in the present chapter and also in the
next one. Here, it is intended only to indicate that this
process must be related not only to the radical changes
in the structure of the wider society but also to the ever-
growing autonomy of the game from any one social group.
It is likely that this latter process has led to a

corresponding increase in the propensity of the game to
change according to contingencies in its own structure.
Against this, that the eventual acceptance of the necessity
of introducing extensive alterations into the original
format followed fully fifty years after the first diagnosis
of its fundamental weaknesses is an indication of the extent
to which first-class cricket, above all other popular
sports with the possible exception of horse-racing, has
retained intimations of its aristocratic and conservative
heritage - particularly within its occupational ideology.
It is to the way in which these distinct, but often opposing,
pressures were incorporated into the overall organisation
of cricket during the late nineteenth and early twentieth
centuries that the attention of the first chapter in this
section is directed. In the second chapter, the focus of
enquiry shifts from the organisation of first-class cricket,
to the emergence of a pattern of highly distinctive social
arrangements - in particular, the distinction between the
amateur and the professional status, which is, for many,
the hall-mark of the most elaborate form of cricket.

Chapter One The Establishment of the

County Championship

The idea of the first-class county cricket clubs
playing an annual series of matches to decide which should
be designated the "champion" was mooted in the popular
sporting press probably at least ten years before such
an event was instigated. But it was not until 1873, when
nine county clubs were in existence - Derbyshire, Gloucester-
shire, Kent, Lacashire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire, Surrey,
Sussex, and Yorkshire - that a championship was in any
sense formally instituted.[1] Even then, it was left to
the sporting press to calculate the final result. That
the Championship should have come into existence indepen-
dently of the influence of the generally accepted controlling
body in the game, the M.C.C., and that it should have relied
so heavily for its early support upon the enthusiasm both
reflected in and engendered by the sporting press, are
significant points which must be discussed in greater
detail at a later point. For the moment, it is necessary
only to produce a roughly chronological account of the
events leading up to the inception of the Championship in
1873, and its recognition by the M.C.C. fully two decades
afterwards.

1   It is instructive to note that, at approximately the
     same time, both the Football League (1888) and the Rugby
     Union (1895) were founded. This coincidence suggests that
     the factors which we single out as being responsible for
     the establishment of the County Championship were at work
     in society more generally, making for the development of
     a number of organised, professional sports dependent on
     spectator support.

In the previous chapter, the circumstances under which
the first county clubs came to be formed were analysed.
It was argued that they were very much the creation of
the most prosperous sections of the gentry and sections
of the bourgeoisie, and that, to a large extent, their
appearance represented the culmination of a process in
which these groups had attempted simultaneously to demon-
strate their membership of the ruling class, and to
liberalise the existing, highly paternalistic, organi-
sational structure of cricket. In contrast, such
evidence as is available suggests that throughout the
second half of the nineteenth century, the energies of
the M.C.C. were directed inwardly - for instance, at
improving members' facilities at Lord's - at the expense
of any moves to create and extend different types of
organised cricket in England. With one exception, the
M.C.C. appeared indifferent toward the establishment of a
Championship, waiting rather to ratify the arrangements
made by the counties themselves. This event occurred in
1894.

Against a background of growing public interest in
inter-county competition and a corresponding decline in
the popularity of the all-professional touring Elevens,
meetings took place, upon the initiative of the Surrey
County Cricket Club in 1873, between representatives of
Surrey, Middlesex, Kent, Sussex, Derbyshire, Gloucester-
shire, Lancashire and Yorkshire - Nottinghamshire were not
represented though they participated in the Championship
from the first - to standardize the conditions under which
the competition was to be contested. From contemporary

reports, it appears that the most pressing issue to
which representatives were required to address their
attention was that of the residential qualifications to
be applied to participants. The conditions laid down by
the M.C.C. had not been universally applied with the result
that certain players were representing more than one county
in a season.

The Secretary of the Surrey Club, Frederick Burbage,
first consulted the M.C.C. who declared that it would
consider any recommendations submitted, provided they had
the support of all county clubs. Between February and
June of 1873, a series of meetings were held at the Hanover
Square residence of Dr. Evan B. Jones, a member of the
Surrey committee. That great difficulties were experienced
by the counties in constructing a universally acceptable
formula is indicated by the fact that the final recommen-
dations were accepted only on the casting vote of the
Chairman, Frederick Burbage. Before this, a meeting held
on April 15th had rescinded a previous resolution debarring
a cricketer playing for his county of residence from playing
against the county of his birth. The final recommendations,
ratified at the Oval on June 9th, 1873, were:

"(a) That no cricketer, whether amateur or profes-
       sional, shall play for more than one county
       during the same season.

 (b) Every cricketer born in one county and residing
       in another, shall be free to choose at the
       commencement of each season for which of these
       counties he will play, and shall during the
       season play for that county only.

 (c) A cricketer shall be qualified to play for any
       county in which he is residing and has resided
       for the previous two years; or a cricketer may

   elect to play for the county in which his family
   home is, so long as it remains open to him as an
   occupational residence.

(d) That should any question arise as to the resi-
   dential qualification, that should be left to the
   decision of the Marylebone Club.

(e) That a copy of these rules be sent to the Mary-
   lebone Club, with a request that they be adopted
   by the Club." [1]

In one respect, these recommendations exemplify dis-

tinctive features of the type of society in which they

were conceived. The inclusion of birth and residence as

qualifications for membership of a county team is clearly

indicative of a society in which localised, particularistic

values continued to be predominant. In fact, a salient

feature of the development of British society as compated

to that of, say, the United States of America is the

absence of a period of "pure" bourgeois dominance. For

professional cricketers, this has meant that they have

rarely been in a position to sell their skills, univer-

salistically, to the highest bidder. From the seventeenth

century until the middle of the twentieth, control of

cricket and cricketers remained in the hands of those

high status groups who subscribed to localised, particu-

laristic values. [2]

When the "Qualifications for the County Cricketer"

were submitted to the M.C.C. later that year, it attempted

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1 Quoted in the Rev. R. S. Holmes', The County Cricket
 Championship, (Bristol, 1894), p. 32.

2 The major exception to this generalisation were, of
 course, the members of the professional touring Elevens
 (circa 1846-1870).

to introduce one modification into the original document: that

> "An amateur could play for any county in which
> he or his parents had property, or in which his
> parents, if dead, had property at the time of
> their decease." [1]

If accepted, this modification would have allowed the amateur an extra method of qualification. However, it was not acceptable to the counties and eventually was dropped. In the time taken by the counties to agree upon their formula, the M.C.C. had itself attempted to organise a form of inter-county competition. It was announced in January, 1873, that;

> "With a view to promoting county cricket, and to
> bringing counties into contact which otherwise
> might not have had the opportunity of competing
> with each other, and to establish an interesting
> series of county matches on a neutral ground, the
> Committee of the M.C.C. propose to offer a silver
> cup for competition. The matches will be arranged
> by lot, and the ties drawn by the Committee as soon
> as possible after acceptances are received.....The
> winner of the final tie will hold the cup for one
> year. The winner of the final tie three times
> successively shall hold the cup in perpetuity.
> The name of the winning county, with the date,
> shall be engraved on the cup at the cost to the
> M.C.C." [2]

In the event, six counties were invited to participate but only Kent and Sussex accepted. Only one match was played, on what was described as a "very dangerous pitch" at Lord's, after which the competition was abandoned.

If 1873 marks the beginning of the modern inter-county axis of competition, then it must be said that during the first fourteen years of its existence, this event was

1   Ibid. p. 33.

2   A. D. Taylor, op.cit., p. 103.

characterised by an almost total absence of centralised organisation and a similarly chaotic procedure for adjudicating victory. As one of the most dedicated students of the game has pointed out,

> "there has been an uncritical acceptance and repetition of statements concerning earlier periods, or statements about earlier cricket, which would horrify a professional historian... The only significant thing about 1873 was that for that season, rules governing qualifications for counties were agreed - nothing else was decided - certainly not how the championship should be run."[1]

As Major Bowen goes on to suggest, the fact that the county representatives thought it necessary to legislate to maintain distinctive "county" identities indicates that the idea of a "champion" county was already well-established. Between 1873 and 1882, when the county secretaries began meeting annually, or perhaps in 1887, when they formed the County Cricket Council, no centralised body existed to supervise the day-to-day running of the Championship. Not only was the number of "first-class counties" eligible to participate in the Championship not regularised, but there was also no accepted formula for deciding its outcome. It seems more than likely that those responsible for elevating the significance of 1873 have been guilty of projecting a model of the Championship as it later became, back to a period in which no such elaborate structure existed. Again, Major Bowen has been responsible for providing evidence to support this conclusion.

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1   Rowland Bowen "The Early County Championships", in _Wisden_, ed. N. Preston (1959), p. 92.

> "There was no general agreement whether Hampshire
> and Somerset were to be considered among the
> "celebrated" counties; averages often included
> all county matches even against such teams as
> Buckinghamshire. For example, W.G. Grace's
> published records for the first-class matches
> includes such matches as the M.C.C. v Hertford-
> shire. Moreover, there seems to be a distinction
> between the county champions and the county
> championship. In other words, the county champ-
> ions were the best county against all-comers;
> the idea of restricting the choice of champions
> by reference only to games against other counties
> did not appear to exist, certainly in the minds
> of the editors of the "Companion" or "Annual"
> until some time in the late 70's or early 80's." [1]

When, in 1887, the County Cricket Council superseded
the annual meeting of county secretaries, the foremost
among those problems which it was intended to resolve
remained classification of counties, qualifications of
players, and adjudication of victors. Before 1890, when
it suffered the improbable fate of being dissolved _sine die_
by the casting vote of its own Chairman, this Council had
drawn up the framework for an inter-county competition
under which all county elevens were classified in one of
three divisions with stipulations for automatic promotion
and relegation. It was largely because of rivalries
existing between county clubs that the Council went out
of existence, and the invitation to the M.C.C. in 1894
to establish principles for classifying counties, and
regulating the Championship, was a final recognition of
their inability to reach any form of lasting compromise.
In that year, a committee of the M.C.C. produced a
"Classification of Counties" in which it was stipulated
that,

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[1]   _Loc. cit._

> "Cricketing counties shall be considered as
> belonging to the first-class or not. There
> is no need for further sub-division.
>
> First-class Counties are those whose matches
> with one another, with the M.C.C. and Ground,
> with the Universities, with the Australians,
> and such other elevens as shall be adjudged
> first-class matches by the M.C.C. Committee
> which are used in the compilation of first-
> class batting and bowling averages.
>
> There shall be no limit to the number of first-
> class Counties.
>
> The M.C.C. Committee may bring new Counties into
> the list, may remove existing ones from it, or
> may do both." [1]

The outcome of the annual competition was henceforth

to be determined upon the following principles:

> "one point... for each game won, one point
> deducted for each loss, and the county which
> should have obtained the greatest proportion
> of points to the total of finished matches
> should be reckoned the champion county." [2]

The M.C.C.'s recognition of the County Championship

had the effect of confirming this competition's status as

the centre-piece of organised cricket in Britain. Admitting

additions to the number of first-class counties allowed to

participate, Worcestershire in 1899, Northamptonshire in

1905, and finally Glamorgan in 1921, and allowing for

frequent minor alterations in various aspects of its

organisation, the Championship has retained this pre-eminence

until the present day. From 1900 until 1969, administration

was the responsibility of the Advisory County Cricket

Committee, [3] established by the M.C.C. The majority of

changes in the original format of the Championship can be

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1   The Rev. R.S. Holmes, op.cit., p. 32.

2   Viscount Alverstone and C.W. Alcock, op.cit., p. 104.

3   In 1969, it was superseded by the Test and County Cricket
     Board.

seen as attempts to retain within the structure of the
competition, those properties of excitement and entertain-
ment needed to attract consistently large audiences, a
problem which, since 1918, has become increasingly acute.
The establishment of the County Championship is only one
example of a series of changes in various aspects of cricket
between 1860 and 1910, which, in their totality, represent
the last stage in the transformation of cricket from a
crude, largely unregulated "folk" pastime to a modern,
highly elaborate, bureaucratised sport. In the sphere of
organisation, in addition to the development of county
cricket, these years saw the first international compe-
titions, notably those between England and Australia;
after much protracted debate, the formation of the Imperial
Cricket Conference in 1909; the establishment of a Board
of Control to administer Test matches played in England; [1]
and in 1895, the formation of the Minor Counties Cricket
Association, and the institution of the Minor Counties
Championship. In 1884,the M.C.C. adopted a completely
revised Code of Laws which, whilst incorporating little
that was not already in practice, nevertheless clarified,
standardized, and updated many rules which had been
rendered obscure or outmoded by the rapid expansion and
elaboration of firt-class cricket. These new Laws intro-
duced the notion of boundaries, and legalised five or six
ball overs. Subsequent changes during this period saw an
elaboration of the rules pertaining to declarations, and
the "follow-on", the ending of the traditional custom of

1   Likewise absorbed into the T.C.C.B. in 1969.

allowing two overs to be bowled in succession by the same
player, and a clarification of the conditions under which
a "new ball" could be requested. In 1892, the M.C.C.
issued its first instructions to umpires. The introduction
of a heavy roller at Lord's in 1870 marked the beginning
of a general improvement in the standard of the pitches.
From about 1880, coloured shirts disappeared from the cricket-
field to be replaced by a standard white apparel. White
buckskin shoes were worn for the first time in 1882.

In addition to witnessing many changes in facilities,
techniques and regulations, the period in question - 1860
-1910 - saw a marked extension in the status of cricketers
as public entertainers. The year 1864 was notable for
witnessing the debut of a player whose achievements and
distinctive personality led to his becoming a legend in
his own life time, and an immeasurable influence upon the
subsequent development of the game. For historians and
statisticians alike, W. G. Grace's achievements are plain
enough; he scored 54,896 runs and took 2,864 wickets. In
1895, at the age of forty-seven, he amassed 1,000 runs in
twenty-two days. It is true that these figures have since
been surpassed on several occasions but, by the standards
of the time and under the prevailing conditions, they are
phenomenal. To record these achievements, Grace introduced
techniques, particularly in batsmanship, which altered the
entire conception of the game. In this respect, as the
Jubilee Book of Cricket claimed,

> "He revolutionised cricket. He turned it
> from an accomplishment into a science; he
> united in his mighty self all the good points

> of all the good players and made utility
> the criterion of style..... he turned the
> old one-stringed instrument into a many
> chorded lyre. But in addition, he made
> his execution equal his invention." [1]

But the significance of Grace extends far beyond
his technical achievements. As a result of possessing
not only exceptional athletic ability but also a par-
ticularly easily identifiable personality, Grace became
one of the most influential cult heroes of the nineteenth
century. Because his appeal was in no sense class-
bound, he was one of the most potent stimuli to the
popularisation of cricket to a level at which it could
realistically be considered as a "national" sport. His
very presence at a match was sufficient to draw the
largest crowds. As H. S. Altham noted:

> "He was incomparably the greatest 'draw' of
> all sportsmen in history; he was the nearest
> approach to a living embodiment of John
> Bull that England has seen, and however much
> H. G. Wells may sneer at 'the tribal gods
> for whom people would die', I can believe
> the Bishop of Hertford read deeper into the
> heart of man when he spoke of W. G. the words
> with which his memorial biography so fitly
> closes: 'Had Grace been born in ancient
> Greece, the Iliad would have been a differ-
> ent book. Had he lived in the Middle Ages
> he would have been a crusader and would
> now have been lying with his legs crossed
> in some ancient abbey, having founded a
> family. As he was born when the world was
> older, he was the best known of all Englishmen

---

1 Prince Ranjitsinhji, The Jubilee Book of Cricket,
(1897), p. 213.

and the king of that English game least
spoilt by any form of vice!" [1]

To the sociologist, the preceding summary of important

milestones in the development of cricket between 1860 and

1910 may appear as little more than a veneer. Such a bald

chronological description of changes in various aspects

of cricket, its organisation, rules, ideology and the

status of its participants, leaves the extent to which they

must be seen as related both to each other and, in a broader

perspective, to changes in the structure of British society,

virtually unconsidered. Many important questions do not even

arise. Why, for instance, was first-class cricket organised

on the basis of county identification at this time? To

whose image of the functions of organised sport did this

organisational pattern bear closest resemblance?

1   H. S. Altham, op.cit., pp.123-124.

   One of the greatest problems in assessing the importance
   of W.G.Grace lies in the extent to which his achievements,
   in part, his very existence, became inestricably linked
   to a particularly pervasive ruling ideology. When Mon-
   signor Ronald Knox suggested in jest that W.G.Grace and
   W. Gladstone might be the same person, he gave expression
   to a sentiment with which few contemporaries would have
   argued. Part of Grace's charisma sprang from the fact
   that he held an attraction for all sections of society.
   For those who revelled in the glories of British
   Imperial expansion, he epitomised her absolute supremacy.
   (Consider, in this light, the eulogy on Grace found in
   his memorial biography.) For the industrial proletariat,
   and here the problems of ideology loom largest, it can
   be argued that he presented an identity - an alter ego
   - which by the very span of its achievements, had
   escaped the stultifying restrictions produced by the
   rigidities of a class-bound society. And in his
   freedom lay the hope of things to come.

But expressed in this form, these questions imply that sports such as cricket existed in a purely passive relationship with the social structure in which they were located; that is to say, the functions they served, and the form they took, may be interpreted only as reflections of the leisure requirements of a particular class within that structure. In the case of cricket, that its develop- ment during the eighteenth century was due to a lasting popularity amongst the aristocracy has already been demon- strated. However, while this type of relationship was the decisive factor in the early stages of cricket's development, that it remained as influential during sub- sequent stages has to be proved rather than assumed. While it is not the intention to reject the causal significance of such a relationship out of hand, two factors in particular, would appear to indicate the necessity of elaborating this model of development. In the first place, the structure of the ruling class in the second half of the nineteenth century differed significantly from that of the aristocracy in the eighteenth. It was larger, more diffuse, and less distanced from the rest of society; its members were recruited from diverse origins. This relative heterogeneity increased the likelihood of dissension on a wide variety of issues appearing within its ranks. But probably of even greater importance was the fact that it was involved in a totally different relationship with the rest of society. In marked contrast to the landed aristocracy of the eight- eenth century, who used the tacit acceptance of their domination to establish a personalised relationship with lower status

groups in local communities, large and increasingly
significant sections of the ruling class in mid- and
late-Victorian society, were engaged in an economic
relationship with society at large. Here was the market
for those products and services which lay at the basis
of its political and social dominance. If reference to
cricket as a "national"sport is more significant as an
example of ruling-class ideology than as a description
of reality, nevertheless, the gradual growth in the popu-
larity of cricket meant that the ruling-class possessed
a relatively lower level of control over the day-to-day
organisation of the game than its eighteenth century
counterpart. This is one reason, perhaps, why it
experienced greater difficulty in isolating cricket as
an exclusive leisure activity.

In the second place, the case of cricket can be taken
as an example of the way in which an institution in the
process of development creates its own dynamic. Repeated
changes in the organisation and rules of cricket, and in
the techniques and strategies of its players, may be seen
as an expression of a constant interplay between problem
and solution. Though, until comparatively recent times,
the overall context in which the game was performed and
the image it presented to the rest of society, were dominated
almost exclusively by the upper classes, as the game gained
popularity at all levels of society, so its administrators
were compelled to take account of the likely presence of
large crowds. The introduction of boundaries may to a
large extent be explained in precisely these terms.

Similarly, since the game revolved around the contest
between batsmen and bowler, any significant advance in
the technical expertise of the one tended to stimulate
a comparable advance by the other. Throughout the nine-
teenth century, advances in bowling techniques - from under-
arm, through round-arm, to over-arm - can be directly
related to advances in the range of strokes, attacking and
defensive, employed by the batsmen. A similar interpre-
tation can be put upon the frequent changes in the rules
of cricket during the nineteenth century. As both the
organisation and techniques of the game became more
elaborate and complex, so alterations and additions to
these Laws follow a pattern which represents as much the
need to incorporate these advances into the existing
structure of the game as the direct influence of a particu-
lar social group.

In introducing this discussion, it has not been the
intention to apportion on _a priori_ grounds, degrees of
causal significance to particular factors in the develop-
ment of county cricket. Its purpose was to indicate the
extent to which the complexity of this process imposes
limitations upon the type of analysis which can be
presented. In fact, if any one factor in the following
exposition appears to receive a disproportionate emphasis,
it is as likely that this is an indication of the prevailing
state of historical evidence as a deliberate attempt to
establish its causal primacy.

Throughout this stage (1873-1945), it may be said that
cricket retained in its character, strong elements of an
elite tradition: this, in spite of the fact that, by the

turn of the century, the majority of its regular partici-
pants had ceased to be recruited from the upper-classes -
however generally that group may be defined - and that
the importance of a "mass" audience increased steadily
to the point at which it became the decisive factor in
any estimation of the financial viability of many county
clubs. This pattern of development presents an interesting
and instructive comparison with those of other sports
whose identities at the beginning of this period were
equally securely anchored amongst the culture of the upper-
classes. Yet, unlike cricket, both football and rugby
proved incapable of harnessing diverse social strata
within their organisations. Both underwent a process
of internal bifurcation whereby a truncated section re-
mained the exclusive domain of the ruling class, socially
distanced and, under the banner of "amateurism", ideologic-
ally shielded from the masses. Though a distinctive type
of competition evolved in the northern cricket leagues,
these never became as socially ostracised as did Rugby
League, and their participants were never formally
excluded from participation in first-class cricket.[1]
When it is noted that a relatively highly organised form
of cricket, dominated entirely by professionals drawn
from the lower classes, had developed immediately prior
to the establishment of modern first-class cricket, the
differences in the establishment of this type of cricket,

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1   While the demands of full-time participation in either
     league or county cricket made them mutually exclusive
     in practice, for the retired or overseas player, parti-
     cipation in league cricket was often a very important
     way of prolonging, or extending, his career.

on the one hand, and both football and rugby, on the other, becomes particularly interesting. That cricket alone succeeded in retaining an apparently high degree of internal unity indicates that the focus of analysis should be directed upon the particular relationship between cricket and the upper-classes during those years when its organisational framework was emerging.

It is necessary to accept from the first that just as the institutional framework of the game of cricket was undergoing a continuous process of change, so was the composition of the upper-classes. While this was not so fundamental as to reduce that group's capacity to rule, it did lead to divisions of opinion which, in certain cases, became lasting schisms. To many of the non-aristocratic members of the upper-classes, a visible association with institutions like cricket and horse-racing, which epitomized the life-style of an elite, was as valuable as the financial prosperity on which it would be based. It is in the differing capacities of such institutions to incorporate the consequences of continuous changes in the nature and structure of the upper-classes within their traditional frameworks that distinctive patterns of development originate. In the previous chapter, the chain of events leading up to serious attempts being made to supplant the authority of the M.C.C. in 1863 were described. That the M.C.C. survived this crisis was as much a reflection of the ambivalent aspirations of the upwardly-mobile sections of the middle class as a tribute to the durability of that institution. However, in relation to cricket, the very

existence of such a movement was an indication of the
extent to which large numbers of the game's devotees had
become disenchanted with the attitudes of the game's
traditional patrons. In the face of the intransigent
conservatism displayed by the M.C.C., the professional
touring Elevens represented both the expression of the
entrepreneurial ideal in organised sport, and a means of
wresting some control over the administration of the game
from that sphere of influence which centred on Lord's.
Similarly, county cricket clubs provided a framework
within which "first-class" matches could be staged more
regularly, without relinquishing the exclusiveness of the
traditional intra-aristocracy contest.

Given the type of data available, it is not possible
to present the rivalries between supporters of county
cricket, and of the M.C.C., as an instance of a growing
middle-class threat to aristocratic dominance in society
at large. Indeed, it is possibly naive to imagine that
such a simple correspondence between allegiances in the
world of cricket and social class membership would occur.
Members of the aristocracy were to be found amongst the
lists of patrons of the county cricket clubs just as
frequently as members of the bourgeoisie were admitted
to the M.C.C.. Nevertheless, in respect of the ideals
they represented, the M.C.C. on the one hand, and county
cricket - and even more decidedly, the touring elevens -
on the other, were in direct opposition. Whilst the
pronouncements and actions of the former gave every
indication of a growing conservatism and elitsm, the

latter stood for a measure of democratisation, the
creation of more opportunities and facilities for a
larger number of individuals from diverse social back-
grounds to participate as players and spectators. By
the end of the previous stage, these two forces were at
loggerheads over a number of issues. This situation
provided every reason for supposing that a permanent
schism of a type comparable to that which rent the games
of football and rugby, might develop within cricket's
institutional structure.

Thirty years later, at the turn of the century, it
had become equally clear that no such permanent rift was
likely; in fact far from polarizing around two sets of
irreconcilable ideals, the M.C.C. and the county cricket
clubs had undergone a process of convergence to the point
at which ideological differences had apparently disappeared
to be replaced by a unification of interests in an elaborated
general category of first-class cricket. On the basis of
the assumption of a direct correspondence between social
classes and the major lines of dissent within cricket's
institutional structure, one would be forced to the con-
clusion that since, in 1894, it was the representatives
of the county cricket clubs who enlisted the advice and
support of the M.C.C., there had been a relative shift of
power from the middle-classes during this period. But
such an hypothesis runs contrary to the most widely
accepted sociological and historical analyses of the
distribution of power within the British class structure
at this time. As Bagehot noted;

> "The middle classes - the ordinary majority
> of educated men - are in the present day the
> despotic power in England." [1]

Any attempt to account for the distinctive pattern of development followed by cricket, no matter how tentative, must accept as a basis, a more complex model of social change. Of the institutions involved, none avoided undergoing a complex process of recasting. It is necessary to look to these areas, the structure of the middle and the upper-classes in general, and that of the county cricket clubs and the M.C.C. more specifically, to find the beginnings of an explanation of that sequence of events which culminated in the recognition of the County Cricket Championship by the M.C.C. in 1894.

Conceptualization of the class structure of nineteenth century Britain in terms of the growth of a dichotomous division of membership and interests between the aristocracy and the middle-classes presupposes the existence of the very factor which differentiates Britain from probably all other industrialised European nations. From late in the eighteenth century, instead of attempting to wrest hegemony from the aristocracy, sections of the bourgeoisie had, in fact, fused with that group. While such other factors as the impact of the French revolution, and an ever-present fear of the nascent working-class movement, may have reinforced this relationship, it was based from the first on a recognition by both parties of the assets - social and financial - possessed by the other. But it is important to note that as a result of the peculiar nature of this

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1   W.Bagehot,The English Constitution,(World's Classics)p.235.

fusion,

> "...the hegemonic ideology of this (Victorian)
> society was a much more aristocratic combination
> of 'traditionalism' and 'empiricism' intensely
> hierarchical in its emphasis which accurately
> reflected the history of the dominant agrarian
> class." [1]

If the middle classes never constituted a real challenge
to the social and political position of a ruling class
which, until the twentieth century, continued to be dominated
by landed interests, nevertheless they possessed sufficient
autonomy to give a distinctive identity to the institutions
they patronised. There can be no doubt that, first, touring
elevens, and later county clubs, were imbued with attitudes
towards organisation and participation which differentiated
them from the comparatively exclusive, and traditionalistic
M.C.C.. The question to be answered, therefore, is why
these differentiating qualities disappeared between 1870
and 1890.

To provide at least a partial solution to this problem,
it is first necessary to account for the occurrence at this
time of fundamental changes in the structure of both the
upper and middle classes in British society; this, in
opposition to the simpler assumption of one of these groups
undergoing a transformation which brought it closer in
terms of interests and ideals to the unchanging other.
In the case of the aristocracy, it has been argued that;

> "The truth is that the foundations of a
> British society dominated by the landed
> classes all collapsed together with and
> during the Great Depression. Landownership

1   Perry Anderson, "Origins of the Present Crisis",
New Left Review, (July-August, 1968), p. 12.

> ceased, with some exceptions, to be the
> basis of great wealth and became merely a
> status symbol." [1]

The beginnings of this decline may be located long before the "Great Depression". Though it is likely that the richest individuals in Britain remained landlords until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, many were then not of traditional aristocratic descent, but like the Barings, Jones, Lloyds, and Guests, were prosperous entrepreneurs who had exchanged wealth for landed status. Nevertheless, with this proviso, a measure of the continuing significance of the landed aristocracy can be found in their continuing dominance of Parliament until 1885. It is from this period that two decades of "universal catastophe for agriculture" began to make heavy inroads into the great residues of wealth which had accrued to the landed aristocracy over the previous two centuries. The effects of the acute crisis which confronted British agriculture, however, were not uniform. In the first place, it probably served to increase inequalities within the landed class. The economic status of all but the largest landlords was severely weakened by the fact that land rents rose more slowly than agricultural prices. It has been estimated that while the aggregate rent of land returned by a near stationary landed class rose between 1850 and 1873 by no more than 16%, agricultural prices rose by 29%, and general prices by 32% [2] The position of the large landowners was ameliorated by a rise

1   E.J. Hobsbawm, Industry and Empire, (1967), p. 170.

2   J.C.Stamp, British Incomes and Property, (1916), p. 49.

of over 100% in the aggregate rent of houses, of which a

disproportionate amount they acquired. In addition to this,

supplementary income accrued from investment in property,

particularly in urban areas, industry and finance:

> "The Earl of Verulam, for instance, in the
> 1870s had an income of about £17,000 (which
> he usually overspent), of which £14,500 came
> from rents and timber sales. His son, the
> third earl, extended his small share portfolio
> to some fifteen companies, mainly in the
> colonies and other overseas parts, and became
> a multiple director of companies, again mainly
> of African and American mines. By 1897 almost
> a third of his income came from such unbucolic
> sources." [1]

The point to be stressed here is that throughout this

period, the traditional ruling-class, a landed aristocracy,

was in the process of being superseded by a new elite,

different in character, and, to a lesser extent, in compo-

sition which, while maintaining a connection with the land

through the ownership of property, was essentially a

product of urban-based corporate business. The changing

character of the Conservative Party is but one reflection

of this transformation. From being the traditional mouth-

piece of agrarian interests, at the start of the twentieth

century, it had become much more a representative of

business and high finance.

> "It was no longer led by a Bentinck, a Derby,
> a Cecil or a Balfour, but - after 1911 - by a
> Glasgow Canadian iron merchant (Bonar-Law),
> and two Midlands industrialists (Baldwin and
> Neville Chamberlain)." [2]

A similar process of internal restructuring occurred

within the middle-classes at this time. Originally mainly

[1]   E. J. Hobsbawm, op.cit., p. 167.

[2]   Ibid., p. 171.

composed of those entrepreneurs who provided much of the
dynamic impetus behind early nineteenth century industrial-
isation, by 1870 the middle-classes had come to embrace
a far wider range of occupations, notably the professions
which trebled in number between 1841 and 1881, compared
with a two-thirds increase in the total population. The
significance of this expansion was more than just numerical;
as one historian has pointed out, the combination of strong
occupational cohesion and a stringent code of ethics

> "led many (professional men) increasingly to
> differentiate themselves from the business-
> class to play an important part in criticizing
> the entrepreneurial policy of laissez-faire and
> replacing it by collectivism." [1]

But a still greater threat to the solidarity of the
middle-class resulted from the development of a distinctive
elite within this group of entrepreneurs. While too
complex to describe in detail, the emergence of a business
aristocracy was probably the logical culmination of a
process which had its roots in a gradual expansion in the
scale of financial, manufacturing and industrial enterprises,
one index of which is the ever-increasing numbers of joint-
stock companies formed during this period,[2] and the exist-
ence of a complex network of railways which greatly
facilitated travel within Britain. In conjunction with
these two factors, there appeared a group of big businessmen

1   H. A. Perkin, op.cit., p. 429.

2   The number of registered companies (excluding railways
     and other chartered or parliamentary companies) grew
     from 1,000 in 1844 to over 10,000 in 1887. (See B. C.
     Hunt, The Development of the Business Corporation in
     England, 1800-1867, Cambridge, Massachucetts' (1936).

which, by the end of the century, was both larger and
wealthier than the landed aristocracy.

> "Compared with the 2,500 great landowners in
> 1873 with rentals of over £3,000 (excluding
> London property and other income) there were
> in 1850 under 2,000 businessmen with profits
> under Schedule D of £3,000. By 1880, there
> were over 5,000. And if 866 of the landlords
> had over £10,000 and 76 over £50,000, the
> corresponding figure for businessmen had risen
> from 338 to 987 and from 26 to 77 respectively."[1]

What differentiated this new "aristocracy" from previous
generations of upwardly-mobile entrepreneurs was their
retention of business connections at a stage when tradition-
ally these interests were renounced in favour of the status
conferred by ownership of land. Whilst the purchase of an
estate remained an important index of success, improved
transport facilities enabled the hitherto more-or-less
mutually exclusive styles of life, symbolised by the estate
and the office, to be much more effectively combined. How,
ever, railways did no more than assist this synthesis. Far
more significant from the point of view of causality was
the upgrading of the business career. At this time, it
ceased to be looked upon as the antithesis of one of the
ideal requirements of an aristocracy; i.e. that its members
should be free from the taint of work. Unlike the early
entrepreneurs who either participated in the work of their
factories or whose offices were located directly in the
factory, the financiers of the late nineteenth century
conducted their business from offices located in London,
or one of the other major provincial centres, and were thus
far removed from industry as such. Thus, the conjuncture

1   H. A. Perkin, op.cit., p. 431.

of a number of processes of change - in the structure of
agriculture, commerce and industry, - produced a situation
in which there occurred a coalescence of interests, a
combination of business aristocrats and aristocratic business-
men, which came to form the core of a reconstituted ruling
class. The assimilation of business into this milieu had
one other important consequence. Whereas previously,
financial success was seen only as a necessary prelude to
an adoption of that style of life associated with the
landed aristocracy, a process which itself permitted a
relatively high degree of upward-mobility over extensive
ranges of the class structure, the preservation of an active
association with the world of business tended to substan-
tially reduce the opportunities to progress beyond a certain
level, As a result, membership of the upper-classes tended
to become far more stable. The consequences of this
stabilization became apparent on the accession of Edward VII,
and the full flowering of an era in which the upper-classes
achieved unparalleled social distinctiveness - or according
to one's ideological predilections, an "orgy of conspicuous
waste".

> "Biarritz, Cannes, Monte Carlo, and Marienbad -
> the international luxury hotel was very much the
> product of this age and found in the 'Edwardian'
> style, its best architectural form - steam yachts
> and larger racing stables, private trains,
> massacres of game birds and opulent country
> house weekends stretching into weeks: these
> consoled the increasingly lengthy leisure hours
> of the rich." [1]

1   E. J. Hobsbawm, op.cit., p. 137.

As these remarks suggest, integration of sections of
the landed aristocracy with representatives of various
business interests was not confined to the sphere of
work. In politics, education, marriage and social life
in general, there is ample evidence to show that a similar
merging was occurring. Nowhere is this integration better
illustrated than in the formal and informal organisation
of "county society". By the time of the reorganisation
of local government in the 1888 County Councils Act, much
of the exclusiveness of this last remaining bastion of
aristocratic dominence had disappeared. In Cheshire, for
instance, numbered amongst the Justices of the Peace were,

> "all the great resident industrialists; Sir
> Edward Watkin, the railway magnate, Sir John
> Brunner, the Northwich chemical magnate, John
> Laird and David MacIver the Birkenhead ship-
> builders, Thomas Brocklebank the Liverpool
> shipowner, Colonel Brocklehirst the Macclesfield
> silk manufacturer.....In 1886 the Daresbury
> division bench was very similar in composition
> to the boards of directors of the principal
> Warrington companies, Greenall's Brewery and
> Parr's Bank, while in the Wirral division a
> third of magistrates travelled daily to work
> in Birkenhead and Liverpool." [1]

As a testament to the strength of this new-found
affinity, one has only to consider the length of time that
the ruling class of which it was the foundation, remained
dominant in British society. It is probably true to say
that while its influence in the political sphere may have
declined, in the realms of economic and social life its
pre-eminance is still unchallenged - a factor of considerable
significance in explaining the durability of many institu-
tions founded around the turn of the century.

1   H. A. Perkin, op.cit., p. 436.

However, to point to changes in the relationships
between groups as large as social classes in a context
as all-embracing as the wider society is to provide only
an indication of the type of factors which could be
expected to be relevant in an analysis of the establish-
ment of an activity as specialised and restricted as
first-class cricket. That the establishment of a
nationally recognised county cricket championship depended
to a significant degree upon the inclusion of diverse,
non-aristocratic sections of society into a reconsti-
tuted ruling class can only be demonstrated by citing
evidence to show the existence of a parallel convergence
within the institutional framework of cricket itself.
On the basis of postulating a "coalescence of interests"
in society at large, one would predict that those groups
which in 1870 formed the mainstays of the M.C.C. and the
county cricket clubs would integrate sufficiently over
the following thirty years to permit the establishment of
a generally acceptable county championship.[1] Thus, it is

1   This statement contains two implicit assumptions; first
     that throughout this period cricket remained a rela-
     tively high-status activity, and second, that the desire
     to enhance personal and family status was an important
     characteristic of the British middle-class in the second
     half of the nineteenth century. However, evidence to
     substantiate both is not difficult to find. In the case
     of the former, it is sufficient to point to the emphasis
     placed upon cricket in the standard public school curri-
     culum, and on a more general level, to the extent to which
     cricket was seen as a repository of those norms which were
     the apotheosis of English national character. In the
     latter case, there is ample evidence to show that during
     the period from 1873 to 1894, the years of the so-called
     "Great Depression", retrenchment became the byword in
     middle-class circles. To protect the prosperity and
     prestige acquired during the preceding "Golden Years",

to the internal structures of the M.C.C. and the county cricket clubs that attention must now be turned.

By the early 1870's, the popular image of the M.C.C. - and one to which the majority of its members would willingly subscribe - was of a caste-like coterie, whose exclusiveness was manifested in an almost complete indifference to those persons, institutions and affairs which lay beyond the pale of its own milieu. Largely as a result of the M.C.C.'s endeavour, or perhaps its lack of endeavour, the preceding twenty years had seen the progressive disenchantment of those whose interests lay in developing similarly elitist clubs beyond the immediate confines of London, to a point at which the basis of the omnipotence of the Lord's club was in question. By insisting on the retention of absolute control over the activities of cricketers, the M.C.C. eventually forfeited the allegiance of those professionals who had played such an important part in the expansion of the game's popularity. A tacit alliance of these two groups finally compelled the M.C.C. to accept changes in the Laws of Cricket, a sphere in which its

members of the middle-classes were prepared to go to such lengths as restricting family size. By adopting these measures families were able to maintain the status-confirming paraphernalia, servants, carriages and the like, needed to cloak an otherwise stark bourgeois existence. Further, through placing their sons in one of the prestigious for the education of gentlemen, the public schools, the middle-class parent conceived of a future in some section of the government administrative service, previously monopolised by the sons of the aristocracy. For a more detailed analysis of these changes, see J. A. Banks', Prosperity and Parenthood, (1954)

authority was traditionally at its greatest. However, if
the period from 1870-1974 is taken to represent the peak
of the M.C.C.'s indifference and complacency, there are
signs that from this time, a vociferous body of opinion
within the M.C.C. itself began to lobby for a radical
re-appraisal of the functions that institution should
serve. In 1874, in the wake of the rejection by the
county clubs of the M.C.C.'s proposals for a "knock-out"
county competition, the Secretary of the M.C.C. made the
following statement at the Club's Annual General Meeting:

> "The match list will be found to differ from
> those of previous years. The counties having
> generally disapproved of the scheme entertained
> last year, the Committee have instituted a
> series of divisional matches. The North, South-
> East, and West will be represented at Lord's.
> The Elevens will be selected by the Committee,
> and they hope to bring out many players who,
> from various circumstances, may have been
> debarred from playing for their respective
> counties. Secretaries of clubs in all parts
> of England have been requested to forward the
> names of players, little known to the general
> public, but of local celebrity, who may, by this
> means, be enabled to advance themselves in their
> profession." [1]

From this statement, it is clear that the M.C.C.
intended to preserve its independence in the face of the
growing popularity of county cricket matches by establishing
a series of matches between teams representing arbitary,
but convenient geographical zones. It was to retain complete
control over both the staging of these matches and the
selection of the teams involved. The consequences of this
decision were two-fold: by general consent, the standard
of cricket played at Lord's declined, and at the same time,

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[1] From the Notebook of R.A. Fitzgerald, Secretary of
the M.C.C., op.cit. p.9.

members of the M.C.C. displayed such disinterest in the

performance of its teams that the Club began to suffer a

severe shortage of players. In defending the actions of

the M.C.C., the Secretary claimed that the decline in the

standards of performance could be attributed to two

circumstances; first, that the dominance of W. G. Grace

meant that in his absence, standards were automatically

seen to have fallen, and second, that as a result of a

surfeit of cricket, it had become very difficult to

distinguish between the "Gentlemen" and the "Players" -

the implication being that only the former were capable

of attracting large crowds. However, at least two writers

publicly challenged the credibility of these explanations.

In a letter to the Editor of Bell's Life, Mr. R. A. H.

Mitchell wrote;

> "I cannot think that Mr. Grace's advent to the
> field of cricket can have in any way contributed
> to the decline in cricket .... It is the pro-
> fessionals whose names we miss. Why is this?
> Those who say there is too much cricket appear
> to me to be stating only half the truth. There
> is too much cricket under the imperfect manage-
> ment of the M.C.C.. The M.C.C., occupying as it
> does, the first position of any cricket club in
> England, holds in its own hands the remedy for
> the present state of affairs. What is wanted is
> a policy of conciliation with due regard to the
> interests of other clubs. Hitherto, the M.C.C.
> has arranged their matches independently, and
> the argument advanced has been, 'We arrange our
> matches and others must make their own arrange-
> ments accordingly'. I hope the hard logic of
> facts may break down so infatuated a theory.
> Let the M.C.C. invite representations of the
> County Clubs and the All-England Elevens to meet
> together in the autumn and arrange their matches
> for the next year, in such a way as may be most
> convenient to all....In such matches as the Gentle-
> men versus the Players, I should like to see per-
> mission given to the Players to select their own side."[1]

1   Ibid., p. 10.

In another letter to <u>Bell's Life</u>, an anonymous
contributor wrote in a similar vein,

> "Let the Marylebone secretary, if he has the
> time to pay a visit to the Kennington Oval, or
> to Prince's, whilst a good county match is
> proceeding without Mr. Grace, and he will at
> either place receive a direct denial to his
> preposterous statement. The real fact of the
> case is that the public are more fond of
> cricket than ever, but they will not visit
> any ground that does not lay an attractive
> programme before them." [1]

Further evidence of opposition to the attitudes and
policies of the M.C.C is provided by Sir Pelham Warner.
In <u>Lord's 1787-1945</u>, he relates;

> "At the Annual General Meeting of the Club on
> May 5th, 1875, a fierce attack was made not
> for the first time, by Mr. Willoughby, who
> criticized the expenditure on the Tavern,
> derided the match-list as rubbishy, and asserted
> that professionals were reluctant to play at Lord's,
> being better treated elsewhere. He objected
> strongly to the introduction of lawn-tennis
> courts, and criticized the attitude of the
> Secretary to members." [2]

From these statements, it is not difficult to infer
the basic issues at stake. If Fitzgerald can be taken as
the "mouthpiece" of the "establishment" within the M.C.C.,
then it is apparent that this group were intent on retaining
the social and physical exclusiveness of the Club at the
expense of the standard of cricket it staged, or even, it
seems, a significant reduction in the numbers of matches
in which its teams participated. The growing popularity
of cricket among the "petit-bourgeoisie", and worse still,
the urban-industrial proletariat was anathema to a group
dedicated to the maintenance of an highly elitist conception

1   <u>Loc.cit.</u>

2   P. F. Warner, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 69.

of the game. Fewer matches involving a lower standard of
performance was a preferable alternative to submitting
to the demands of a mass audience. However, it is equally
apparent that around 1876, significant modifications began
to be introduced into the ideology and probably the compo-
sition of the M.C.C.'s "establishment". On October 2nd,
1876, R. A. Fitzgerald resigned from the office of
Secretary on the grounds of ill-health. During the
thirteen years of his tenure, the "number of members
increased from 650 to 2,080".[1] His successor, Henry
Perkins, gave up an established legal career to take the
vacant position. Though no exactly comparable figures
are available, it is likely that the number of members
elected between 1876 and 1898 was more than three thousand.
By 1910, the total had risen to 5,219, an increase of
over 400% in forty years. Perhaps of greater significance
than this numerical expansion, however, were the changes
in the conditions pertaining to membership. At the Annual
General Meeting of 1875, the issue of "playing members"
arose for the first time in the Club's history.

> "The Committee now approach a less satisfactory
> aspect and one scarcely worth the reputation of
> the Marylebone Club. It is much to be lamented
> that the playing staff of the club does not
> appear to have advanced in due proportion to the
> increased roll of members. The members are
> earnestly reminded that something more is required
> of them than cursory support in order to maintain
> the Marylebone Club at the head of the cricketing
> world. It will scarcely be credited that on
> several occasions last season matches were either
> abandoned or otherwise injured, both by the non-
> appearance of members who agreed to play, and by
> the reluctance of others to take part at all."[2]

1   M.C.C. Annual Report, 1877.

2   Bell's Life, Saturday, May 8th, 1875.

The following year, the M.C.C. took action to remedy this problem;

> "A revised scheme of election was submitted to
> a special meeting of members on March 2nd, 1876,
> ... the new rules affecting election to the
> M.C.C. have been substituted for those which
> stood the test of many years, but which are
> found inadequate to the rapid expansion of the
> Club....The object which the Committee have
> had in view.... is to secure a proper discretion
> in the election of new members. Cricketers
> possess the first claim on the Club, and it is
> not thought conducive to the best interests to
> suffer the welfare of the Club to depend upon so
> uncertain a basis as the popularity of certain
> great matches." [1]

In addition to these attempts to stimulate the level of active interest shown by its own members, the M.C.C. initiated an association with the Middlesex Club in 1877. Under the terms of this arrangement, the M.C.C. made no charge for the use of the Lord's ground, but generally received a donation from the county, "larger or smaller according to the state of its finances". Recording the event, James Lillywhite noted:

> "Cricket at Lord's benefited greatly by the
> appearance there of the Middlesex Club, which
> has migrated from its former headquarters at
> Prince's and the addition of a few county
> matches to the Marylebone programme will
> certainly strengthen it at a point where it
> has been undeniably weak of late years. For
> some time there has been a complaint that there
> was not so much first-class cricket at Lord's
> as the revenue and the position of the Club
> warranted, and beyond all doubt, with the
> exception of the two fashionable meetings of
> the season, there had been for some time to
> the outside world an air of monotony and apathy
> about the cricket at Lord's. The addition of the
> Middlesex fixtures filled a decided blank in the
> Marylebone programme, and there was certainly
> more life in the appearance of matters at head-
> quarters than in previous years." [2]

1   R. A. Fitzgerald, op.cit., p. 15.

2   Quoted in P. F. Warner, op.cit., p. 71.

The admission of county cricket to Lord's, though it preceded official M.C.C. recognition of the County Champ-ionship by sixteen years, was nevertheless an indication of a significant change of attitude on the part of the M.C.C.. No longer was county cricket an activity beyond countenance, nor the cricket field an arena fit to be graced only by members of a secluded elite. It is not difficult to discover during the following two decades, instances of innovations admitted by the M.C.C. which tend to confirm the existence of a more progressive attitude with respect to both the facilities offered to members and to the growing importance of cricket as a form of popular entertainment. An enlarged ground staff, a new members' Pavilion, a new stand (the Mound), and eventually a Press-Box were added to the attractions of Lord's by the turn of the century. In addition, the M.C.C. accepted responsibility for organising overseas tours.[1]

Without a detailed inventory of the class and occupational backgrounds of the M.C.C.'s members, a complete explanation of this change of attitude cannot be sustained. However, some indication of one possible source of change can be gained from examining the proportional size of the aristo-cratic component in the M.C.C.'s membership. In 1877, out of a total membership of 2,291, 337 were titled members of the aristocracy. By 1886, the total membership had expanded to 5,091, while the aristocratic component had declined marginally to 327. By 1915, the total membership had increased again to 5,135, while the aristocratic component numbered 452.

1   Previously the arrangement of these ventures had depended solely upon the enthusiasm of private enterprise.

Though these can be taken only as a rough guide, they do suggest a continuous decline in the significance of members of the aristocracy within the overall membership of the Club. But as well as indicating that the M.C.C. was electing an ever-increasing proportion of its members from beyond the confines of the aristocracy, they show a growing awareness amongst leading representatives of industry, commerce, and finance, of the prestige value of membership of such institutions as the M.C.C.. In addition to these numerical changes, it is also important to note variations in the methods of obtaining membership of the Club. Of these, perhaps the most significant was the advertisement, in 1888, of 100 Life Memberships at £100 each, a measure which broke the long-established tradition of election by recommendation. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to discover who profited from this advertisement. But in a more general context, it may be noted that the forty years which preceded the outbreak of the Great War, witnessed the introduction of State-awarded peerages to leaders of industry, commerce and finance. That more than one third (seventeen) of the forty-seven recipients of this honour, cited in a recent study,[1] had by 1915, become members of the M.C.C. gives some indication of the esteem in which the M.C.C. was held within this section of society.

Though the context of cricket is a microcosmic one, if the type of change described above can be taken as evidence of the existence of similar changes in the structure of

1   Ralph E. Pumphrey, "The Introduction of Industrialists into the British Peerage: A Study in the Adaption of a Social Institution," American History Review, LXV, No. 1, (October 1959), pp. 1-16.

the wider society, making for the establishment of a larger, but no less exclusive, ruling class, then at least a partial explanation of our problem is at hand. The assimilation of sections of an aristocratic elite and of a more recent middle-class into a plutocracy may be seen to have affected a unification of previously divergent interests, represented on the one hand, by the M.C.C., and on the other, by the county clubs, thus stimulating a rejuvenation of the former while preserving the ruling class's overall control of the organisation and ideology of the game.

In the case of the county cricket clubs, originally the agencies through which an active participation in respectable, organised cricket was introduced to the Victorian middle-classes, a similar though less distinctive, convergence took place. Whereas, in the 1860's, their members were questioning the legitimacy of the absolute control wielded by the M.C.C., by the 1890's a unity of intention and organisation had been established which was destined to remain the foundation of first-class cricket until the second half of the present century. Probably a combination of factors were instrumental in producing this situation. First, it rapidly became seen as inconsistent that an activity such as cricket, which contributed so significantly to the acquisition of those normative and behavioural standards typically associated with the upper-classes, should display such a lack of integration at the apex of its organisation. As one, somewhat anguished, observer asked:

> "How can we expect our children to learn from
> playing cricket when the very matches they can
> watch during their school holidays - supposedly
> the zenith of cricketing achievements - carry
> the taint of jealousy, dishonesty, and selfish-
> ness." [1]

In addition, the existing method of adjudicating the

"champion county", depending as it did, almost entirely

upon the whim of the sporting press, hardly befitted the

most traditionally elitist, and English of all summer

sports. But perhaps the most crucial development of all

concerned the rapid proliferation of the county cricket

clubs themselves. Between 1860 and 1914, membership of

these clubs appears to have become a much sought-after mark

of status in fashionable circles. While this may have

developed first in and around the major urban centres, it

soon diffused far and wide throughout England, Wales,

Scotland, and Ireland. For instance, county clubs were

established in Durham in 1864, Denbighshire in 1864,

Clackmannanshire in 1868, and County Donegal in 1871. The

prestige invested in these clubs effectively obviated the

organisation of a generally acceptable form of competition

which made allowances for the wide disparities in playing

strength, facilities, and financial resources separating

them. In short, few clubs were prepared to admit to not

being "first-class", and thus unworthy of participating

in the County Championship. In this predicament, the M.C.C.

maintained an unhelpful aloofness: as Haygarth noted, "to

the M.C.C. all counties are equal". [2] By the early 1890's,

the "organisation" of first-class cricket had become

chaotic. The only formally constituted body capable of

1   Anon, "Chaos in Cricket", Belgravia, August 1890, p. 164.
2   Quoted Lord Harris, op.cit., p. 182.

restoring consistency to the category of "first-class",

the County Cricket Council, voted itself out of existence

in 1890. And yet, even in this state, there can be no

denying the enormous popularity of inter-county matches.

The Rev. Holmes, writing in 1894, observed that,

> "Twenty-five years ago, the great matches of the
> season were North v South and Gentlemen v Players.
> The former have to all intents and purposes
> disappeared, whilst the latter no longer possess
> the charm they once did. County cricketers
> prefer fighting under the colours of their County.
> It is by no means certain that in twenty years
> time the annual matches between Amateurs and
> Professionals will be played. The fact is, all
> our interest is absorbed in the doings of the
> Counties. The crowds flock to County matches."[1]

The precise motives of those representatives of the

county cricket clubs, who, in 1894, invited the M.C.C. to

draw up a "Classification" of first-class counties, and

to organise a championship between them, have not been

faithfully recorded. Yet it is less than idle to surmise

that among them were the desire to maximise their capacity

to tap the economic potential of county cricket matches,

to create a coherent, consistent competition from which a

"champion county" could be seen to emerge by all, and to

secure, both for themselves and their descendents, the

social cachet attached to county clubs, then largely depen-

dent on the somewhat fickle foundation of mass popularity.

Whatever the motivation involved, the result of the

M.C.C.'s intervention in 1894 was the establishment of a

type of county competition which was destined to last in

its essential form until the present day.[2] One final

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1   The Rev. R. S. Holmes, op.cit., p. 67.

2   In fact, the 1972 season saw the first major divergence
from this original formulation.

observation will serve to conclude this chapter. As in
the seventeenth century, the fundamental and far-reaching
redistribution of power within British society in the
hundred years from 1775 was followed by an era of retrench-
ment, in which those who had gained most from these new
lines of power and distinction sought to safeguard themselves
by affecting as close a liason with members of the previous
ruling-class as their lack of heritage would allow. It is
against the background of this type of regularity in the
processes of change which have moulded British society
over the past five hundred years, that the development
of the most elaborate forms of cricket must be examined.

Chapter Two   Social Relationships in

First-Class Cricket: 1873-1945.

At first sight, it may appear slightly paradoxical
that cricket should have acquired in the distinction
between the amateur and the professional, a set of highly
elaborate, dichotomous social relationships and role
requirements, deliberately contrived and often formally
established, at the same time as it became a spectacular
attraction to large audiences drawn from all sections of
society. And yet it is both exceedingly difficult and
grossly misleading to attempt in any real sense to dis-
associate these hierarchically ordered relationships and
roles from the popular context of first-class cricket.
The paradoxical nature of this coincidence in fact
provides the key to its own resolution. For it is likely
that both the organisation of first-class cricket, and the
social relationships which serve as its hall-mark, were
reflections of fundamental changes in the structure of
British society itself. In the previous chapter, it was
argued that the eventual reconciliation of the original
county cricket clubs with the M.C.C., and the subsequent
establishment of a county championship as the competitive
centre-piece of first-class cricket, were indicative of
the degree to which previously discordant groups representing
on the one hand, the vested authority of the aristocracy,
and on the other, the growing power of industrial, commercial
and financial interests, had, by the turn of the century,

crystallized into a new ruling-class, plutocratic in character and diverse in composition. In this chapter, it will be argued that the emergence of a distinctive pattern of social relationships within first-class cricket can only be understood in terms of the dual functions it served for this class; those of integration within its ranks, and differentiation from other, sub-ordinate classes. By virtue of having incorporated this distinction, first-class cricket could become popular - in the sense of attracting mass audiences, and indeed, in later years, coming to depend upon these audiences to sustain its financial credibility - without relinquishing the elitist dimension of its image and ideology.[1]

In their most elaborate form, the categories "amateur" and "professional" denoted the existence of two radically different social worlds within first-class cricket. In some cases, this distinction amounted to physical segre-gation: for instance, the amateur had a separate dressing-room, ate apart, and even entered the field of play by a different gate. In others, like the placing of the amateur's initials before his name, while the professionals' went after, the method of differentiation was more subtle, if no less meaningful. In addition to their playing roles, professionals were required to bowl at club members in the nets, and to perform a wide range of menial tasks. On the

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1   That this formulation involves considerable over-simpli-
     fication is not doubted. We will show later, for instance,
     the extent to which substantial sections of the upper and
     middle classes in Victorian society were opposed to admit-
     ting professionals into first-class cricket under any
     conditions. Its purpose here is simply to focus attention
     upon the dominant theme of the chapter.

field of play, particularly from the turn of the century onwards, the roles of the amateur and professional, though complementary, nevertheless differed widely in terms of styles and performance, and more fundamentally, the attitudes towards the game reflected in these constrasting styles. It was the individuality and flare of the typically amateur batting performance which gave first-class matches most of their spectacular appeal; it was the consistency and predictability of the professional, both in batting and bowling, which sustained their competitiveness. For the true amateur,[1] participation in first-class cricket constituted little more than an athletically and aesthetically stimulating form of exercise, though this did not necessarily imply any lessening in his level of involvement. For the professional, however, every performance was part of a career, the success or failure of which effectively determined the fate of his entire work life. Because of these pressures, it was argued, captaincy should always remain the perquisite of the amateur, who by virtue of his different conception of the game, remained indifferent to such problems. At least, this has been the traditional interpretation of Lord Hawke's oft-quoted remark, "Pray God, that a professional should never captain England."

But rationalisations of this type often serve as pieces of ideology to blind the observer to another, if not the correct, interpretation of such apparent discrimination. A more satisfactory explanation of the amateur-professional distinction may be obtained by considering the following circumstances. First, between 1873 and 1945, the great

1   Even at this stage, various types of 'shamateurism' had developed.

majority of professional cricketers came from a working-
class background. Second, during the same period, a
growth in the size and influence of the working-class in
British society, coinciding with a supposed relative
decline in the economic prosperity of the middle-class
and a real decline in the political influence of the
aristocracy, created an unprecedented situation in which
the working-class could be seen as mounting an active
challenge to the political, economic and social dominance
of a plutocracy which, itself, lacked the sanctity of
tradition. As a result, relationships between the working-
class and the rest of society reached a level of antagonism
unparalleled in British history. It is hardly surprising
to find that it was within those institutions with the
greatest traditions of upper-class dominance, such as
cricket and horse-racing, that formal and informal
sanctions upon the nature and frequency of relationships
between members of different social classes were most
stringently enforced. Finally, in the case of the cricketer,
the precise role he played, and the status he was accorded
in county cricket, was significantly influenced by the work
and market situation of his immediate predecessor, the
professional in the touring Elevens. During the 1850's
and 1860's, these Elevens dominated the sphere of organised
cricket. Their representatives, - players like Clarke,
Parr, Jackson and Daft, - were both the popular cult heroes
and the arbiters of developing styles and techniques.
Clearly, this exalted status could not continue to exist

within a type of cricket which was actively dominated by
personnel drawn from the higher strata of Victorian
society, and which, until many years later, paid only
lip-service to the goal of financial viability. One
cause of the strength and durability of the amateur-
professional distinction, with all its attendant stereo-
types, lay in the extent of the transformation by which
it was established. That this involved a radical and far-
reaching recasting of the role and status of the professional
cricketer was noted by one of the most famous players of
the period, Prince Ranjitshihji, in an article he wrote
to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Victoria's reign:

> "A professional in former times was entirely the
> servant of his club, and in a servant's position.
> In the exhibition elevens, he became a free member
> of a club with equal rights with other members,
> and also in a way a public character, supported
> by and responsible to the public. These two
> aspects of a professional's position are worth
> remarking with reference to the position of
> modern professionals playing for counties. A
> modern professional who represents his county
> is partly a servant of a club, partly a servant
> of the public, and partly a skilled labourer
> selling his skills in the best market. He may
> or may not have a local interest in the club he
> represents: that is another aspect of his case." [1]

Bearing these circumstances in mind, it seems plausible to
argue that the incorporation of the amateur-professional
distinction represented a conscious attempt by those respon-
sible for the inception and organisation of county cricket
clubs and the County Championship both to restore and
preserve upper-class control over the game and its image.

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1   Prince Ranjitshihji, "Cricket and the Victorian Era",
     Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (July 1897), pp.15-16.

Once such a class-based identity had been stamped upon
county cricket, it was but a short step to argue that
it was the amateur, recruited almost exclusively from the
upper and uppermiddle-classes, who was best equiped to
protect the interests of cricket, particularly in the role
of captain. Those who have maintained that captaincy fell
to the amateur as a result of his qualities of leadership,
or because he suffered less from career pressures, have
propounded what, in effect, amounts to a self-fulfilling
prophecy.

If the "exhibition elvens" had any lasting influence
on first-class cricket, it is more than likely reflected
in the fact that county cricket, whilst exuding class and
status distinctions, nevertheless remained one of the least
exclusive of elitist sports. The demand for cricket as a
form of mass entertainment, stimulated so effectively by
the touring elevens between 1850 and 1870, could never be
entirely erased. But it cannot be denied that the ideals
on which county cricket was founded, and the values it
represented, were but an extension into the sphere of
commerce, finance, education, and beyond these, into
social life in general, of the amalgam of values of the
new "plutocracy". Their particular conception of cricket
can only be understood as part of an ideology which has
been described as "actively anti-intellectual, anti-
scientific, games-dominated tory-imperialism".[1] The
pervasiveness of this ideology is best illustrated in an
anecdotal comment supplied by the author of the previous

1   E. J. Hobsbawm, op.cit., p. 141.

quotation:

> "It was not the Duke of Wellington but a late
> Victorian myth which claimed the battle of
> Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton,
> which did not exist at the time." [1]

The precise nature of the relationship between cricket and the ideology of Victorian imperial aggrandizement can be highlighted by juxtaposing two quotations from contemporary authors. The first contains an ethical and moral defence of the eminence of cricket and football in the standard public school curriculum:

> "I claim for our cricket ground and football
> field a share, and a very considerable share too,
> in the formation of the character of the English
> gentleman. Our games require patience, good-
> temper and perseverance, good pluck, and above
> all implicit obedience. It is no bad training
> for the battle of life for a boy to be skinned
> at football, or even given out wrongly at cricket,
> and to be able to take the affliction quietly
> and with good temper, and in a gentlemanly spirit." [2]

The second, a famous, or in some circles, notorious piece of late-nineteenth century verse, extends the relevance of the qualities of character nurtured by cricket to the sphere of the "battle of life" - in this case, to an incident in a long-forgotten desert campaign:

> "Vitae Lampada
>
> There's a breathless hush in the Close tonight -
> Ten to make and the match to win -
> A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
> An hour to play and the last man in.
> And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
> Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
> But the Captain's hand on his shoulder smote -
> 'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

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1   Ibid., p. 142.

2   The Hon. R. Grimston, in Fifty Years of Sport at Oxford,
    Cambridge, and the Great Public Schools, (ed. A.C.M. Croome)
    (1913), p. 113.

> The sand of the desert is sodden red -
> Red with the wreck of a square that broke,
> The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
> And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
> The river of death has brimmed his banks,
> And England's far, and Honour a name,
> But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:
> 'Play up! play up! and play the game!'
>
> This is the word that year by year
> While in her place the School is set,
> Every one of her sons must hear,
> And none that hears it dare forget.
> This they all with joyful mind
> Bear through life with a torch in flame,
> And falling fling to the host behind -
> 'Play up! play up! and play the game!' " [1]

When Kent C.C.C. won the Championship in 1906, a contributor to the National Review, was moved to write that it was,

> "Because they were imbued with that co-operative
> and sporting enthusiasm, that superb playing for
> the side and not for the self, that sacrifice of
> the individual for the team's sake..... there is some-
> thing Imperial both in the form of the Kent team
> and in the popular recognition thereof." [2]

During the early years of the Championship, the reification

of these qualities in the amateur cricketer par excellence

lent an unassailable rationale to his domination both of

the county cricket club, and as captain, of the Eleven

itself. And, at the last call, it was these qualities

which would admit the amateur to membership of a still

more sought after elite:

> "And when 'time' is called you will 'bring out
> your bat', your own conscience will say 'Well
> done': and those you have cheered and helped
> will say, 'A good man! Thank God for such an
> innings!' Aye, and when on the resurrection
> morning you will come out of the pavilion,
> leaving your playing clothes behind you, and
> robbed like your glorious Captain-King, you

---

1 Sir Henry Newbolt, Vitae Lampada, Selected Poems (1940),
   p. 87.

2 Home Gordon, Op. cit., p. 659.

> and all the hosts of God will see and understand
> your score as you cannot now, and your joy will
> be full as you hear the Captain, 'the innumerable
> company of angels,' and the whole redeemed Church
> of God greet you with the words, 'Well Played Sir!' [1]

However, by the last decade of the nineteenth century,
the justification for amateur captaincy had begun to move
away from these qualities of personality towards a more
explicit assertion of status superiority. In the same
article in the National Review, Home Gordon claimed that;

> "County sides are best led by a man socially
> superior to the professionals." [2]

But in adopting this attitude, defenders of the
amateur status were led into flouting another of the central
ideological tenets in their conception of cricket, the
inherently democratic nature of the game. Yet such was
the strength of their resolve to retain the sanctity of
the amateur's position that, in the case of county cricket,
even the image of democracy, so jealously guarded for gener-
ations, was sacrificed. An example of this contradiction
occurs in Home Gordon's article, at the point at which he
declares that,

> "Cricket will always be a gloriously democratic
> game, but in county cricket, the captain should
> always have some standing.... the Leicestershire
> committee have selected as their captain, Sir
> Arthur Hazelrigg who has never participated in a
> first-class match in his life, and was not even
> in his school XI, nor yet in a University trial." [3]

Coinciding with this change, there also appeared within
the upper strata of Victorian society a distinct division

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1   Rev. Thomas Waugh, The Cricket Field of the Christian
     Life, Stockport (1894), p. 148.

2   Home Gordon, op.cit., p. 660

3   Ibid., p. 661.

of opinion with respect to the participation of professionals in county cricket, a conflict which called into question the _raison d'etre_ of this form of the game. On the one hand, what may be described as "conservative" opinion held that cricket should remain the unchallenged domain of the upper-class and, as such, exclusive. As a representative of this group argued,

> "It will be an evil day when changes are made which are based upon the assumption that cricket depends more on gate-money than on the support of country gentlemen, more on its first-class fixtures than on the games at our country-houses." [1]

At the core of this type of argument lay an abhorrence of the entrepreneurial aspect of first-class cricket. This led, so it was claimed, to the divesting of those qualities of co-operation and self-discipline, the development and representation of which was felt to constitute cricket's major function. Mr. C. E. Green, a county cricketer, and later, President of the M.C.C., notes in 1910 that,

> "County cricket has become too much of a business, and too much of a money-making concern. There is, I am afraid, very little real sport in it now as a game, and the feeling of _esprit de corps_ which ought to exist in connection with real county cricket is fast disappearing." [2]

One consequence of the growing emphasis upon economic profitability in first-class cricket, in particular, offended many of the game's more traditional devotees. It was felt that by admitting the interest of a fee-paying audience, a premium was put upon predictability and

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1 Anon, "Cricket", _The World's Work_, (1902), p. 216.

2 Mr. C. E. Green, in W. A. Bettesworth's _Chats on the Cricket Field_, (1910), p. 183.

regularity, both with respect to organisation and to the
participation of players. Automatically, much of the
characteristically amateur spontaneity of the game was
lost, and, more seriously, many amateurs who found it
impossible to devote so much time to the game, were
forced either to withdraw completely, to be replaced by
professionals, or to receive a wage thinly-veiled in the
form of a fee or expenses. As an article in the National
Review, in 1910, suggested, the true amateur, the salt of
first-class cricket -

> "Men like Lord Hawke, who have the taste and
> the means to go on playing first-class cricket
> strictly and purely as amateurs....." [1]

were fast becoming the exception rather than the norm, as
conservative opinion undoubtedly thought fitting. In this
situation, the amateur's only alternative was to accept
some form of financial remuneration for his services
from the county club, a measure which, since it led to
the defilement of the treasured amateur status, was anathema
to traditionalists. As early as 1900, H. G. Hutchinson
could describe four ways in which the cricketer could
retain his amateur status whilst receiving financial
assistance. The first of these, the payment of hotel and
travelling expenses, "is a custom that is perfectly
recognised, and perhaps in no way lowers the status of those
who receive this help".[2] The second involved receiving
"expenses" in excess of those actually incurred; the third,
receiving compensation for losses incurred by his "business"

1   H. G. Hutchinson, "The Parlous Condition of Cricket",
    National Review, (1900), p. 32.

2   Ibid., p. 34.

owing to his absence; and the fourth, receiving a regular
salary, not for playing cricket but for other services
which he does not perform and never thought of performing,
- i.e. the 'assistant secretary'. "The fault," Hutchinson
concludes,

> "lies with the custom, the system approved by
> the custom.... and it is a system that is an
> almost necessary result of the immense, the all-
> embracing demands on a man's time that first-
> class cricket makes..... A man cannot make a
> decent pretence of attending to a business or
> a profession and yet play first-class cricket,
> excepting only in the case of professions like
> school-mastering and the law, with their long
> vacations, which nevertheless only give a man
> the necessary freedom at the latter end of the
> season." [1]

A more extreme version of this criticism was voiced
by those who saw in the attention paid to cricket - "a
disease characteristic of all sections of society" - a
threat to England's economic stability, and above all, to
her national security. By placing so much emphasis on
cricket at school, a false idea of the relative value of
work and play was instilled into upper-class children.
The result, it was feared, would be a generation ill-
fitted to hold their own with others whose education had
been conducted upon "sounder" lines. Games had a value -
"when played in the right spirit, they are an admirable
training for the more serious battles of life. They
impress upon boys the necessity for patience, resource-
fulness, and unselfishness as no other form of education
could"[2] - but the tendency was for boys to become

1   Ibid., p. 42.

2   "An Old Harrovian", op.cit., P. 96.

enthusiastic sportsmen and hence, to forget their work. If the energies of the upper-classes could be so dissipated, what was to stop the same malaise affecting the rest of society?

> "When the upper-classes thus magnify the importance of games it is not surprising that the lower class follow suit. It is obviously impossible for the great majority themselves to play games, but they can pay to look on - they cannot go to race-meetings, but they can bet in the streets."[1]

These sentiments provided a reliable indication of the extent to which not just the upper-classes, but all sections of British society,[2] were imbued with a sense of militant chauvinism during this era of "splendid isolation". As the "Old Harrovian" went on to suggest, foreigners found it difficult to understand how,

> "An Englishman can talk so glibly about the greatness of an Empire they are not fit to defend, nor can he believe in the patriotism of a people with whom sport and amusement come before performance of the duty of their country."[3]

These, then, were the central arguments employed by a vociferous body of opinion within the highest strata of Victorian and Edwardian society to oppose the expansion of first-class cricket. If this form of cricket as a popular entertainment was considered to be inherently dissipating, it is not surprising to find that the image of the professional cricketer, the paid seducer of the

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1   Ibid., p. 97.

2   For an example, see Lord Roseberry's address to the 17th Trade Union Congress (1884), which was received with raptuous applause; quoted in George Bennet's, The Concept of Empire, (1951)

3   "An Old Harrovian", op.cit., p. 99.

masses, should suffer accordingly. In the words of an

anonymous contributor to the Saturday Review,

> "They (the professionals) are for the most part
> a very well conducted and responsible body of
> men, and many of them would do credit to any
> station of life in which they were placed, but
> it must be remembered that cricket brings them
> into association with men of the best manners,
> and above all, of impeachable character, whose
> traditions of the game, brought from school and
> college, make unfairness or even sharp practice
> as impossible to them as cheating at cards. It
> is from these men that cricket takes its tone in
> this country, and that tone is sustained by their
> determination to have no pecuniary reward of any
> sort in the matches in which they play." [1]

That these opinions were representative of a sizeable

proportion of the late-Victorian upper-classes can be shown

by referring to the almost simultaneous growth in the

popularity amongst this section of society of country-

house cricket, a variant of the game in which, in marked

contrast to county cricket, an emphasis on elitism among

the participants and exclusiveness in organisation, was

retained. To many, country-house cricket,

> "Was truly amateur, people who wanted to play
> to win regardless of other aspects, would not
> find themselves again invited, nor again would
> fine exponents, but not so fine characters." [2]

Though existing as early as 1840, the apogee of country-

house cricket coincided with that "orgy of conspicuous

waste" in which members of the upper-class indulged during

the decade which immediately preceded the outbreak of the

Great War. In its heyday, country-house cricket was

organised as elaborately and extensively as the county

version. One of its participants, Mr. C. K. Francis,

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1   Anon, "Professional Cricket", Saturday Review, July 14th,
    1883, p. 84.

2   Rowland Bowen, Cricket: A History of its Growth, p. 117

recalled that,

> "We used to stay in various country houses for
> about a week, playing two or three matches,
> sometimes against very good teams. The cricket
> weeks at Preston Hall, Croxteth, Lees Court,
> Scarborough, Hothfield, Compton Verney, Wilton, Rood
> Ashton, Patshill, Northernwood, Escrick, South-
> gate, Vice Regal Lodge, are only a few that I
> can remember now out of the many." [1]

After the Great War, though a few examples could still
be discovered, the influence of country-house cricket
declined as rapidly as that leisured, luxury-seeking
enclave of society with which both its staging and its
players were so intimately associated. To many, the
disappearance of country-house matches and of the ideals
it represented was a further indication of the declining
standards of British social life. As Alec Waugh observed,

> "It is sad to think how quickly that world
> has passed, and how effectively the machinery
> of our industrial system has already taken
> cricket for itself. Nyren's game is no longer
> entertained for a few. It has become a part
> of the national life, and probably, if the
> Bolsheviks get their way with her, it will be
> nationalised with the cinema and the theatre
> and Association Football." [2]

The ephemeral popularity of country-house cricket may
be seen as perhaps the most real articulation of what has
been described as a conservative body of opinion, basically
opposed to the popularisation of first-class cricket.
However, there was within Victorian society another,
equally coherent body of opinion which, inasmuch as it
favoured the extension of county cricket into a spectacular

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1   Mr. C. K. Francis, in W. A. Bettesworth, op.cit., p.207.

2   A. Waugh, "Lord's and its Literature", London Mercury,
     (1922), p. 78.

crowd-drawing, profit-making, enterprise, may be described as "liberal".[1] In itself, a more pragmatic approach, liberal opinion was principally differentiated by its acceptance, indeed, active soliciting of professionals in county cricket. In fact, many of the improvements in pay and conditions of employment of the professional cricketer immediately before and after the Great War stemmed from the efforts of Lord Hawke in Yorkshire. In his article on cricket in the Victorian era, Prince Ranjitsinhji asked, "What excuse is there for the exist- ence in the community of a class that does nothing for the general welfare?" The answer he provides in this article can be taken to represent liberal opinion in general:

> "Now I should be the last to say that a man of
> ability should give all his time to cricket.
> That would be quite absurd. But I do not think
> that the life of one who devotes himself to
> cricket is either altogether wasted or quite
> useless to his fellow-men, for the simple reason
> that cricket provides a very large number of
> people with cheap, wholesome and desirable
> amusement."[2]

The type of cricket envisaged here is far removed from the elegance and sumptuousness of the English country- house. Clearly, it is more than a game; rather, "a huge institution, highly organised and demanding the entire time of those actively engaged in it."[3] Its home was a special arena, the County Ground, its rationale based on profit-making, and its motif, "spectacular."

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1   The implication of "liberal" in this context must not be
    exaggerated. Along with "conservative", it is used to
    denote differences within the spectrum of upper-class
    opinion regarding cricket's function.

2   Prince Ranjitsinhji, op.cit., p. 9.

3   Ibid., p. 6.

> "The county clubs were no longer glorified
> local clubs, but in addition business concerns.
> They provided popular amusement and good
> cricket: in fact, they became what they are
> now - local in name and partly local in reality,
> but also run upon exhibition or, as I called it,
> spectacular lines." [1]

The presence of professionals was deemed essential to

the successful continuation of this type of cricket,

largely because of the level of skill it required and

the all-embracing demands placed upon its regular partici-

pants. Only the professional had the time to devote to

attaining and maintaining that quality of performance

demanded by first-class cricket's audience:

> "The development of cricket has taught them (the
> audience) what the game can offer when played
> skilfully, and they would cease to come if
> matches were poor or if it sank to the average
> standard that can be attained by men who only
> played cricket occasionally and as a recreation.
> There are players who can come into first-class
> cricket from other pursuits, and make centuries.
> But players like Mr. W. H. Patterson and Mr. D.C.
> Steel are very rare indeed.... I cannot see how
> cricket as a great institution for providing
> popular amusement, could, as things are now,
> exist without a class of people who devote them-
> selves to it." [2]

That professionals were considered an essential ingred-

ient of "spectacular" cricket, however, did not result in

their being granted a greater degree of occupational

autonomy or status. The absence of any such process of

up-grading may be seen as an indication of the extent to

which the role of the professional, and the ideology of

his occupation, were determined by a more general conception

of the rights and capabilities of the working-class male

held by the late-Victorian upper-classes. In this light,

1 Ibid., p.16.

2 Ibid., p. 10.

professional cricketers were accepted as good workers, reliable and energetic, and as such, worthy of preservation. In the words of Lord Harris, another subsequent President of The M.C.C.,

> "A more discerning body of men it would be
> difficult to find. Their work, especially
> among those who do not rise to the top of
> the ladder, is very hard; they are always ex-
> pected to be keen......It would be a distinct
> loss if such a body of men were to be with-
> drawn from our cricket fields..... Therefore,
> let us by all means encourage them to perse-
> vere in their profession, so they may do
> their part towards the welfare of the community." [1]

Others, however, while favourably disposed in principle towards the presence of professionals in first-class cricket, and willing to admit the level of skill possessed by the best, nevertheless expressed considerable reservations as to the number of occasions on which the typically "professional" approach to the game should be employed. As the biographer of the Hon. F. S. Jackson pointed out,

> "The skill with which Shrewsbury uses his legs
> upon a treacherous wicket is nothing short of
> miraculous. His comrade-at-arms, William
> Gunn, can also play the game very able: so can
> Mr. Stoddart and Mr. Jackson - a fact not
> generally known. The difference between the
> play of the two amateurs and the two profes-
> sionals is that the latter makes use of the
> method when it is not necessary to it, whereas
> Stoddart and Jackson only do so where there is
> no other course open save wild slogging. It is
> not the use of the method, but the abuse of it,
> that can with fairness be criticised." [2]

Beyond the sphere of work, the professional cricketer tended to be accorded a status similar in many respects to

1   Lord Harris, "The Development of Cricket", p. 172.

2   P. C. Standing, The Hon. F. S. Jackson, (1906), p. x.

that of the indigenous population in a colonial territory.

In his popular occupational identity, simplicity and

honesty were the key features:

> "The cricketer is just a man with a clear eye,
> bronzed face, and athletic figure. He is usually
> somewhat lacking in general information, and is
> sometimes a poor conversationalist upon any but
> his own subject. He does not read much. On the
> other hand, he does not talk much about things
> he does not understand, which is a good trait.
> He gives the impression of having led a free,
> unconstrained life - he be, in fact, anything
> from a trooper in the Rhodesian Horse to a
> Californian orange-grower. He is simple, frank,
> and unaffected: a genuine person, with plenty
> of self-respect, and no desire to seem what he
> is not: on the whole, not a bad sort of man at
> all - quite the reverse." [1]

The specific content of this stereotype is important.

One can scarcely fail to note the strains of what might

best be referred to as "doctrinaire paternalism." In

presenting it, the author was clearly conscious of the

accusations of those who saw in the professional, the

harbinger of first-class cricket's doom. With this in

mind, he constructed a picture of a cricketer who had

neither the capacity nor the inclination to challenge the

status quo. Such a portrayal served not only to buttress

the status of the professional but also, by implication,

to defend the existence of "spectacular" cricket in general.

For, if playing as a professional does not lead the cricketer

to challenge either the organisation of the game or its

administrators, then it may be argued that,

> "the profession of cricket does not do much harm
> to those who follow it." [2]

1 Prince Ranjitsinhji, op.cit., p. 10.

2 Ibid., p. 10.

Even amongst those who looked favourably upon his presence in first-class cricket, then, the professional was required to accept a position of almost total sub-ordination, a role which was based upon a tacit acceptance of the inherent limitations imposed on an individual by virtue of a working class up-bringing. When he discusses the typical amateur, Ranjitsinhji develops this theme further:

> "As for the amateur, who, being a man of
> leisure, devotes his life to cricket - well,
> he gets much good out of the game and very
> little ill, whereas he might easily be doing
> something that would have quite the reverse
> affect upon him. He generally has all the
> good qualities of the professional; only in
> a higher degree inasmuch as he starts in most
> cases with more capacity for development." [1]

In the respect it elicited and the responsibilities it entailed, the role of the professional in county cricket involved a dramatic down-grading from his previous position in the touring Elevens. Here, to all intents and purposes, professionals as a group dominated their work environment. The only respect in which a professional cricketer in the early years of the Championship could have been compensated for this loss of autonomy was the greater regularity of work and income which accompanied the introduction of a fixed number of annual matches. Yet, as far as one can judge, the relative and absolute decline in power and status suffered by cricketers provoked little antagonism. For the most part, they accepted this new definition of their work situation as a *fait* *accompli*. No doubt, the current popularity of county cricket which, by 1880, had almost

1   Ibid., p. 8.

completely replaced the professional Elevens as the

dominant form of spectacular entertainment, endorsed

this attitude. Where an instance of protest did occur,

it was normally directed at conditions of employment,

particularly the rate and method of compensation, rather

than at restoring the public status of the professionals'

role in the game. Perhaps the most significant, and

certainly the most publicised, incident was the "Notting-

hamshire Schism" of 1881, described at length in James

Lillywhite's Cricketers Annual, in 1882:

> "As a rule professional cricketers have borne
> themselves so respectably that the attitude
> taken by Alfred Shaw, Shrewsbury, Barnes, Morley,
> Selby, Scotton and Flowers in refusing to play
> for their county unless certain specified demands
> were granted by the committee was at first hardly
> credited....The precise origin of the movement is
> difficult to trace, but indirectly the visits of
> the two Australian Elevens to England may be held
> responsible for the sudden and extraordinary
> change which took place in the bearing of profes-
> sionals who had previously comported themselves
> most becomingly. The terms upon which the Colonial
> Players were accepted over here were utterly false
> to men like Shaw, who knew that the home status of
> some was certainly not above the level of profes-
> sional cricket in England, and here no doubt was
> the first sign of a grievance. Then again, the
> readiness with which in many cases, rather exorbi-
> tant demands of the Australian managers were met
> by some of our chief clubs probably had some in-
> fluence in encouraging Alfred Shaw, who may be
> considered as the leader of the movement, in
> believing that the withdrawal of seven most capable
> members of the Elevens might reduce the management
> of a county even so rich in cricketers as Notts.
> to accede to the imposition of new stipulations
> in the recognised contracts." [1]

The precise issues at stake were two-fold. First,

the professionals required the existing de facto conditions

of employment to be accorded a de jure contractual status

[1] Quoted in F. S. Ashley-Cooper, op cit., pp. 218-219.

by the county clubs, and in particular, that the benefit
should become an automatic reward for a stipulated period
of service to a particular county. Second, they demanded
the right to organise matches between county elevens inde-
pendent of the county clubs. For this latter request, the
Nottinghamshire Committee had already established a precedent
by permitting a similar request made by Richard Daft. That
the actions of Shaw et. al.[1] reflect a failure to come to
terms with the rapid decrease and imminent demise of their
previous autonomy is probable. But it is also likely that
they were an indication of the confusion produced within
the occupation by the presence of overseas touring parties
in England, and the organisation of similar parties composed
of English professionals, to tour Australasia. Until the
present century, the planning of such ventures and the
profits which accrued from them, were monopolised by profes-
sionals, of whom Shaw and Shrewsbury were among the most
prominent. Besides this domination, the subordination of
professionals in county cricket was an anomaly destined to
create extreme status inconsistencies. If this hypothesis
is accepted, it makes an important contribution towards
an understanding of the resilience of the idea of occu-
pational independence in the professional cricketer's
self-conception, a factor which, nearly forty years after
the establishment of the first county clubs, is otherwise
difficult to explain.

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1   This was not the first instance of Shaw objecting to
     the subordination of professionals. In 1873, he had
     refused to join W.G. Grace's team to tour Australia
     because professionals were to be allowed only second-
     class travel facilities.

The outcome of the Nottinghamshire "Schism", however, was to establish firmly a pattern of authority relationships in first-class cricket which was to remain virtually un- challenged until the second half of the twentieth century. The reaction of the Nottinghamshire Committee was strongly influenced by the general outcry within cricket's "establishment" at the outrageous nature of the professionals' demands. James Lillywhite expressed the opinion that as,

> "a deliberate combination against recognised administration..... it was not merely a question of the welfare of one county, but it involved a distinct and material alteration in the relations between paid cricketers and their employers which vitally affected the interests of every club of any importance." [1]

The Committee refused to accede to any of the profes- sionals' demands, omitted them from the eleven, and as a result, surrendered their supremacy among counties to Lancashire. By the end of the season, "after due submission had been made", five of the seven players were readmitted, but Shaw and Shrewsbury, "whom the committee adjudged to be the prime movers in the conspiracy", were excluded until the following season.

The "Schism" appears to have been the last group protest staged by professional cricketers. Since 1881, many players have stood out for particular alterations in their conditions of employment, some even for the establish- ment of a legally binding contract, but no instances of group actions have been recorded. Against a background of a gradual deterioration in employer-employee relationships

1   F. S. Ashley-Cooper, op.cit., p. 219.

and increasing industrial strife, this may seem unlikely.
But it is not difficult to understand. Until 1945, and
possibly later, the average annual earnings of a professional
cricketer, and the conditions under which he worked, with
a first-class county were greatly superior to those commanded
by unskilled or semi-skilled manual workers, occupational
categories which would have constituted the most realistic
alternatives for the majority of professionals. In addition
to this, there was the kudos of being a cricketer, a
relatively high status occupation irrespective of one's
personal situation within it, and the more tangible bene-
fits this offered - in particular, opportunities for upward
mobility on retirement. To these conscious, if ideologically
coloured, attributes must be added the fact that as county
cricket became established as the centre-piece of first-
class cricket, so the extent to which professionals came
to internalise the norms and values which so distinguished
the identity of the county cricket clubs, increased. By
the end of the Great War, the majority of county clubs had
instituted "nurseries" and other similar agencies, which
had the manifest function of recruiting potential playing
staff, but also served as highly efficient instruments of
socialisation.

One consequence of the establishment of the County
Championship was a considerable expansion in the career
opportunities open to the professional cricketer. No
longer was he restricted to aiming, at best, at a place
in one of the touring Elevens, or, more normally, to
securing a position as professional to a local club.

At first, nine, but by 1922, seventeen county cricket clubs existed, each employing as many as forty, and seldom less than twenty-five professionals. As has already been shown, this increase in the size of the occupation sparked off lasting and vehement criticism from those who feared for the amateur status, and those who protested against men being "taken away from trade and useful occupations in order to play cricket for some fifteen years of their lives, and the very best years into the bargain." [1] The development of a coherent occupational ideology at this time was, one suspects, a reaction on the part of "liberal" opinion to these criticisms. Framed within the confines of an hierarchically ordered institution, and representing an idealistic, upper-class conception of the cricketer, this ideology served to rationalise the subordination of the professional and to glamorise the occupation. Its seminal feature was the belief that there existed between the cricketer and his work, an intense emotional affinity capable of off-setting all but the most intractable difficulties. Thus those who sought to defend the hierarchical system of social relationships within first-class cricket did so, more often than not, by invoking the image of the contented, happy, cricketer. For example,

> "Now most cricketers would rather play cricket
> than do anything else, even though it is the
> means whereby they live. The large majority of
> cricketers play cricket for cricket's sake, rather
> than because they get so much a year for appearing
> in so many matches or bowling for so many hours a-
> day at the nets. For this reason, I think I would
> rather be a professional cricketer than a man who

1   Prince Ranjitsinhji, op.cit., p. 8.

> toils to make a large income out of some business
> that he hates in order to spend it upon something
> that he likes. Such men have a divided life, half
> of which is not life at all in the strict sense
> of the word." [1]

There is little doubt that such an image of the
cricketer was internalised by the great majority of pro-
fessionals, and that its presence was sufficient to sustain
the majority against doubts concerning both the financial
benefits offered by county cricket, and the indeterminacy
of the career itself. In the case of finance, the poten-
tial earnings of the most successful players were, from
the point of view of the aspiring cricketer from a working-
class background, considerable. The gulf between the ideal
rewards and the real wages they received on first joining
a county club - one pound a week, without a winter retainer
in most cases - was bridged by the intangible "love of the
game". Sir Jack Hobbs, one of the most revered figures
in the modern history of the game, described exactly how
these two factors combined to project him into a cricket
career. After leaving the York Street Boys School in
Cambridge, for which the fees were 4d a week, he recalled
that:

> "I began to feel deeply that there was a career
> in front of me. Apart from the glamour, the
> earnings of professionals in those days (c.1900)
> seemed to my mind very big. I had been told
> that they were getting five pounds a match. It
> seemed big money. But even the earnings paled
> in my imagination with the glory of playing for
> a county - say, for instance, for Surrey, the
> county of my hero, Tom Hayward....Cricket had
> become with me an all-absorbing passion. It was
> my supreme ambition. It stuck out a mile in my
> mind beyond anything else. My father's occasional

1   Ibid., p. 9.

remarks about county players fired my hopes.
Love of the game must have been bred in my
very blood." [1]

This appreciation of the potentialities of a cricket
career, redolent with youthful enthusiasm and ambition,
should be contrasted with the more mature reflection of
another professional Test cricketer:

"It is popularly supposed that there is quite
a lot of money in first-class cricket. If there
is, I have not found it. It is the worst paid
of all professional games. With Worcestershire,
the recompense for 1,500 overs a year, which yield
an average crop of over 150 wickets a season, and
47 innings producing between 800 and 1,000 runs
for twenty weeks' cricket, brought in under £300.
During the period of depression it was suggested
that the Worcestershire professionals should agree
to a ten per cent reduction, and other clubs were
circularised as to the amount of wages paid to
their professionals. I was informed that at least
four other counties paid less than Worcestershire,
and several other counties paid the same rate. Out
of this, hotel accounts for away matches, taxi
fares, flannels, and cricket equipment bills have
to be paid by the professional." [2]

This account calls into question many of the assumptions

upon which Hobbs based his decision to enter cricket. If

Root's evaluation of the cricket career is accepted, even

the successful county cricketer found the financial bene-

fits obtained from the game barely sufficient to sustain

a respectable standard of living. For many professionals,

the promise of a "benefit" constituted a major incentive

to following a cricket career. Yet Root quotes the example

of a player in his final year with Worcestershire who, on

being offered a second "benefit", replied, "No, thank you,

I can't afford it!" The reasons he gave were as follows:

1   J. B. Hobbs, My Life Story, (1935), p. 32.

2   F. Root, The Cricket Pro's Lot, (1937), pp. 43-44.

> "A benificiary has to bear the whole of the
> expenses of both the home and away fixture
> of his club for the match he decides upon.
> He is not given an absolutely free choice of
> the fixture, the most profitable match generally
> being denied him. Wages for players, umpires,
> gatemen, policemen, scorers, and so on, have to
> be paid, as well as the travelling expenses.
> It is not always possible to insure against the
> vagaries of the weather." [1]

The belief that a cricket career unfailingly conveyed
upon its followers an opportunity to obtain higher-status
jobs on retirement had become a treasured facet of the
occupational ideology as early as the turn of the century.
Administrators, and amateur players alike, frequently
articulated the belief that:

> "A first-class cricketer, whose character is
> good, can rely with certainty upon obtaining
> on his retirement from county cricket a suitable
> and well-paid berth, which he will be capable
> of filling for many years. Frequently, too,
> their fame and popularity help cricketers to
> find good businesses upon their retirement,
> when usually they have a certain amount of
> money, gained from their benefit match, to
> invest. Certainly, from a material point of
> view, a successful cricketer's career is by no
> means unprofitable. More than that, it is far
> better than those followed by most men in the class
> from which the majority of professional cricket-
> ers are drawn." [2]

Here again, a comparison between the beliefs expressed
above, and those described by even the most successful of
professionals, is instructive. The latter contain a far
less ecstatic estimation of the merits of a cricket career,
and a far soberer account of the problems likely to be
encountered by those involved in first-class cricket as
professionals. Jack Hobbs, whose achievements on the

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1   Ibid., p. 45.

2   Prince Ranjitsinhji, op.cit., p. 7.

cricket field are in several respects unrivalled, observed

that:

> "There is no royal road to success in cricket.
> It is a rough, hard, road, and only a few can
> win through." [1]

He went on to extend this argument by offering the

following advice to prospective players:

> "Seek first, a position in some business so that
> there may be something tangible to fall back on
> in the case of failure at cricket or dislike of
> it...... Cricket is too precarious. It is all
> right, if you can rise to the top and get the
> plums. Otherwise, it is a bare living for a few
> years, with nothing at the end; one saves a few
> pounds in the summer and spends them in the winter." [2]

The spectre of financial and social deprivation atten-

dant upon the end of a cricket career is largely implicit

in Hobbs' advice. But, in the observations of other con-

temporary professionals, it becomes dramatically real.

For example:

> "Many of the cricket heroes of the past are
> getting what consolation they can out of their
> memories - and an unskilled job at a pittance
> of a wage. During their innings they played
> life's game according to the rules of the circles
> in which, by unavoidable circumstances, they
> were compelled to enter. But dress suits are
> superseded by, in some cases, the corduroy of
> the pauper: and the presents and souvenirs have
> disappeared into the clutches of rich uncles
> owning shops denoted by the sign of the three
> brass-balls." [3]

It is significant to note that observations and criti-

cisms of various aspects of the occupation of the professional

cricketer have been confined, by and large, to reflections in

autobiographies. Professionals rarely, if ever, voiced

their grievances publicly during their playing days.

1   J. B. Hobbs, op.cit., p. 47.

2   Loc.cit.

3   F. Root, op.cit., p. 50.

For many, of course, an awareness of the problems to be faced in retirement did not develop until that stage of their careers had arrived. Even the blatant inferiority of their status within county cricket, though frequently deeply-felt, was insufficient to stimulate the professional into some form of active protest - although Patsy Hendren once contrived to ridicule the whole arrangement by refusing an invitation from the ten fellow amateur members of an M.C.C. team, and walking alone through the professional gate on to the field of play at Lord's. During the inter-war years, and since 1945, many of the most abrasive aspects of the amateur-professional distinction disappeared - for instance, at Lord's all players have lunched together since shortly after the end of the Great War - but, in general, it remained the basis of social relationships in most county clubs until the second half of this century. In the writings of professionals, innumerable examples of the way it became enshrined in the social and physical organisation of these clubs are recorded. For instance;

> "At Edgbaston before the war the professionals
> were crowded into one small room and the amateurs
> - sometimes only one amateur - had the use of a
> dressing room twice the size. While accommodation
> was being wasted like that, the members of the
> professional staff who were not actually in the
> team for the match had to change in any nook they
> could find beforethey went to bowl at the nets."[1]

The extent to which, until 1962, professional cricketers accommodated themselves in their behaviour and attitudes almost without question to a subordinate status within first-class cricket, is seen by many as one of the most

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1   H. E. Dollery, Professional Captain, (1952), pp. 161-162.

incomprehensible aspects of an highly enigmatic sport.
Yet, it is not difficult to suggest at least the beginnings
of an explanation of this phenomenon. As Prince Ranjitsinhji
noted, for individuals from a working-class background, the
cricket career offered relatively immediate liberation from
the prospects of an otherwise arduous and frustrating work
life, and the almost unique opportunity to advance both
socially and financially in a society which, as late as
1939, did not facilitate any form of upward mobility.
Even if all its perils were recognised and the degree
to which many of its promises were more ideological than
realistic was understood from the start, the cricket
career still offered a fleeting acquaintance with a social
world which otherwise must have remained for ever remote.
The magnetic attraction of this prospect is best captured
by a professional cricketer, in a statement which also
provides a fitting conclusion to this chapter:

> "Still, they love the game that has, for a
> period, lifted them from the rut of the
> commonplace and revealed to them a phase
> of life which their comparatively slender
> incomes make impossible for them after
> they have given of their best. It can
> hardly be called a wasted life, for the
> game, if it has not provided them with a
> comfortable old age, has given them in their
> palmy days an entrance into realms far above
> their station." [1]

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[1] F. Root, op.cit., p. 50.

Conclusion

It may seem that in the previous chapter a dispro-
portionate amount of attention is devoted to the develop-
ment of the cricket career before 1914. If this is the
case, there is a very simple explanation for it. It was
during the forty or so years which followed the establish-
ment of the County Championship in 1873 that the basic
features of the first-class cricket career were established.
As will be shown, it was not until after 1945 that the
foundations of this career began to weaken. During the
inter-war years very little altered so far as the life
and prospects of the professional cricketer were concerned.

Part Five   Cricket as a Career in

Britain: 1945-1972

> "The bowler has a job to do; the batsman
> has a job to do; and somewhere down the
> line, we have to entertain the public." [1]

Introduction

In 1946, seventeen first-class county cricket clubs
prepared to resume their annual contest for the honour
of being designated the "champion county". On the surface,
it appeared as though very little had altered. After six
years of war it was only to be expected that some of the
faces had changed: a number of pre-war players had retired,
while a few had been killed or permanently injured on
active service. But, in most other respects, the organi-
sation of county clubs and of the championship in which
their teams took part was identical to that which had been
established during the inter-war period. Depending on
their size and wealth, the county clubs each employed
between twenty and thirty-five professionals in addition
to a ground staff composed of promising young players.
Within both the clubs and their teams, the amateur-pro-
fessional distinction remained the major axis of differen-
tiation. It was an ideological and real distinction
reiterated throughout the organisational structure of the
game. Professionals were never elected to the captaincy

[1]   A statement made, during interview, by a first-class
      cricketer.

of the county side, though they frequently deputised in the event of the amateur captain being ill or unavailable. The "Gentlemen versus Players" match at Lord's remained one of the most prestigious contests in the annual calendar of fixtures. Professionals generally changed in separate dressing rooms, and still, on occasions, entered the field by a different gate. Within the corpus of professional players, hierarchy remained just as important a principle: the senior professional's was a voice of authority even when, as in the case of the younger players, it ordered a number of menial, pre-match duties to be performed.

Ten years later, to the undiscerning eye, cricket probably appeared still as immune to change as some of its critics held that it always had been. In fact, at the level of international competition, England's national team reigned supreme, having just defended the "Ashes" [1] for a second consecutive time. But to others, signs that fundamental changes in the structure and ideology of first-class cricket were imminent, could not be mistaken. The size of audiences at county matches was constantly declining and county administrators were experiencing great difficulty in finding enough private benefactors to combat the loss of revenue which resulted from this decline. In this position, their first response was to reduce the size of their playing staff. For many, however, this was less disturbing than the more obvious change in the relative

1   The term used to describe the series of test matches played regularly between England and Australia.

status of amateurs and professionals. Largely as a result
of the dearth of experienced amateurs, professionals were
now being appointed to fill positions which had previously
been closed to them. Not only were county clubs appointing
professionals to the captaincy of their teams, but at the
highest level of all, the national side, a professional,
Leonard Hutton, had succeeded to the captaincy.

By the 1960's many of these innovations had been
assimilated into the normal organisational structure of
the game. In 1962, the separate statuses of the amateur
and the professional were discarded in favour of a single
category - the player. Throughout the decade, the conditions
under which players were employed became less rigid and
constraining. In addition to being paid more, they were
permitted under special circumstances to move between
counties without spending a number of years gaining a
residential qualification. By the end of the decade,
cricketers had established their own representative asso-
ciation - the Professional Cricketers Association. [1] But
perhaps the most significant of all post-war changes dates
from 1963 when, for the first time, outside sponsorship,
in the form of the Gillette Cup, was admitted to the first-
class game. More than any other single event, the inaugur-
ation of this annual competition signalled the end of a
conception of first-class cricket which had endured since
the inception of the County Championship in 1873. No
longer could the game be administered as a somewhat enlarged,
but still essentially elitist, leisure activity. From 1963,

1   Established in 1967.

cricket became a business and the cricketer a professional entertainer whose success was to be judged partly in terms of technical expertise and partly in terms of his ability to entertain audiences. Since then, several other forms of sponsored competitions have been introduced - notably the John Player Sunday League and the Benson and Hedges Cup.

In the final section of this account of the development of particular aspects of cricket, attention is focused on the consequences for the occupation and the career of the cricketer of this "revolution" in the organisation and ideology of the first-class game. In this, one salient fact stands outs. There can be little doubt that the status of the cricketer suffered a considerable and continuous decline between 1945 and 1970. For years, deprecatory comments had been heaped upon those who dared voice a preference for a career in the game. It was pointed out that not only was first-class cricket likely at any moment to become bankrupt, but even if it managed to survive a little longer and the player in question managed to follow a successful career, there was no guarantee that he would be able to find comparable employment on retirement. The cricketer, it was argued, was isolated from other occupations. Both his skills and his reputation were irrelevant beyond the boundaries of a cricket field. This was not only a result of the declining status of the game. To a significant degree, it was a consequence of fundamental changes in the nature and organisation of work in British society. As many facets of industry and commerce have been compelled to modernise their business performance,

technical expertise has become more important than a
desirable character. Because of these added demands,
the aspiring cricketer tended to be advised to prolong
his education as a prologue to embarking upon a relatively
secure, remunerative career in industry, commerce or in
one of the professions. If the prospective cricketer
chose to believe that this advice was based on an exces-
sively fatalistic interpretation of the state of first-
class cricket, there were many objective indices which
suggested that he was mistaken. Attendances at county
cricket matches were falling, and the annual accounts of
most county clubs indicated that liquidation was a
prospect more realistic than prosperity. Part of our
problem lies in discerning what impact public knowledge
of the parlous condition of first-class cricket had, first,
on recruitment of future players and, second, upon the
structure and ideology of the occupation itself.

Within the last ten years, however, the introduction
of sponsorship has radically altered the prospects of
first-class cricket. The popularity of the type of over-
limited, one day, "instant" contest on which the new,
sponsored competitions are based has not only staved off
impending bankruptcy but has also called into question
the feasibility, or desirability, of retaining the County
Championship in its existing form. If the first-class
game was to persist as a financially viable form of mass
entertainment, what justification could there be for
maintaining a type of contest which clearly had lost its
appeal amongst the general public? If, for many tradition-
alists in cricket's "establishment", this question came

close to heresy, those responsible for the financial
administration saw most clearly that it had to be faced
up to and if possible, answered. The introduction in
1972 of a reconstructed Championship, involving fewer
matches and a League Cup based on one-day matches, marked
the first attempt to reorganise what remains the competi-
tive foundation of first-class cricket into a paying
concern.

For players, sponsorship offered the immediate promise
of a sizeable expansion in their earning capacity. On
the introduction of the John Player Sunday League in 1969,
it became possible for the typical county cricketer to
earn in one season a sum which, twenty years earlier, would
have taken four years to amass. But there was another side
to this picture - one which received little or no publicity.
Besides improving the cricketer's material expectations,
the changes introduced into the first-class game during
the 1960's also created a number of fundamental dilemmas
in his career structure. The combination of more one-day
cricket and a clear obligation to entertain were factors
which were not necessarily compatible with the player's
own ambitions. How was he, for instance, to reconcile the
potentially conflicting demands of personal success, team
success and mass entertainment? In addition to what
appeared to many as imperfectly assimilated goal structures,
the established cricketer was also faced with the problem
of deciding whether, or to what extent, those time-honoured
skills and strategies designed to cope with the exigences
of a three-day, county match were applicable to the new

brand of one-day cricket. Was it not likely that, in
order to succeed in the latter version of the game, the
player would need to master a range of techniques radi-
cally different to those he had learnt and perfected
during the early years of his career?

In this introduction, attention has centred on some
of the implications for the cricket career of the many,
post-war changes in the competitive structure of first-
class cricket. It has been suggested that, since 1945,
many of the traditional goals and techniques of the
occupation have been challenged and that, at the same time,
the career structures linked to first-class cricket have
become less rigid and more variegated than at any time
since the middle of the previous century. The chapters
which follow represent an attempt to discern how far, and
in what ways, fundamental changes in the rationale and the
structure of first-class cricket have precipitated a corres-
ponding restructuring of the careers of its participants,
and in their perception of the requirements and goals of
these careers.

Chapter One A Sociological Approach
to Cricket as an Occupation

It is the fundamental presupposition of this study
that an examination of the extent to which cricket may
be considered a marginal work activity will give rise to
a greater understanding of the structure of this occupation.
It must be emphasised that such an approach does not assume
a priori that cricket is a marginal occupation, but that if,
in the course of investigation, one can demonstrate the
existence of those structural inconsistencies which other
studies have shown to be integral dimensions of marginality,
then these must be considered as significant influences on
both the actions of cricketers and their perception of the
merits or disadvantages of a cricket career. Because of
the importance of this claim, it is necessary to devote
some time to clarifying the integral dimensions of margin-
ality.

Within the last twenty years, it has undoubtedly become
an influential concept, particularly within the field of
the sociology of occupations. For instance, in 1959,
T. H. McCormack noted that among the considerations which
prompted her analysis of "The Druggist's Dilemma", was,

> "a growing appreciation of the importance of
> marginal occupations for theories of social
> stratification. Processes of changes and
> adjustment are frequently more visible in
> the occupations which lie along the edge of
> any given system of occupational classifi-
> cation than elsewhere." [1]

1   T.H.McCormack, "The Druggists Dilemma: Problems of a
     Marginal Occupation," American Journal of Sociology,
     vol. 64 (1959), p. 308.

Marginality is a concept which undeniably conveys an important idea, but, at the same time, it has tended to become blurred in actual usage. In different contexts, it has been given socio-psychological, interactional, and structural connotations; sociologists have written of marginal men, marginal roles, and marginal occupations. [1] In 1928, Robert E. Park introduced the idea of a "marginal man" to describe the position of the racial hybrid, who, as a result of the tendency for racial groups to be defined in terms of status dimensions, finds himself in a position of status inconsistency. [2] In 1952, a study of the chiropractor by Walter I. Wardwell moved the focus of attention from the marginal man to the marginal role, "an imperfectly institutionalised one, which means there is some ambiguity in the pattern of behavious expected of the person filling the role." [3] In the final case, the concept of marginality has been taken to apply to inconsistencies existing within the wider sphere of occupational structures. In a study of engineers, W. M. Evan, [4] has shown how that occupation appears to have failed to develop an ideology consistent with either the position of the scientist or the businessman, and how, as a result, its members tend to feel marginal towards both groups.

1   It is possible for these three terms to be equally
     meaningful within a single context, but such a situation
     has to be empirically described rather than hypothetically
     assumed.

2   Robert E. Park, "Human Migration and the Marginal Man,"
     American Journal of Sociology, vol. 33 (1928), pp 418-429.

3   Walter I Wardwell, "A Marginal Professional Role: The
     Chiropractor", Social Forces, vol. 30 (1952), pp 339-348.

4   W.M.Evan, On the Margin - The Engineering Technician,
     in P. Berger's, The Human Shape of Work (1966),pp.237-258.

It is this last interpretation of marginality which
bears closest resemblance to the meaning given to it in
this study. Here, marginality is seen to be a feature
of the structure of occupations. It is characteristically
a consequence of the fact that the every-day work activi-
ties of the majority of its participants are not seen as
being consistent with either their own career goals, or
the goals of the occupation itself. To assess the margin-
ality of any occupation, it is necessary to examine the
following integral dimensions of its structure:-

(i)   The nature of the work task.

(ii) The occupational title.

(iii) Education and training.

(iv) Rate and method of compensation.

(v)   Career patterns.

To the extent that each of these structural dimensions
is surrounded by significant degrees of variation, uncer-
tainty, and ambiguity, an occupation may be described as
marginal. In a developmental context, the importance of
each of the various dimensions cannot be assumed to have
remained constant. To estimate the significance to be
attributed to each as far as cricket is concerned, it is
necessary to take into account changes in the game's
rationale, organisation, and ideology, which, in turn,
depend on the type of social structure within which it is
located. For instance, until the second half of the
twentieth century, the ideology of cricket, reflecting its
elite status, effectively legitimated many of the most
marginal aspects of the occupation. To the nineteenth

century cricketer, job insecurity and irregular payment
were accepted as inevitable, if unwelcome, features of
low status occupations, whereas in the twentieth, pro-
tection against these conditions is seen as one of the
rights of any employee and the duty of the employer.

Mid-twentieth century changes in the status of cricket
have played a significant part in making a study such as
this feasible. Before, and even today at its highest
administrative levels, one suspects that the strength of
the game's traditional ideology would render an attempt
to gain an objective picture of the major occupational
characteristics of cricket futile. One of the most
important aspects of the post-war transformation of cricket
has been the degree to which, both at an organisational and
ideological level, the occupation has been bureaucratised,
a process which reflects the tendency for traditionally
aristocratic institutions, compelled to come to terms with
the realities of their economic situation, to redefine
their function in terms of the demands of a mass audience.
It is at the level of the County Cricket Club that the
problems of retaining economic viability in a changing
society are at their most immediate, and hence the masking
effect of the game's traditions is at its weakest. It is
at the County level that the marginality of cricket is
most apparent.

Of the dimensions of occupational structure referred
to earlier, all but one, occupational career patterns, are
self explanatory. The position of career patterns in
cricket is problematic precisely because it assumes that
the popular middle-class concept of the career can be

applied to such an occupation as cricket. Can the
cricketer be described as following a career without
unjustifiably stretching the meaning of that concept?
A career is typically seen to be a succession of related
work positions, arranged in an hierarchy of prestige,
through which persons move in an orderly, predictable,
sequence. In this light, it is possible to argue that
the occupational framework of cricket does not contain a
series of clearly defined positions. One becomes a crick-
eter as soon as the first contract with a county club is
signed, and one ceases to be a cricketer upon the final
termination of that contract. During this intervening
period, the cricketer does not move through an hierarchy
of related positions, but stays in the same job, performing
the same work tasks, and sharing the same relationship with
the employer. In short, it is as legitimate to describe
the cricketer as following a career as it is a motorway
navvy.

But are these arguments sufficiently compelling to
deny the use of the concept of career in the case of
cricket, and other similar occupations? In the first
place, this popular definition of the career is limited
inasmuch as it relies heavily on the location of the
individual within an organisation or occupation in which
the responsibilities and requirements of offices are
clearly, and often formally, stated, as is the behaviour
of their incumbents. This usage is characteristic of
Mannheim, and to a lesser extent, Weber. Mannheim's term,
"amtskarriere" refers to the type of situation in which

the steps to be taken for advancement are clearly and
rigidly defined, as are the prerogatives of each office
and its place in the official hierarchy; i.e. it refers
to careers in a bureaucracy. However, such a rigid
definition of "career" unnecessarily limits its useful-
ness. Without reverting to the position referred to earlier,
in which excessively liberal application of concepts
drastically reduces their sociological meaning, it is
possible to take a definition of the career which, whilst
maintaining its applicability as a description in objective
terms of the movements of an individual through various
stages and contingencies in their work life, nevertheless
admits the possibility that these stages and contingencies
may also be defined by factors other than those relating
to the formal structure of the organisation or the occu-
pation. In cricket, the individual player's career may
be analysed partly in terms of relatively formal stages,
e.g. selection for a Test Match and the awarding of the
County Cap, but it is also necessary to take into account
such relatively informal, non-institutional factors as the
estimation of colleagues and audience. This type of
career can be said to typify sporting occupations. In
part, it is symptomatic of their marginality, since it
reflects the conflicting pressures contained within the
structure of these occupations. The concept of career
carries the implication of future expectations. These,
the cricketer possesses when he enters the occupation,
but the salient feature of his career is that it is
generally accepted that these expectations will be

realised in another occupational environment. Cricket
as an occupation is structured to sustain a high level
of commitment over a short period, whilst including in its
ideology, the recognition that the career is only one stage
in the individual's total work life. Such a career may be
described as indeterminate.

The uncertainty and ambiguity which typify the occu-
pation of cricket draw attention to another important
dimension of the concept of career which has been neglected
in modern sociological research. While the career can
be described as an objective account of the movement of
an individual within and, in some cases, between occupations,
it can also be taken to refer to a moving perspective in
which the individual sees his present work as part of life
as a whole and interprets the meaning of his various
attributes, actions and the things which happen to him.
Erving Goffman has noted the duality implicit in the
notion of a career:

> "One side is linked to internal matters held
> dearly and closely, such as image of self and
> felt identity; the other side concerns official
> position, jural relations, and style of life,
> and is part of a publicly accessible institu-
> tional complex." [1]

The subjective dimension in the concept of career is
of particular significance in the case of marginal occu-
pations, which, by virtue of the ambiguities contained
within their institutional structure, permit the
individual a greater freedom and flexibility in interpre-
ting his career than other occupations. His actions are

[1] E. Goffman, Asylums (1968), p. 119.

not oriented towards the demand of a career path, the
major stages and contingencies of which have been formally
defined by an impersonal agency. Though objectively defined
career goals must exist to give his movements meaning, the
interpretation he gives to his movements with respect to
these goals may be influenced either by the incorporation
of conflicting goals within the occupation itself,[1] or by
the presence of a third party, normally an audience whose
criteria for evaluating success may conflict with those
held by the performer.[2]

The way in which an individual perceives his career
in a marginal occupation is an important factor in deter-
mining the degree to which he will identify with his
occupational milieu. In the case of cricket, prospective
participants are influenced in their choice of occupation
by a subjective predisposition toward the game. How such
a predisposition is formed must remain a subject for future
research, but, in the case of cricket, it is important to
note that it is an activity in which most male members of
British society participate at some period of their child-
hood and adolescence, and that the idea of becoming a
"professional" sportsman is a typical initial response
of many male children to the realisation that a large
part of their life must be devoted to work. The trans-
lation of this predisposition toward cricket into an active
identification with the career in the game is mediated by
a series of variables: firstly, those which arise out of

1   For an example of this situation, see Thelma H. McCormack,
    op.cit., pp. 308-322.

2   For an example, see H.S.Becker's "The Professional Dance
    Musician and his Audience," American Journal of Sociology
    vol. 61 (1956) pp. 146-161.

the previous life history of the individual; and secondly, those which relate to the occupation itself. The first category includes such factors as the individual's family background, education, and financial and social status at the time of entry into the occupation. Most significant in the second category are the status of the occupation, and the specific character of its ideology. Though these variables are theoretically discrete, in cricket, and in most other spheres of life, they do not vary independently but rather tend to exert a causal influence by appearing in clusters. Thus, on the basis of the assumption of a common subjective predisposition towards the game, one can predict that the careers followed by cricketers, and the attitudes they develop towards their work and their status in society at large, will constitute discernible patterns.

Recent studies have isolated four central elements in the process of work identification; occupational title, commitment to work, commitment to a particular organisational or institutional position and the public status of the occupation.[1] Because of their importance in the following analysis, each of these elements must be described in greater detail.

(1) Occupational Title

The extent to which one's work can be described in terms of a well-defined occupational title is an important

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1 H.S. Becker & J, Carper, "The Elements of Identification with an Occupation," American Sociological Review, vol. 21, (1956), pp. 341-348.

factor in the development of a work-based identity.

> "In the first place, they (the occupational titles)
> specify an area of endeavour belonging to those
> bearing the name and locate this area in relation
> to similar kinds of activity in a broader field.
> Secondly, they imply a great deal about the
> characteristics of their bearer, and these
> meanings are often systematized into elaborate
> ideologies which itemize the qualities, interests
> and capabilities of those so identified."[1]

(2) Commitment to Task

Occupations may be differentiated according to whether
members see themselves qualified to deal with sharply
delineated tasks, a wide range of tasks, or fail to under-
stand their work and how they should go about it.

(3) Organisational and Institution Position

The formation of an occupational identity tends to
coincide with the development on the part of the individual
of a more rigorous definition of the life of the organisation,
and the positions within them, in which his future lies;
those places in which it is appropriate, desirable or
likely that he will work.[2]

(4) Social Position

> "Occupational identities contain an implicit
> reference to the person's position in the
> larger society, tending to specify the
> positions appropriate for a person doing
> such work, or which have become open to him
> by virtue of his work. The most frequent
> reference is, of course, to social class
> position, to the opportunities for class

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1   H.S. Becker & J. Carper, "The Development of Identifi-
     cation with an Occupation," American Journal of Sociology,
     vol. 61 (1956), pp. 268-277.

2   Becker & Carper, "The Elements of Identification...."
     p. 342.

> mobility opened up or closed off by entrance
> into the particular occupation. It is also
> possible for an identification to contain a
> statement of a particular relation of members
> of the occupation to the society, quite apart
> from class considerations." [1]

This analytical framework was developed by Becker and Carper in the course of a study of the genesis of identification with an occupation among students doing graduate work in physiology, philosophy, and mechanical engineering. None of the occupations for which these students were being prepared were marginal; in fact, graduate students were deliberately selected for study not only because they were convenient, but because of the central character of graduate school in developing professional identification. By applying this framework to a marginal occupation, it is hoped that differences in the way members of this type of occupation relate to their work, and in the extent to which the sphere of work forms a salient element in their self-images, will be highlighted. It should be noted at this stage, that a significant amount of overlapping occurs between the central dimensions of marginality and the four major elements in work identification. While it is not within the province of this preliminary discussion to define the relationship between the structural features of an occupation, and the behavioural and attitudinal characteristics of the individuals who comprise its membership, on a priori grounds it does appear significant that the features in the structure of an occupation most likely to give rise to ambiguity and uncertainty are also those exercising the most significant influence upon

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1   Ibid., p. 346.

the degree and manner in which the individual identified
with that occupation. Assuming the significance of this
overlapping, we should expect members of the occupation
in question to differ appreciably in their self-image
according to their position in the occupation and their
status in the wider society.

Chapter Two   The Career of the Modern Cricketer

This analysis is based on a series of fifty-five
interviews conducted during the winter of 1968 and the
spring of 1969 with cricketers drawn from nine of the
seventeen clubs which participate annually in the County
Championship. Data were collected from players who, at
the time of interview, were classed as being in one of
three career stages; retired, established, or aspiring.
In this chapter, the data yielded by these interviews are
presented in three sections, each of which relates to one
of these stages. The "retired" stage is discussed first
because, to some extent, our data relate to the discussion
of the position of the professional cricketer in the
previous stage in the overall development of the game.
The advantages of this procedure are two-fold: not only
does it provide a detailed account of the structure of
each of these stages, but also an insight into the cricketer's
perception of the extensive changes introduced into the
organisation of first-class cricket since 1945. Apart from
being differentiated in terms of career stages, the sample
of interviewees contained wide variations along those lines
by which western societies typically differentiate their
members, class background, colour, religion, and education.
Many of the respondents could be differentiated according
to whether they played as amateurs or professionals. This
study, from the first, has focused upon the latter, and
there is no deviation from this pattern in this final

chapter. A description of the amateur's role in
cricket is introduced only in so far as it is required
to explain features of the professional career. If the
amateur's presence becomes less felt as this analysis
proceeds, then this may be seen to accord with the decline
and eventual disappearance of the amateur from the occu-
pation over the last twenty years.

The Retired Cricketer [1]

A. Family Background, Education, and Early Work History. [2]

Nine of the retired cricketers interviewed had parents
who were, or in most cases, had been employed in occupations
which, according to the Registrar-General's Classification,
were either partly skilled or unskilled. (Social Classes
IV and V) Three were manual labourers, two were gardeners,
two were factory hands, one was a bricklayer, and one a
storekeeper. None of these nine players had received a
grammar or public school education, and all had left school
by the age of fifteen. At this stage, however, only two
became members of the ground staff of a county club. Of
the remaining seven, three took up apprenticeships, while
four obtained "office" jobs, normally as a "messenger boy"
or as a clerk. The length of time spent in these intermed-
iary occupations varied from two to seven years. The
father of one of the players who had joined a county club
directly after leaving school was himself in the employment
of that club; otherwise none of the parents of our respondents
had any connections with cricket closer than that of being a
keen local player.

The remaining eleven players in this group had parents
in occupations classed as professional, intermediate or
skilled. (Social Classes I, II, and III.) Two were company

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1   A sample of twenty.

2   These factors in the life history of the cricketer are
     grouped together because both theoretical and empirical
     analysis from both this and other studies suggest that
     they tend to interact to produce regularities in the work
     lives of the majority of the working population.

directors, two were lawyers, two were bank employees, two
were schoolteachers, two were skilled technicians, and one
was a sales representative. Seven of these players were
educated at public schools and four at grammar schools.
Four of those who had attended public schools continued
their education at either Oxford and Cambridge. None of
those educated at grammar schools went on to university,
though three out of the four did obtain further educational
or professional qualifications at a later date. Three of
the four who went to grammar schools became professional
members of a county club, while only one of those who had
received a public school education did so. Four of those
educated at public schools, and one educated at a grammar
school, played first as amateurs but later (within five
seasons, allowing for the cessation of cricket between
1939 and 1945) gained an administrative post with a county
club, normally as Secretary or Assistant Secretary. Before
taking on a dual role as administrator and player, four
had occupied executive positions in industrial organisations,
and one was a master at a public school.

These data suggest the existence of two relatively
clearly defined patterns in the early career histories of
retired players. These patterns, traditionally described
as the amateur and the professional, are differentiated in
terms of both the class and educational background of the
young player, and his method of entering the occupation.
The amateur, typically from the upper or middle classes,
with a public school and university background, first
played cricket for a county in a small number of matches

each season when his education or job permitted.
Because he was not exposed to any degree of economic
insecurity, and because his education and social back-
ground provided relative easy access to many respectable
occupations, the amateur cricketer exhibited a highly
distinctive range of attitudes towards cricket. From our
data, it is clear that he hardly conceived of cricket as
a career. Playing for a county team was a means of
enjoying himself before entering upon a work career in
a more suitably prestigious setting - be it professional,
administrative, or commercial. The amateur cricketer's
privileged social status in the wider society resulted
in the development of a type of commitment to the game
and to his fellow players which, in every sense, was the
negation of that associated with a career orientation.
Though success was still an important ingredient in
engendering enjoyment, it never became the all-important
consideration which, for professionals, it had to be.
That is not to say that the amateur did not possess a
commitment beyond that generated by a mild enthusiasm
for a pleasing form of relaxation. On the contrary,
their presence on the cricket field represented an
intensive, often emotional belief in the aesthetic and
ideological qualities of the game. When asked why they
chose to play first-class cricket, the amateur typically
referred to his "love of the game", a relationship which
had been nurtured throughout childhood and adolescence.
In addition to representing, in quintessential form,
those values and beliefs which were the hall-mark of an

elite, cricket's integration in the standard curriculum of public schools gave it an active role in the inculcation of these qualities into future generations.

The early career histories of retired professional cricketers were in several respects the complete antithesis of those of the amateur. The large majority came from working-class backgrounds, had not attended a grammar school or public school, and had left school at the earliest opportunity. Only in a minority of cases was this highly dichotomous picture modified. Here, professional players came from middle-class backgrounds and had attended a grammar school. That three of the four of our respondents who had received a grammar school education became professionals appears to introduce a significant deviation from the patterns so far established. However, in assessing the significance of this deviation it is necessary to bear in mind two additional factors. First, although our data are not sufficiently detailed to justify an unequivocal statement to the effect, it is probable that the fathers of those 'deviant' players - i.e. those from middle-class backgrounds with a grammar school education who became professionals - either died early in the player's childhood, creating financial difficulties for the rest of the family, or themselves belonged to occupations or held positions in organisations which would place them in the lower section of the middle-class. Whatever the case, it is also true that half of our respondents who fall into this category, left grammar school at or before the age of sixteen, i.e. they were

"premature" or "early leavers". Second, it is necessary
to take into consideration relative changes in the prestige
of cricket as an occupation over the past forty years. The
criteria used to evaluate the status of an occupation in
1970 were very different from those applied by aspirants
thirty years previously. Whereas before 1950 the prestige
and mystique of cricket in the wider society were powerful
inducements to the potential player, by 1970, this could
no longer be claimed to be the case. Particularly during
the 1930's, participation in what retained the aura of an
elite pastime, and which provided a financial return which
in a time of economic depression, was relatively lucrative,
were factors which gave the cricket career a status com-
patible with the achievement of an average grammar school
education. Today, a cricket career is far less compatible
with the universally felt need to attain a high level of
educational achievement. Further support for the idea of
a sporting career may have resulted indirectly from the
fact that sports such as cricket were relatively unchallenged
as sources of entertainment and exercise for most sections
of society. A knowledge and a liking for these games were
part of the family background of all professional cricketers
interviewed, and it seems likely that they acted as an
incentive to taking up the game as a career. The following
statement neatly summarises the type of situation in which
most aspiring professionals found themselves immediately
before and after the war:

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> "When you think of 1932 and 1933, most youngsters
> leaving school were glad of any job. Those who
> had gone onto grammar school or who had got into
> a technical school, had probably come from a lot
> better families. I'm not saying I came from a
> bad family, but we were just a working family.
> We were all interested in sport, but we weren't
> endowed with any money - I was the tenth child.
> Throughout the country, things were rough and
> you were glad of anything." [1]

One hitherto unsuspected characteristic of the early

work history of retired professionals suggested by our

data, concerned the sequence of events leading up to

entry into the occupation. It had been assumed that

the professional player's connections with a county club

were unbroken from the time he left school to the day he

retired; that boys were recruited to a County Club's staff

immediately they left school - in fact, it was thought

that an offer of this type precipitated leaving school -

and spent the next three to six years performing any number

of manual jobs at the County Ground, whilst at the same

time, gaining valuable experience from watching and prac-

tising with established players, and playing in the

occasional "Club and Ground", or 2nd XI match. Where it

was necessary to find an alternative source of employment

during the winter months, this step was seen by players

and administrators alike as being purely temporary. It

was a matter of financial expediency rather than a question

of preparing an alternative career. However, the case

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1   All the quotations used in this chapter, except
     where otherwise stated, were gained in recorded
     interviews with players. To transcribe these into
     grammatical written statements, a degree of para-
     phrasing has sometimes been necessary. This procedure
     has in no way altered the original meaning contained
     in the spoken statement.

histories of the majority of respondents show this to have
been a largely erroneous impression. Only three of the
twelve players interviewed were recruited by a County
Club within a year of leaving school.[1] In these cases,
the early work histories did follow the basic outlines of
the pattern originally subscribed to. The following is
the account by one of these players of the way he was
recruited into cricket:

> "I think that I was 'spotted' in a match at
> school when I was about fourteen by one of
> the county players. He told me that the
> County were looking for young players, gave
> me the name and address of the County Secre-
> tary, and told me to write and ask for a trial
> if I was interested in playing full-time. At
> the end of my last term at school I did this
> and was granted a trial."

The winter activities of these players were seen
definitely as temporary measures. It was common to find
that a temporary job was created by a member of the County
Club. Young players were often prohibited from accepting
any temporary jobs which, by virtue of being more remunera-
tive, would be likely to diminish their commitment to cricket.

However, this type of early career history was excep-
tional. It was normal for subsequently successful players
to have spent up to seven years working in other occupations
before becoming full-time members of a County Club's playing
staff.[2] The decision to leave school had been made

1   In one of these cases, the directness of entry was
    undoubtedly facilitated by the fact that the player's
    father was a member of the same County's staff.

2   It is important to note that I am not suggesting that
    the minority of recruits to cricket became members of
    the Ground Staff, but that the minority of those crick-
    eters who subsequently became successful county or test
    players started in this way.

independently of any considerations of a possible career
in cricket. In most cases, no firm offers had been received
from a county club. Nor can it be argued that the decision
to leave was made in preference to remaining at school in
the hope of gaining advanced qualifications. At this time,
it was normal for children from working-class backgrounds
to leave school at the earliest possible opportunity, if
only because an extended education imposed a considerable
financial burden on the rest of the household. For a new
entrant to the ranks of professional cricketers to possess
more than rudimentary educational qualifications was abnormal.
Players felt that, since they had succeeded in gaining entry
to the then relatively prestigious occupation of cricket
without formal qualifications, it was improbable that their
absence would seriously jeopardise the future. During this
initial period, they would play for County teams at various
levels, and probably receive instruction from the County
coach, but cricket did not constitute their primary source
of employment. The description by a retired professional
of his early years in cricket provides an illustration of
this time-lapse between leaving school and joining the
staff of a County Club:

> "I left school at the age of 14½ and went to
> work at an engineering firm on Southwark Bridge
> Road. I stayed there for three months and then
> I went to another in the Westminster Bridge Road
> - my relations worked there and got me the job.
> Jobs weren't easy to come by at that time. I
> stayed there for nearly two years, then I had a
> letter from my schoolmaster, asking me whether I
> would like to go for a trial for the County Ground
> Staff. I got the job and started playing for the
> Surrey Colts and from there, having done well with
> the Colts, I eventually went on to the Staff."

For those players whose careers began before 1939, the
idea of playing cricket professionally partly contradicted
a generally held conception of what constituted a "good job",
a conception moulded by the presence of economic depression
and massive unemployment. This was particularly the case
in that section of British society from which most profes-
sional cricketers were drawn. As one such player commented,

> "Like most other people in the 1930's my idea
> was to get security, but looking back, if I had
> stuck to security, I would still have been a
> solicitor's clerk."

Chance and good luck plays an important role in the
retired players' conceptions of their early career. Rather
than subscibing to the dominant view of the "good job" as
one which yielded regular pay with relatively little
prospect of abrupt termination, but which contained little
opportunity for promotion, they preferred to take their
chance in an occupation which, whilst offering to a few
the opportunity to become conspicuous successes, also
contained a high degree of insecurity. This element of
insecurity made the occupation ideally suited to the
aesthetic and excitement-creating demands of members of
an elite, but manifestly unsuited to those from the lower
strata of society who possessed neither the economic
resources nor the social connections to sustain them in
the event of failure. In the face of the apparent unad-
visability of their chosen course of action, the retired
player looked to an inherent emotional and physical affinity
with the game to justify his choice of career. Thus, in
explaining why he became a professional cricketer, one
player replied,

> "Most professional sportsmen have their talents
> born in them, and it is a question of whether
> they were fortunate enough to be able to display
> them."

Here, the contrast with the responses of amateur cric-
keters was striking. Whereas the latter saw their presence
in cricket as a logical projection of opportunity and an
emotional affinity with the game, the professional saw
his choice of cricket as a career almost as a consequence
of having a particular genetic inheritance. Since the
capacity to play is inherent, should the opportunity to
reveal one's talent arise, the player is under an obligation
to take it.

Once a member of a county club, the experiences of
amateur and professional cricketers were totally different.
That amateur players rarely conceived of cricket as a
career has been indicated already. They saw their partici-
pation as a pleasant interlude before commencing the real
"business of life".[1] For members of the upper or upper-
middle classes of British society, the idea of becoming a
professional cricketer would not have arisen, for it would
have involved a contradiction not only of all the basic
career prescriptions associated with these strata, but
also the dominant institutional and ideological structure
of the game itself. These sentiments are incorporated in
a statement made by a retired amateur:

> "I had no intention of entering sport as a
> profession and always intended to enter the
> game as an amateur."

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1   These players either had no conception of where
    their future work career lay, or vaguely anticipated
    working in a profession or large organisation.

The style of play, and indeed, the style of life of
the amateur cricketer involved the presentation of a
cavalier approach to the game, partly in order to emphasise
his freedom from any career restraints. For the professional,
however, the early stage in his career involved the adoption
of a set of attitudes towards playing cricket which empha-
sised practice, perseverance, and, above all, the acceptance
of a subordinate status within the game. The inculcation
of these attitudes, which indirectly safeguarded the status
quo, were necessary conditions of being granted the privilege
of becoming a professional. Both amateurs and professionals
saw the professional cricketer's prospect of achieving a
lasting success in his career in the amount of effort he
put into these early years in the game. As a professional
cricketer noted:

> "Success demands great sacrifices: in my
> experience, only exceptional individuals
> have ever succeeded without a great deal
> of work during the formative years between
> the ages of fourteen and twenty-one."

It may be noted that an apparent contradition exists
in the retired professional's conception of his early
career in cricket between, on the one hand, believing
himself to be naturally endowed with those talents required
of a cricketer, and on the other, his stress on the need
to devote much of his time to practice. This inconsistency
can only be accounted for by taking into account the fact
that the professional cricketer was required to play a
highly specialised role in which reliability was emphasised
as a complement to the characteristic unpredictability of

the amateur's approach. During his early years as a
cricketer, the professional had to learn to harness his
natural ability to the demands of his role. Only in
exceptional cases,[1] did a professional cricketer succeed
without first achieving this adjustment in his approach
to the game. However, there was one further source of
uncertainty and insecurity in the early life of the
cricketer which served to sustain feelings of ambiva-
lence towards the career. Even though he accepted the
need to spend a period of his early career learning to
adjust his talents to the demands of the professional
role, the young cricketer was not ensured of future
success. In part because he was in competition with
other aspiring professionals, and also because of the
existence of other factors, such as luck and temperament,
which might limit his ability, the player had to accept
the permanent presence of an element of doubt and uncertainty.
This was reflected in the professional's attitudes in an
unwillingness to believe in his capacity to succeed.
Though they aspired to become cricketers whilst at school,
it was not until the first steps to satisfying this ambition
had been taken that the majority of professionals were
prepared to identify totally with the occupation. For
example, one professional noted:

> "I had always hoped that I had the ability to
> take up sport, but I never really thought that
> I was going to be good enough. My headmaster
> told me that I would play for Surrey one day, but
> I never believed him."

1   The most frequently quoted example of a professional
    who succeeded without adopting a typically 'professional'
    approach is D.C.S. Compton, who represented England
    before and after the War.

The suspension of the County Championship between
1940 and 1946, and the post-war requirements of National
Service constituted two major contingencies in the careers
of the retired professionals interviewed though, in their
implications, they differed significantly. The cessation
of first-class cricket during the war years aggravated
the anxieties to which the young professional was already
exposed. Since it reduced the average length of the career
by seven years, players had only a relatively short period
in which to achieve that status in cricket which would
provide a stable future in society at large. Before the
outbreak of war, the majority were at a stage at which
enjoyment more than compensated for the relative financial
deprivations involved in following a cricket career. But
seven years later, the responsibilities of marriage and
family greatly increased their independence upon a regular
source of income. For these reasons, and for others
related to their immediate work situation, professional
cricketers viewed the revival of county cricket with some
trepidation. As one player put it:

> "I think my greatest worries came during the
> war. Although I managed to play some cricket
> in the meantime, it was difficult to know
> what was going to happen in 1946. Would there
> be county cricket? Would I still be good enough?
> There was no way of knowing whether another one
> hundred good players would suddenly spring up.
> But because it was wartime there was nothing to
> do but wait and see."

These anxieties were particularly acute in the case
of players who had not established a firm work identity
before 1939:

> "In 1945, I was very worried whether I would
> be retained after the War. It was at this time,
> during a conversation with the Bedsers, that I
> was advised to take up wicket keeping - originally
> I had been a bowler. I wrote to the club telling
> them that I also kept wicket (the thought at the
> back of my mind being that they were not going to
> retain me)."

Between 1947 and 1960, the early stage in the career

of the professional was shaped by the requirements of

National Service. In many ways, the existence of this

obligation had an influence on aspiring players precisely

the reverse of that of the Second World War. The two

years spent undergoing National Service marked a water-

shed in the work lives of most male members of society.

For the aspiring professional cricketer, it created a

period of up to three years during which he could play

cricket, secure in the knowledge that no firm commitment

to a job, in cricket or elsewhere, could be made until

after the completion of National Service. During this

period, the young professional was in a situation closely

comparable with that of an amateur. That this was a power-

ful attraction is shown in the following quotation:

> "What decided me to go into county cricket was
> the fact that I had two years of National
> Service in front of me. I thought I'd try
> county cricket for two years and then go in
> the army, on the basis of nothing lost, nothing
> gained."

B. The Established Career and Retirement

In analysing the actions and attitudes which charac-

terise the established stage in the retired professional's

career, and his reaction to retirement, the importance of

general background factors cannot be overstressed. If in the following section, it is shown that players' attitudes towards their career and occupation were relatively un-affected by their undirectedness and marginality, this is partly attributable to those factors to which we have already alluded; the economic depression of the 1930's and its effect on employment, particularly amongst the working-class from which the majority of professionals were recruited, and, secondly, the greater prestige enjoyed by cricket at that time. Players frequently stated the belief that they had been particularly fortunate in being able to follow cricket as a career. Since all our respon-dents had successful careers, it cannot be gainsaid, of course, that such a degree of satisfaction did not neces-sarily reflect the general state of the occupation. However, it is just as true that this degree of satisfaction cannot be understood without making reference to the financial and social deprivation present in the working-class backgrounds from which the majority of players were drawn, and to the pervasive influence of the occupation's ideology and traditions.

Within this general framework, the actions taken by professionals and the attitudes they formed towards different aspects of the occupation reflected the fact that they viewed the cricket career, not as an enclave, but as the dominant phase in their total work career. Depending on the level of success achieved, the professional cricketer "retired" either to a secure, remunerative job of the same, or higher status, or to a lower status occupation in accordance with his age and lack of relevant qualifications

or skills. During this central stage in the work life, in which cricket became a "way of life" rather than just a job or work, players displayed a very high degree of commitment to the occupation. They felt most aspects of their lives to be inextricably linked with cricket. None of our respondents had succeeded in gaining extra education or professional qualifications, or craft skills during the period in which they were members of the playing staff of a county club. On the basis of this degree of involvement in cricket, one would expect players to display, on the one hand, a high level of identification with their occupation, and on the other, an apparent immunity to the uncertainties and anxieties which derive from its marginality. In this analysis, the central concern is focused upon an attempt to discover the extent to which these suppositions were correct.

Following the analysis of Becker and Carper,[1] players would be expected to identify most strongly with four particular facets of cricket; its occupational title, the work task, the club or team they represent, and its status in society at large. Without exception, all our respondents were proud of their occupational identity, even though they may have retired from cricket as many as fifteen years before. When one retired player was asked whether he would prefer to be introduced as a cricketer, or as a member of his present occupation, he replied,

> "A cricketer, naturally - I wouldn't like not
> to be somehow connected with it."

1   H.S. Becker and James Carper, The Elements of Identification.

In the case of the work task, the type of identifi-
cation was an important factor in distinguishing between
the amateur and the professional cricketer. Unlike the
amateur, who tended to see his skills as an expression
of natural athleticism, the professional emphasised
throughout his career the need to learn skills. Whilst
admitting that his talents are partly natural, he sees
practice as the only way of perfecting his ability to
satisfy the demands of the professional's role. As one
player put it:

> "You have got to have natural ability before
> you can be coached. But when you start
> playing cricket you have to practice, practice,
> practice - which unfortunately today they don't
> seem to do. The more you play, the better you
> become. It is true of any profession, whether
> you are a doctor, snooker player or footballer
> - it must be lots of practice to make perfection."

Once the basic technical skills had been mastered, the
success of the player depended upon his ability to utilize
these skills in real situation to the best advantage. This
required not only technical competence, but also an under-
standing of the capacity of other players, and a command
of strategy. To the professional cricketer, an identifi-
cation with his work task meant the successful combination
of the physical and cognitive aspects of the game.

> "I used to enjoy thinking things out and watching
> them work. It was only a matter of application
> to the job. Jack Robertson once scored three
> hundred in a day against us. The next time I
> bowled against him, he got eight. He used to
> hook in front of his face, so I decided to give
> him a bouncer fourth ball in the first over, and
> move up the fine-leg fieldsman forty yards. This
> we did, but the fielder dropped the catch. We
> tried it a few overs later and got him."

As a corollary to this pride in their own skills, retired professionals revealed a mild contempt for the abilities of their modern counterparts. Recent changes of county cricket had presented the modern bowler with many artificial advantages, the effect of which was to allow less technically competent players to achieve a level of success equivalent to their own. The following statement expressed the retired professional's general impression of the modern generation of cricketers:

> "I think the game of cricket is farcical today compared to what it was. I was brought up on the finest ground in England - they played bowls on the outfield - and I had to learn my craft on it. In those days, county clubs weren't supported by football pools and that kind of thing. They relied upon getting three days cricket, and it was incumbent on the grounds-man to provide a wicket that would last three days. Today, there is so much fiddling of wickets that a lot of good bowling performances are fictitious. When they come to play on good Test wickets, they haven't learnt their craft. Before the War, there were better wickets for people to play cricket on. Since the War, counties have prepared wickets to suit their bowlers. The celebrated story on one ground during the 1950's was of a visiting captain who, on being asked which roller he would like on the wicket between innings, replied, 'I don't want a roller, I need a bloody vacuum cleaner.' "

Closely allied to the pride shown by cricketers in the mastery of the skills and strategy of the game is the third element in the development of an occupational identity, the development of a commitment to the club they represented. This dimension of identification can be illustrated in two ways. First, retired players described the extent to which they attempted to maintain high standards in their appearance and behaviour in order to enhance the reputation of the team. For example:

"When I played, we had a great pride in playing
for the county, and we were very strict about not
letting the side down, both on the field and off
it. Everybody had to be turned out perfectly on
the field - and everybody had to come down to
breakfast dressed properly. The last year I was
captain, some of our side came down to breakfast
in casual clothes - I sent them back to put
collars and ties on."

Second, the majority of retired players displayed an
antagonism towards the modern practice of transferring from
one club to another during a playing career. When asked
their opinion of this innovation, the typical reply was:

"If you contract to play for a county, you stay
playing for it."

The source of this hostility lay not in personal envy
of the greater financial opportunities open to the modern
player, but in the damage such transfers did to the identity
of the county side. The majority of players felt, as one
player put it, that "loyalty to one's county was the whole
basis of county cricket." This opinion was based on the
following arguments:

"If you call a side a county side, you have got
to keep it a county side. It has a dampening
effect on appeal if you don't - especially for
the local people. The wealthiest clubs, those
with the best football pools at the moment, would
get all the best players. It puts off the young-
sters in your own county."

However, amongst those players who had retired most
recently, a different opinion prevailed. As a foretaste
of things to come, this minority group believed that
cricketers should be allowed to move more freely from
county to county, though they were very much opposed to
the introduction of a transfer system such as exists within
the Football League. The willingness to admit movement

between counties as a limited prerogative of the player
marks a significant departure from the traditional con-
ception of the rights and duties of the role. In effect,
it recognises that professional cricketers have an obligation
to make a success of their own career as well to the county
they represent, and that in theevent of a clash of interests,
it is the player's career which must take precedence. This
position is explained in the following statement:

> "I think players should be allowed to move. I
> don't agree with the transfer system, because
> some counties are a lot richer than others -
> Warwickshire for instance - and can therefore
> buy just what they want. Other sides, like
> Essex, would go out of existence if this did
> take place. I don't see any reason why a chap
> who is fed up with one county, or whose career
> is blocked by a Test player, shouldn't move to
> another one - but not transfer fees."

Apart from this last example, the data presented so
far have given very little indication that retired pro-
fessional cricketers were at all aware of the marginality
of their occupation. Their attitudes towards the nature
of their work and their occupational title, revealed a
level of commitment to the game, in the face of which any
criticisms of the occupation were insignificant. As a
vocation with which the majority had identified very
closely, cricket had few, if any, disadvantages. Even
allowing for the fact that all the players interviewed
had enjoyed long successful careers in county cricket,
and in several cases, had gained international recogni-
tion, the degree of work satisfaction exhibited was particu-
larly high. However, in considering the fourth area of
identification which Becker and Carper isolate, that of the
status of the occupation in the wider society, a different

picture emerges. The virtues of cricket, previously
agreed by all, now become the subject of a sharp division
of opinion between those who believe their cricket careers
had led to substantial upward social mobility, and in
retirement, to opportunities for upward mobility in terms
of their occupation, and those who doubted all or part of
this image. It is these aspects of the occupation which
give rise to most confusion, and uncertainty amongst
retired players. To them, the marginality of cricket lies
not in its internal structure, still well-guarded by
commitment, ideology and tradition, but in its relation
to the rest of the occupational structure and its status
in society in general.

An important, but not decisive, variable in deciding
the alignment of players with respect to these problems
was the degree of success they had achieved. All of our
respondents who had gained international recognition and
a number of the most successful county players, saw a
cricket career as a reliable means of achieving upward
social mobility. Their attitude toward particular aspects
of the career reflected this general orientation. Perhaps
the cornerstone of this set of beliefs was the acceptance
of the essentially egalitarian nature of cricket. It was
held that opportunities to enter and obtain success in
cricket, and those provided by a cricket career in other
spheres of life, were distributed on the basis of achieve-
ment and not ascribed qualities.

An emphasis on personal achievement which, in many
ways, was reminiscent of the Victorian bourgeoisie's
utilitarian concept of "self-improvement", dominated

this group of players' attitude towards work and careers.
their statement indicated a powerful success motive based
on establishing a high level of technical competence and
a willingness to orientate one's whole life towards
attaining this goal. For example,

> "All I ever wanted to do was to get better.
> I never really thought about the monetary
> rewards I was likely to get, - I just wanted
> to be the best. I think once you depart
> from this ideal, which I am afraid is happen-
> ing now, standards tend to fall. Players
> want money before they are good enough."

Dedication to achieving success in the sphere of
cricket was only one aspect of this set of attitudes.
Their relevance extended similarly to the occupation the
individual entered both during the winter months of his
playing career and after he had retired from cricket. To
get a secure, remunerative job on these occasions, the
player must prove his worth to the prospective employer.
As before, the performance of the contemporary generation
of cricketers is seen to compare badly with that of their
predecessors. For example, one retired professional noted,

> "When I was playing, it wasn't easy as it is now.
> If you have got something about you, I don't
> believe you should be found jobs - the individual
> should be prepared to offer the employers as
> much as he can give them. A lot of cricketers
> think they should be given £1500 a year for
> doing nothing - which is hopeless."

The level of prosperity achieved by these players in
their retirement provided a justification of their adherence
to these beliefs. The majority's status was significantly
higher than that of their fathers. This personal success
was reflected in their estimation of the class-ranking of
cricketers. One player declared:

> "Classes don't mean a thing to me - there is
> no such thing as the upper, middle or lower
> classes. I could stay with the Duke of Norfolk
> or Joe Bloggs."

Another player said that he thought that:

> "The county cricketer counts as a member of the
> upper classes, because you meet the elite, or
> the aristocracy, whatever you call them. You
> might not be able to afford to live like them,
> but you certainly meet them."

The existence of this body of opinion has a significance

beyond that of the individual achievements of which it is

a projection. It has the effect of sustaining the credi-

bility of one of the most deeply enshrined aspects of

cricket's ideology; that a successful career in cricket

automatically creates opportunities in different occu-

pations which, if properly exploited, can only lead to

upward mobility. A statement by one of the amateur cric-

keters interviewed ranks as a classic reiteration of this

belief:

> "It is quite remarkable how well cricketers do
> when they retire. There are charities in
> existence designed to provide assistance for
> cricketers who find themselves in difficulties.
> Today, the number of applications for assis-
> tance has reached almost rock-bottom. I can't
> think of one successful cricketer who didn't
> get a good job when he retired. This is because
> of his cricket - because of the sort of chap he
> is. Having met people, and perhaps travelled
> the world his outlook is fairly broad, and he
> is a very employable person."

It is not difficult to ascertain that the origins of

this belief lay in the ideology of the ruling class in

nineteenth century British society. In this context,

cricket was believed to lead to the development of certain

qualities required of an elite. This property resulted

in the game becoming an integral feature of the public

school curriculum and, as such, it functioned to maintain
the domination of this ruling class. The qualities
cricket instilled in its participants were, amongst
others, those of integrity and personability, both of
which were regarded as essential characteristics of the
occupants of high-ranking executive and administrative
positions in a wide range of occupations. In contempor-
ary society, the continued incorporation of this belief
in cricket's ideology is both a legacy of the game's
elite past, and an indication of the extent to which
sections of cricket's establishment remain unaware of the
changing requirements of many occupations and organisations.
That the strength of this piece of ideology may be declining
in the face of a growing realisation of its irrelevance is
suggested by the fact that, even amongst those players who
had derived the greatest advantages from playing cricket,
there was a reluctance to recommend a cricket career un-
conditionally. As one player explained:

> "I'd advise a relative or friend of mine to
> learn a profession first - and then give cricket
> a go."

This approach to cricket, and to the entire work-career
was not characteristic of the majority of the retired pro-
fessionals interviewed. Their responses incorporated a
greater degree of uncertainty and anxiety, which is con-
sistent with an awareness of the marginality of the occu-
pation. In particular, their responses contained serious
reservations about the financial rewards the occupation
had offered them, the status of cricketers, and the degree
of credibility to be accorded much of its ideology. In

many cases, they displayed a belief that the conditions
of their employment were significantly worse than those
of the modern cricketer.

The difference between these two sets of attitudes
towards cricket as a career must not be exaggerated: it
is one of emphasis rather than essence. As has been
indicated already, all cricketers showed a deep attach-
ment to their occupation. The variations referred to
occur in the ways the majority of the respondents inte-
grated a cricket career into their total work life. The
first significant difference is contained in these players'
evaluation of the expressive and instrumental qualities of
the career. Regardless of the prestige of cricket, the
majority of respondents considered that a cricket career
necessarily involved a degree of financial deprivation.
Frequently, this was aggravated by their employer's
failure to provide as much assistance in such areas as
winter employment as they had promised. As one player
put it:

> "I lived for my cricket when I was a young man.
> I didn't get married until I was 29 and so I
> didn't have to worry about anyone else - not
> that I could afford to. When I retired I was
> only being paid £620 a year. When I started
> in 1936, my wages were £1 a week, nothing in
> the winter, and I had to buy my own kit. They
> had promised to find me a job in the winter but
> I was out of work for ten weeks. In 1937, I got
> 25s. a week, and still nothing in the winter.
> I had to find my own employment and I was out of
> work for eight weeks. By 1938, I was in the
> 1st XI and received £2 a week all year round.
> In 1939, I was a capped player and received six
> pounds for away matches, out of which you had to
> pay hotel bills, £3 a home match, and £2 a week
> basic expenses. When I got back after the war,
> I think I got £420 a year. So when you think
> in terms of the monetary rewards of a cricket
> career, you've got to be dedicated. They say
> there is a lot of glory in the game, but it doesn't
> pay the rates and the rent."

This statement suggests a different interpretation to be placed on the player's dedication to cricket, his "love of the game", which was a decisive factor in his initial choice of career. Previously, it has been considered only as a sentiment. However, it is now apparent that, whilst this "love of the game" may be a natural response to the activities which comprise cricket, it has been instrumental in maintaining the player's commitment to the game in the face of relatively low financial rewards. The presence of an "innate" love of cricket, like its character-building properties, has tended to exercise a conservative influence on the game. If dedication functioned to minimize the burden of financial deprivation, it also masked the relative unattractiveness of that aspect of the occupation. [1]

While the financial rewards offered by cricket did not deter a player from pursuing that career, a retrospective appraisal of the indeterminacy of the career would have, or at least might have provoked serious doubts. When asked the hypothetical question, "If you could go back to the age of 15, would you change your career in any way?" one player replied:

> "Looking back, I don't know whether I would choose the same occupation. I loved cricket, and I still do, and it was something I wanted to do all the time. But when you get older, you look back and ask, 'Where has it got me?' If you could think that when you finished cricket you were going to be secure financially, that would be ideal. But when you have got to start looking for another job it is not so easy. You have a great life and meet some great people, but you have to think of security. Perhaps in another job, you wouldn't have enjoyed life so much, but you would have been secure until retiring age."

[1] The same observation applies to a number of other occupations, e.g. social work and nursing.

Reservations of this type were doubtless exacerbated
by the presence of the social mobility ideology surround-
ing cricket. Should the player's career in retirement
not have lived up to the level of aspiration supported
by this ideology, it is probable that his overall con-
ception of the relative advantages of a cricket career
would suffer by contrast. An indication of the pervasive-
ness of this ideology is contained within another state-
ment by the author of the last quotation. When asked whether
he thought cricket offered more opportunities than other,
non-sporting careers, he replied:

> "It must provide the odd opportunity which
> would not occur in other jobs, because even
> if you are just a county player, and don't
> reach Test standards, you are in the public
> eye and you are known. This can open doors
> when otherwise you wouldn't have a chance."

The inconsistency is striking. Retired players sub-
scribe to a belief in the job-creating properties of a
cricket career, even when their own experiences appear
to illustrate the fallibility of this belief. Personal
disappointment or insecurity is not sufficient to out-
weigh the influence of the occupation's ideology.

This belief that the qualities embodied in the suc-
cessful cricketer were held in great esteem by prospective
employers in other occupations exercised a significant
effect on the attitudes cricketers developed towards the
problem of retirement. It was exceptional to find a
player who possessed a firm conception of the likely con-
sequences of retirement. Where such ideas existed, the
alternative career envisaged was a direct extension of
the cricket career, e.g. umpiring or coaching. Otherwise,

the majority of retired professional cricketers admitted
that during their playing careers, their plans for retire-
ment were restricted to such vague ideas as "getting a
business." The idea of obtaining professional qualifica-
tions or craft skills during the cricket career was notably
absent. So, too, was any effort at developing a permanent
source of employment from jobs obtained during the playing
career, in the winter months. The significance of these
jobs was related only to the immediate problems of getting
enough money to live comfortably during the close season.
Typical of this approach, and the regret with which it was
viewed later, was the following comment:

> "When I was playing, I had various jobs in the
> winter - none really directed at providing some
> durable experience and prospects. Now I am
> coach here, I insist that these youngsters I
> see, further their education. They learn from
> my mistakes."

This is not to suggest that the majority of retired
professional cricketers underwent social and financial
deprivations on leaving the occupation. In fact, many were
financially "better off" in retirement. But to produce this
fact in support of the advantages of a career is to miss the
point. It was the risks they had taken and the anxieties
these had created which prejudiced the majority against the
type of career pattern they had followed. Almost without
exception, players felt that a professional cricketer
should obtain alternative occupational skills before joining
the staff of a county club. One player spoke for the major-
ity, when he said if he had the opportunity to begin life
again he would play cricket,

> "but I would make sure that I had learnt something
> other than being able to play cricket. In those

days, nobody gave you this advice."

Without these alternative skills, as one player

noted;

> "Cricketers tend to go on from one year
> to the next, thinking it is going to last
> for ever."

The Established Cricketer [1]

A. <u>Family Background, Education, and Early Work History</u>

Seven of the established cricketers interviewed had
parents who were employed in occupations classed as
partly skilled or unskilled. Four worked in factories,
one was a garage mechanic, one was a clerk, and one was
a manual labourer. Five of the number had received grammar
school education, while two had attended secondary modern
schools. Of the former, two left school at the age of
fifteen, while three had remained until seventeen or
later. Both of the latter left school at the age of
fifteen. One of the players who left grammar school at
the age of fifteen went directly to the staff of a county
club, but the other did not become a first-class cricketer
until seven years later. All three who had left school
after the age of seventeen became employees of a county
club immediately after completing their National Service.
Both of the players from secondary modern schools had
completed an apprenticeship before joining the playing
staff of a county club.

Thirteen of the established cricketers in this sample
had parents in occupations classed as professional, inter-
mediate, or skilled. Six were executives in large industrial
or commercial concerns, three were solicitors, two were
schoolteachers, one was a first-class cricketer, and one a
sales representative. Eight of these players had attended

1   A sample of twenty.

grammar schools, four had attended public schools, and one had attended a secondary modern school.[1] Of those from grammar schools, five left after the age of seventeen, and three between fifteen and seventeen. Of those from public schools, three left after the age of seventeen, and one between fifteen and seventeen. The one player who had attended a secondary modern school left at the age of sixteen. Two of the cricketers from grammar schools and one from public school, had completed their education at either Oxford or Cambridge. Of the three members of this sample who had attended grammar schools, but who had left between the ages of fifteen and seventeen, two joined the staff of a county club immediately. Of the five who remained at school until they were at least seventeen, one joined a county club immediately on completing his university education, two joined on leaving school, while the remaining two held at least one other job before entering cricket. Of those who had attended public schools, one joined a county club on completing his National Service, one spent nearly three years in another occupation, and one went to University, and then played only as an amateur. While admitting immediately the limitations on prediction and generalisation imposed by the nature of these data, nevertheless, they do provide strong support for believing that significant changes in the early careers followed by

1   The position of this individual is complicated by the fact that his father was a successful professional cricketer. This makes the establishment of his class background difficult, Since, in career terms, the father was particularly successful, he has been ranked according to the type of job he obtained on retiring from cricket.

professional cricketers have occurred during the period
spanned by the work histories of our respondents. These
histories contained two important variations from the typical
amateur and professional patterns found in the early careers
of retired players. With respect to professional players,
it appears that first, a larger proportion came from middle-
class family backgrounds, and second, of those who came
from a working-class background, not only had a larger
proportion attended grammar rather than secondary modern
schools, but also more than half of this group had remained
at school after the minimum school-leaving age.

Before attempting to explain these variations, it is
necessary to indicate the extent to which they can be seen
as reflections of more general changes in the structure
of post-war British society. The amateur-professional
dichotomy in pre-war cricket was a legacy of the type of
class structure which existed at the time cricket was
organised into its modern form. In the 1870's this dis-
tinction corresponded very closely to real distinctions
in society at large. Even as late as 1939, it could still
be argued that amateur and professional cricketers inhabited
two different, almost discrete social worlds. As has been
shown already, the differential distribution of wealth,
power, and status, of which the situation of the amateur
and professional was a manifestation, differed only in
degree from the historical period in which the aristocrat
and his liveried retainer had first played cricket.
Changes in the composition of the ruling class in the
nineteenth century had not resulted in any substantial

alteration in this group's position relative to the rest
of society.

However, since 1945, these traditional patterns, for
a century the basic distinction contained in the game's
organisation, had been under-going a process of accelerated
erosion. In formal terms, the climax of this process came
in 1963 when the distinctions between the amateur and
professional categories of cricketers were abolished, all
players thereafter being designated as "cricketers." The
forces lying behind this drastic reorganisation of
cricket's institutional structure had existed for many
years prior to 1963. Though the precise extent to which
British society has been restructured since 1945 has been
the subject of continuing disagreement between sociologists
and others who represent opposing ideological positions,
in general terms, it is possible to describe three crucial
areas in which some degree of change has occurred; an
increase in the level, if not a more equable distribution,
of wealth amongst all sections of society; similarly, a
general, if not proportional increase in educational
opportunity; and lastly, a redistribution of the total
labour force, amongst sections of the occupational structure.
Again, in highly generalised terms, the cumulative effect
of these processes has been to expand that stratum of
society most commonly described as the middle-class. As
a consequence of increased affluence, attitudes towards
work and leisure have altered radically; for instance, the
prestige of non-manual career-oriented occupations has
risen at the expense of skilled manual occupations; and

as the possession of at least one car has become common-
place in a vastly greater number of households, so more
sophisticated forms of leisure involving travel and,
normally greater financial outlay, have become popular.
As the aspirations of an expanded middle-class have
altered, sports such as cricket, which to a large extent
had traditionally depended for their support, both from
players and spectators, upon the existence of a more
rigidly hierarchical society, containing fixed patterns
of work and play appropriate to each stratum, have tended
to decline in popularity and prestige.

When the major variations in the early careers of
established cricketers are evaluated in the light of
these more fundamental changes in the overall structure
of British society, a number of significant conclusions
can be drawn. First, the fact that a growing number of
players from a middle-class background were being re-
cruited, and that a great number of those from working-
class backgrounds had received a grammar school education,
more often than not extending beyond school-leaving age,
suggests that at this time,[1] cricket retained its attrac-
tiveness as an occupation amongst sections of society
which one would expect to be most sensitive to declining
financial and social status. That many of the respondents
had attained a level of education which would have quali-
fied them for entry into more normal professional or
commercial occupations, did not deter them from following
a cricket career. This suggests a situation which will be
examined more fully later; namely that the impact of

1   All respondents began their careers between 1952 and 1962,
    and the majority, during the latter half of this period.

cricket's declining fortunes did not have a significant
affect on the player's attitudes towards the career
until the established stage of his own work history.
Until then, cricket retained sufficient prestige to out-
weigh more objectively-based evaluations of the occu-
pation's condition. How cricket managed to perpetuate
its mystique in a rapidly changing society is a more
difficult question to answer. One common factor in the
background of a very high proportion of respondents,
retired and established, has been the presence of a
strong parental interest in cricket. In a small pro-
portion of cases, the father had been a professional
cricketer himself, a factor which had a direct impact on
the son's choice of career. In the case of the majority,
the father had been what the players described as a "keen
amateur", that is, he had played for a local club, or had
been a regular spectator at first-class matches. There
were no instances of a player having to overcome active
parental opposition to following a cricket career. It is
possible also that the traditional popularity enjoyed by
cricket in British cultural life acted to some extent as
a self-generating agency. For instance, cricket characters
abound in many of the most popular school-boy novels.[1]
Since the hero of these tales is frequently cast in the
role of captain or saviour of the school, college or club
cricket team, the game becomes an integral aspect in the
development of early conceptions of work.

1 Several P. G. Wodehouse novels revolve around Mike,
   the hero's feats on the cricket field.

The connection in popular literature between school
and cricket suggests a second reason why a career in
cricket remained compatible with the attainment of rela-
tively advanced levels of education. Until very recently,
the place of cricket as the dominant, and in most cases,
the only summer sport played in schools was unchallenged.
For all our respondents, participating in sport has con-
stituted probably the most enjoyable part of their school
lives. Apart from character-building properties, which
would have applied primarily to amateurs, an outstanding
ability at sport acts as a powerful status-conferring
mechanism within the milieu of inter-school relationships.
It was at school that our future professionals first
participated in competitive cricket, and where they first
came to the notice of potential employers. It was normal
for them to have participated in several varieties of
sport during their school life. As one player described it:

> "Sport played a very important part in my school
> life - I was always terribly keen on all sorts of
> ball-games. I think I can fairly say that I had
> 'ball-sense', which meant that I picked up games
> fairly quickly. I played for my school at
> cricket and football. I also gained representa-
> tive honours for the County Colts and the Young
> Amateurs prior to leaving school."

When cricket is seen as an integral part of school
life, the progression from grammar school to the playing
staff of a county club appears almost predictable. It is
likely that sport would be better organised and enjoy
better facilities in grammar rather than secondary modern
schools, and so it is also more likely - other things being
equal - that a grammar school pupil would progress to a
professional sporting career. The emotional affinity
with cricket which all respondents possessed was nurtured

in an environment where natural ability at sport became
a salient feature in the establishment of early self-
conceptions. In analysing the likely influences on the
young cricketer's choice of career, it must also be
remembered that the immediate post-war years were a
period of great popularity for cricket. Although, by
1955, this popularity was waning fast, it is possible
that the image of well-being established during these
years endured for a longer period. Further, it would be
totally incorrect to assume that the choice of cricket
as a career involved the conscious rejection of an oppor-
tunity or desire to follow another career. Our data
suggest that, even allowing for a middle-class social
background and a grammar school education, the player
who had made a firm commitment to a future career whilst
at school was the exception. Where the player left school
at the age of sixteen, or before, there is no evidence to
suggest that he had considered any career in the strict
sense of the term. An early love of the game, an oppor-
tunity and an ability to participate in a lot of sport at
school and, possibly, the identification with cricketers
as hero-figures, combined to establish what has been des-
cribed earlier as a predisposition towards the career.
When this predisposition was activated by an opportunity
to play first-class cricket, the career was launched. As
one player put it:

> "I think I can honestly say that being fanati-
> cally keen on all ball-games and particularly
> cricket, it was my ambition at the age of thir-
> teen or fourteen to be able to say that I had
> played county cricket; and, at the age of sixteen

> when I had my first trial, it was a tremen-
> dous thing for me. When they put forward the
> proposition of my joining the staff, I was
> thrilled and jumped into it as quickly as I
> could."

The extent to which the elements in this predisposition
were mutually sustaining explains the intensity of the
player's commitment to cricket at this early stage in his
career. One player who left school at the age of sixteen,
described his feelings towards cricket in the following
terms:

> "It was simply my life. Cricket was something
> which dominated my whole thinking at the time.
> I just wanted to play professional cricket."

The corollary to the emphasis placed on sport at
school was a tendency to neglect academic education almost
completely. Gaining a "good education" did not exist as
a separate goal; it was important in so far as it remained
a condition of being able to go on enjoying the opportuni-
ties and facilities to participate in cricket and other
sports. As another player put it:

> "I didn't place too much importance on a good
> education because I was so interested in sport."

At the age of sixteen, or in several cases even earlier,
the complete absence of consideration for any career other
than cricket is not unusual. The idea of work, and a career,
would have had little opportunity to gain meaning by this
stage. However, there are several reasons for supposing
that, by the age of eighteen, consideration of the nature
and location of one's future work would have assumed a
greater importance. Unless a university education is
envisaged, the end of the normal educational period is

imminent, and particularly for those individuals from
a middle-class background, a career offering scope for
advancement in both financial and social status prescribed.
But our data indicate that aspiring cricketers did not
conform to this pattern. For the majority, two extra
years at school did not serve to replace a childhood
love of cricket with an "adult" respect for achieved
skills or a more conventional career in professional or
commercial occupations. When asked whether the need to
get a "good education" was a paramount consideration at
school, one player, who left at the age of eighteen,
replied:

> "While at school, I don't think you thought
> about this. I was wrapped up entirely with
> sport - rugby and cricket. I didn't pay
> much attention to people with more knowledge.
> By the time I was about sixteen, I had my mind
> set on a sporting profession, namely cricket."

In the minority of cases, a love of cricket and a
respect for educational achievements co-existed in the
player's conception of his future. Here a firm decision
in favour of a particular career, cricket or otherwise,
was deferred until the end of secondary education. As
an example of the strength of the attraction of a cricket
career, the following statement is particularly signifi-
cant. The player in question had successfully completed
a grammar school education, had received offers of employ-
ment which contained the prospect of comparatively rapid
financial and social advancement, but yet still opted for
a career in cricket. The idea of a career in cricket first
occurred:

> "during the last year at school. I was
> approached in the winter by the County Coach
> and, as a result it was at the back of my mind.

> The county wanted me to start at the begin-
> ning of the season, but I stayed on at school
> until July to get my 'A' Levels. All the time,
> I was applying for other jobs and so it wasn't
> until the last moment until I decided to play
> cricket. At school the masters were a little
> bit anti-cricket - only the sports master was
> enthusiastic. They looked upon it as a pre-
> carious occupation. My father was very keen
> on me to join. I kept the other jobs I had
> been offered open until September when the
> club offered me a contract. Basically, deep
> down, I wanted to play cricket - it was the
> love of the game."

The establishment of a commitment to the cricket

career at an early age, powerful enough to deter con-

sideration of any alternative career, did not protect

players from an awareness of the marginality of the occu-

pation. The degree to which the established player

perceived the " indeterminacy" of the career at this

early stage contrasts significantly with that of the

retired player. To the former, commitment to the game

was not fortuitous; it is held to be necessary to sustain

the player during the period in which he is serving his

apprenticeship. During this period, players believed that

they had to devote more time and effort to their work than

the majority of individuals in similar positions in other

occupations. For example:

> "It does require greater sacrifices than a more
> normal occupation. A young professional has
> to possess complete dedication - there is no
> easy way out. When I was a young player I
> lived for the game."

One of the major difficulties encountered by players

in the early stage of their career was the sense of isola-

tion created by the training procedures. As one player

put it:

> "You can never get anybody to do anything for
> you - whatever you do, you have to do it your-
> self. If you do it well you get on - if you
> don't, you don't get on. You can't fall back
> on somebody and ask 'Can you do this for me?'
> They can show you how to do it, but nobody can
> do it for you. You are either good enough or
> you aren't. In a normal job, once you get into
> the swing of it, you can go on and on with it,
> but this doesn't happen in cricket. You have
> to be able to change, adjust and improve."

One indication of the extent to which the careers of
established players were affected by an earlier awareness
of the precariousness of the occupation can be seen in
the limitations our respondents imposed on the length
of time which could be devoted to attempting to establish
themselves. It is no doubt significant that this tendency
is most marked amongst the younger and better-educated
in our sample. To them, the pressures imposed by a com-
bination of a greater awareness of the opportunities
offered by alternative occupations, and the declining
prestige of cricket in society at large necessitated
anticipating the possibility of an abrupt and radical
change of career. As one player put it:

> "I joined with a view to giving it four or
> five years - until I was 23 - and then if
> nothing had happened, I would chuck it in
> and look for something else more concrete.
> If I did this, there would be no harm done
> - as long as I didn't let it drag for ten
> years. When I was twenty-eight, I would
> have found it more difficult to get a job.
> A bloke leaving school at eighteen with the
> same qualifications, would be willing to do
> a job for less money than I would at the age
> of thirty."

The imposition of such limits upon the early stage of
the career marks a further departure from the pattern
followed by retired professionals. Whereas before, the
decisive evaluation of the individual's career achievements

were made by an external agency, normally the county
club, for many established players, this process became
the responsibility of the individual himself. These limits
are based on a self-conception of the desirable career in
conjunction with objectively defined standards of achieve-
ment. Thus, the player was placed in a potentially con-
flicting position; in estimating his own achievement, he
had to balance an emotional affinity with the game with
the type of career he envisaged for himself. Even though
all our respondents were at least regular county cricketers,
only a minority reported not experiencing doubts regarding
their ability to establish a successful career. This
minority included all those players who had represented
England in Test matches. Typical of the attitudes they
adopted towards success in the early stage of their
careers was the following statement:

> "There was never any doubt in my mind that I
> should play for England at cricket. I thought
> I would play at least twenty times so I have
> not yet achieved this ambition. I am surprised
> that I haven't played more."

For the majority of players, feelings of ambivalence
and uncertainty were expressed in a number of rationali-
sations which were incorporated in estimations of their
own performances. Of these, the first involved trans-
ferring personal doubt into a characteristic problem
faced by all cricketers. For instance:

> "I think everybody feels that they won't make
> it at some stage or another - even the great
> players, like Cowdrey, get two 'ducks' on the
> trot - so it is only normal over short periods
> to think that you are not good enough."

In the second, players tended to maximize the obstacles
to achieving success faced by the cricketer. By this means,
they created not only an excuse in the event of failure,
but also additional satisfaction in the event of success.
As one player put it:

> "You always feel you are not going to make it
> though you secretly hope you are."

In the third, players dismissed all thoughts of failure,
on the grounds that the more one thought of failure, the
greater was the likelihood of failing.

> "I don't think one even feels that he won't
> make it in any sport. If you thought like
> this, you would never make it in any case.
> At an early age, you don't wonder about the
> chances of failure - you are going to play
> cricket, and as far as you are concerned,
> you are going to make it."

As in the case of retired cricketers, our data indicated
the continued presence in first class cricket of a small
group of players who had followed a distinctly different
type of early career. Whether they are described as
amateurs, or as cricketers, these players typically came
from middle or upper middle-class backgrounds, attended
grammar or public schools until the age of eighteen, and
then had completed a course at either Oxford or Cambridge.
Like the pre-war amateur, these players never conceived
of cricket in terms of a career. That they had become
members of a county team was largely fortuitous. When
asked whether he had considered a career as a professional
cricketer whilst at school, one player in this category
replied:

> "No, never - I haven't really done so since,
> either. I just happen to have done so -
> it was never an intention."

Selection for a county team followed automatically from gaining a 'blue' at university. Often players intended to spend only a short time playing county cricket, as a form of "purgative" before starting work.

> "When I came down from Oxford, I meant to
> play for two or three years, then as an
> amateur just to get it out of my system."

It follows from their method of entering first-class cricket, and the role it was deemed to play in their lives, that none of the players in this group experienced concerns over the difficulty of establishing a career in cricket. As one such player put it:

> "I don't think I have ever felt I wouldn't
> succeed as a cricketer, because I have always
> been in the side, and never left out of it.
> I was made vice-captain quite early and this
> rather precluded being dropped. Now I am
> captain, I certainly don't intend to drop
> myself. I have never felt insecure. The
> moment I did I would cease to play. I would
> never dream of soldiering on in the 2nd XI,
> hoping that somebody was going to drop out
> of the first team."

In a similar vein, another player commented:

> "Whether I made the grade or not was irrele-
> vant - and I think it always will be."

B. The Established Career

(1) Background

The careers of the majority of established cricketers started at a time when the post-war boom in the popularity of cricket was coming to an end. The first post-war decade had seen a sport-starved population flock into county cricket grounds all over the country. Not yet distracted

by an ever-increasing range of alternative leisure pur-
suits, nor lured away from the main centres of population
to the coasts and other "areas of outstanding natural
beauty", the cricket-loving public, measured by the numbers
who passed annually through the turnstiles, exceeded two
million. And this, as an index of the size of audiences,
undoubtedly presents the popularity of cricket in an
unfavourable light. It gives no idea of the amount of
sentiment which surrounded the game of cricket in Britain.
When, in 1953, England won the 'Ashes' and hence laid
claim to the title of world champions, it was seen as an
event which set the seal upon an annus mirabilis which
had already witnessed a Coronation, a British-led team
making the first ascent on Mount Everest, a first Derby
victory for Gordon Richards, and a Football Association
Cup Winner's medal for Stanley Matthews. Between 1953 and
1956, cricket enjoyed as great a prestige as it had at
any time since the twenty years which span the beginning
of the twentieth century - its "golden age". The glamour
accorded by victory heightened the attractiveness of
cricket as an occupation. A string of successful per-
formances in Test matches won a halo, and even a knight-
hood, for its most famous participants. This, in turn,
had the effect of crystallizing the structure of ambitions
and aspirations sustained by the game - this, at a time
when large sections of British society were emerging from
an "age of austerity". To play cricket for England was
probably a universal wish, treasured by boys on the playing
fields of Eton or the local recreation ground. Many

expressed the opinion that the game had triumphed at
last over the incessant crises with which it had been
plagued since the inception of the County Championship
in 1873. One of the most encouraging features in this
revival - one which recalled again the "golden age" -
was the entrance, almost simultaneously of a group of
young amateur cricketers, including P. B. H. May,
M. C. Cowdrey, D. S. Sheppard and T. E. Bailey, whose
talents both reminded older generations of C. B. Fry,
Ranjitsin   F. S. Jackson, and A. McClaren, and enabled
them to gain a place in the national team at a relatively
young age. In addition to their talents, what was so
encouraging about the presence of these amateurs was the
fact that, like Fry et al, they had come into cricket
after a public school and "varsity" education. They
reinforced the amateur tradition at a time when every
indication pointed to its gradual demise, not least the
fact that the English national team was for the first
time captained by a professional player.

However, the euphoria which surrounded cricket at
this time was misleading. Prestige and glamour are not
the only, or even the most reliable, indices of an insti-
tution's well-being. Though, for a decade from 1945, they
functioned to mask the parlous economic condition of
cricket from both its players and supporters, this re-
prieve was only temporary. Against this, many would argue
that county cricket had been financially unstable ever
since its foundation. For instance, it was estimated
that in 1937, county cricket was being run at a loss of

£30,000 per annum. But, as in the case of the national economy, estimates of this type ignored the "invisible assets" - for cricket, the presence of sufficient wealthy supporters to counter this deficit. The vulnerability of this argument rested in its dependence on an unchanging distribution of wealth in society at large. At its core lay the assumption, emanating from and sustained by the game's traditions, that there existed a natural identity between the possessors of wealth and a love of cricket. Before 1939, the numerous processes of social change present in British society had not yet disturbed the hierarchical stability of that structure sufficiently to make such a belief untenable.

By the end of the 1950's, however, there were clear signs that cricket was sliding inexorably toward a state of bankruptcy. One was the gradual decline in attendances at county championship matches. Between 1949, when cricket's standing was at its highest, and 1956, the total annual "gate" at championship matches had declined from 2,126,000 to 1,641,000.[1] Traditionalists amongst cricket's establishment have claimed always that purely statistical arguments fail to take into account the integral contribution made by cricket toward the maintenance of the British way of life. What did it matter whether attendances fell, so long as cricket continued to be played? But to the county cricket clubs upon whom the growing burden of insolvency weighed most heavily, these statistics held an inescapable

1   The figure for 1954 was even lower, 1,408,000. However, any ideas of a revival must be set against the fact that, by 1965, the total had fallen to below 750,000.

significance. They indicated the necessity of reformulating the rationale upon which the organisation and ideology of first-class cricket were based. It could be seen no longer as an elite pastime. To maintain economic viability in contemporary British society, it could only exist as a part of the entertainment industry, organised on the basis of principles which, in their most highly developed form, can best be described as bureaucratic. It is perhaps the central contention of this analysis that the changes in the organisation of both the game and the occupation during the past twenty-five years represent the transformation of an essentially patrimonial institution into an embryonic bureaucratic enterprise.

Recognition of cricket's future role as a part of the entertainment industry was far more an acceptance of necessity than an expression of voluntary re-evaluation. It is doubtful whether such a radical redefinition of the game's rationale could have been enacted within its existing structure, so entrenched in tradition were its organisation and values. In 1955, a P.E.P. Report noted the relationship between cricket's economic insolvency and this redefinition of its rationale.

> "The first-class counties play six days a week
> and are thus definitely part of the business
> of public entertainment. If they relied on
> gate money as their sole source of income,
> however, few would escape bankruptcy." [1]

Wide variations in the rate at which county clubs have accepted this redefinition are an indication both of their financial states and of the resilience of the traditional

[1] "Planning for Entertainment", op.cit., p. 14.

structure. Though many counties organised fund-raising schemes before, notably football pools, it was not until 1964 that financial sponsorship by external organisations was admitted to the overall organisation of first-class cricket. By doing so, the central administration of the game conceded that cricket was not played for its own sake, nor for the good of its participants, but for the entertainment of an audience.

(2) The Role of the Cricketer in a Business Enterprise

By admitting the primary importance of an audience, cricket in effect became a service occupation. Such a transformation involved a profound reorganisation in the role of the cricketer; in short, his new identity became that of a paid entertainer, and in his work, he was forced to accept the obligations and responsibilities associated with this role:

> "The service occupations are, in general, distinguished by the fact that the worker in them comes into more-or-less direct and personal contact with the ultimate consumer of the product of his work, the client for whom he performs this service. Consequently, the client is able to direct or attempt to direct the worker at his task and to apply sanctions of various kinds, ranging from informal pressures to the withdrawal of his patronage and the conferring of it on some other of the many people who perform the service." [1]

For the cricketer, the consequences of these changes in his role were manifold. It gave to the spectator the right to challenge the applicability of those skills and techniques which, by dint of years of practice, had become

1 H. S. Becker, op.cit., p. 146.

the cricketer's hall-mark and, as such, the anchor of
his work-identity. It admitted the cricketer to a rela-
tionship in which basic differences in commitment gave
rise to potentially permanent dissension over the correct
definition of the work task.

> "This contact brings together a person whose
> full-time activity is centred around the occu-
> pation and whose self is to some degree deeply
> involved in it and another person whose relation
> to it is much more casual, and it may be expected
> that the two should have varying pictures of the
> way the occupational service should be performed." [1]

In adapting to this new role, the position of the
cricketer was further complicated by the type of relation-
ship which dominated the institutional structure of the
game in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Traditionally,
the role of the professional had embraced all of the least
spectacular and entertaining aspects of the game of cricket.
He was required to provide the basic elements of predicta-
bility and reliability, both as a batsman and a bowler,
while it was left to the amateur to indulge in those eccen-
tricities of style and attitude which gave the game much
of its spectator appeal. In response to the demands of
this role, over a period of more than fifty years the
professional batsman and bowler had developed a style
based upon the minimisation of risk. Whilst, in technical
terms, this approach to the game represented a greater
achievement, it was also the case that only the most know-
ledgeable and dedicated of spectators could appreciate it.
However, so long as the amateur remained a figure in first-
class cricket, the complementarity of the roles incorporated

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1   Ibid., p. 147

in the game provided sustained enjoyment and excitement
for audiences whose knowledge of the game varied widely.

One symptom of the changing situation which led to
cricket becoming a part of the entertainment industry was
a decline in the numbers of amateurs being recruited into
first-class cricket. As the P.E.P. Report noted:

> "Today amateurs are fast disappearing from
> the county sides as the numbers of young men
> who can afford to devote six days a week to
> cricket without pay is declining. Many clubs
> pay travelling expenses to amateurs, and in
> some cases, paid jobs as secretaries are found
> for the most proficient. Even so, many counties
> cannot find an amateur good enough to captain
> the side. Professional captains are now a
> rarity and an England team has won a series
> in Australia under professional leadership." [1]

The explanation of the diminishing numbers of amateurs
to be found in first-class cricket is probably more import-
ant than this statement suggests. Though a redistribution
of wealth has occurred since 1945, it has not resulted in
the disappearance of a disproportionately endowed stratum
of society, from which the amateur was normally recruited.
A satisfactory explanation lies beyond the scope of this
study, but one can suggest general areas of changes which
probably exerted a significant influence on the phenomenon:
first, the continuing process of economic rationalisation
has meant that the number of organisations or occupations
capable of supporting a part-time employee (the amateur
cricketer) has rapidly declined; second, amongst those
strata of society who traditionally provided the amateur
cricketer, the idea of the career had decreased; and third,
the status of cricket as an occupation has declined since
1945. The significance of this last factor lies in the

1   "Planning for Entertainment", op.cit., p. 18.

fact that it coincided with an expansion in the size
and influence of the middle-class in British society.
The relationship between occupational status and particular
types of class structure is an important sociological
observation:

> "The status rewards in occupations become of
> more intense significance in a society where
> the middle-class is broad and where the differ-
> ence in monetary rewards among the many occu-
> pations is extremely narrow. With the reduc-
> tion in the numbers of captains in industry and
> systematic efforts for the raising of workers
> from bare subsistence level, historically
> important major differential rewards for occu-
> pations are being eradicated." [1]

Whatever its causes, the decline in the number of
amateurs in first-class cricket upset the crucial balance
of roles on which much of the game's attraction rested.
As he came to constitute a very large proportion of the
total number of first-class cricketers, the professional
had to bear more responsibility for the game's fortunes.
Whereas previously the professional who managed to com-
bine a high level of consistency with the personal
magnetism of an amateur was the exception, since 1945
this has become the norm upon which the survival of county
cricket has depended.

(3) Aspects of Marginality in the Established Career of the Modern First-Class Cricketer

It is one of the major contentions of this study that
the gradual changes in the social organisation of cricket
as an occupation which have occurred since 1945 have sig-
nificantly increased the players' awareness of the

1   Lee Taylor, Occupational Sociology, (1968), p. 317.

marginality of this occupation. The loss of autonomy suffered by the game in the course of becoming a business enterprise has meant that cricketers are no longer cocooned within a traditionalistic framework of values and beliefs. Their performances are now subjected to influential and possibly decisive evaluation by people whose point of reference is not an abiding love of the game, but the desire for relatively immediate, spectacular entertainment and whose knowledge of the game does not permit an appreciation of the level of technical competence required to succeed in first-class cricket.

The preceding analysis of aspects of the careers of cricketers now retired showed the marginal dimension of the occupation of which players were most aware to be the indeterminacy of the career. Reactions to this problem took two forms. For the minority, almost all of whom had enjoyed successful careers as cricketers and in subsequent occupations, it was seen as a personal challenge in which players should capitalize on the advantages provided by a cricket career. But for the majority, a retrospective assessment of their careers contained many ambivalencies, especially with regard to the finding of winter employment during the playing career and a permanent source of employment on retirement. One point upon which there was general consensus was the major need to acquire, at an early stage, qualifications or skills which would facilitate access to alternative sources of employment. However, despite these ambivalencies, the large majority felt they could recommend the career to others. Though they

themselves had experienced much doubt and anxiety during
the career, these were offset first, by the belief that
a cricket career provided opportunities both in the sphere
of employment, and in life in general, which were not
offered in more conventional occupations, and second,
by the enjoyment and satisfaction they had derived from
playing first-class cricket.

While these aspects of marginality remained import-
ant influences in an assessment of the success of a career,
in the case of the modern established cricketer another
dimension of marginality, ambivalence over the nature
of the work-task, constituted the dominant influence.
This ambivalence is reflected in several attitudes
typically held by cricketers. It tends to produce a
contempt for the spectator and an hostility towards the
press, whose reporters, it is felt, damage the image of
the game and its players by producing inadequate and often
incorrect appraisals of performances. The ambiguities
found in players' conception of their work stem at heart
from the conflicting demands which characterise the posi-
tion of members of service occupations. The cricketer is
caught between the Scylla of his own desire for a successful
career and the Charybdis of the more immediate demands of
his audience. His dilemma lies precisely in estimating
how far he can orientate his performance towards the
traditional standards of excellence associated with the
occupation as opposed to those subscribed to by his
audience. As Becker has observed in the case of Jazz

musicians, it is often felt to be impossible and un-
desirable to satisfy the demands of both of these
standards:

> "Musicians feel that the only music worth
> playing is what they call 'jazz', a term
> which can be defined as that music which is
> produced without reference to the demands of
> outsiders. Yet they must endure unceasing
> interference with their playing by employer
> and audience. The most distressing problem
> in the career of the average musician is the
> necessity of choosing between his 'artistic'
> standards and their demands. In order to
> achieve success he finds it necessary to 'go
> commercial', that is, to play in accord with
> the wishes of the non-musicians for whom he
> works; in so doing, he sacrifices the respect
> of other musicians and thus, in most cases
> his self-respect. If he remains true to his
> standards, he is doomed to failure in the
> larger society. Musicians classify themselves
> according to the degree to which they give in
> to outsiders; the continuum ranges from the
> extreme 'jazz' musician to the commercial
> musician." [1]

For the average cricketer, this dilemma is aggravated
by the historical tradition in which it is located. Until
1945, the role of the professional cricketer was defined
by the standards and values of an occupation which stood
largely aloof from the influence of "outsiders". Further-
more, because of its elitist position in English cultural
traditions, it was rare to find spectators out of sympathy
with the protagonists. While amateurs bestrode the wicket,
the autonomy of cricket's standards was supported by the
"common man's" characteristic deference to members of the
aristocracy. Within that context, the security of the
professional cricketer corresponded to the relative pros-
perity of the county clubs who employed him. This appears
to have been a crucial factor in determining the type of

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1   H. S. Becker, op.cit., p.147.

attitudes the player displayed towards his colleagues
and his audience. The greater the financial stability
of his occupation, the more the cricketer's colleagues
and his technical expertise became the central reference
points about which he assessed his own performances. The
retired professional's relationship with his audience was
one of relative dominance. The economic viability of
first-class cricket and the existence of a clearly
defined role permitted the player to project his own
standards of excellence on to the audience.

Since 1945, however, the growing financial insta-
bility of first-class cricket has resulted in a reversal
of the established cricketer's position vis-a-vis his
audience and his colleagues, until it reached a point at
which it became similar to that of the dance musician.
Since the survival of first-class cricket is seen to depend
upon its popularity as a form of popular entertainment,
the cricketer has come to occupy a position of subordin-
ance in relation to his audience. Though paradoxical,
it is nevertheless true that the more the erstwhile
spectator stays away from cricket matches, the greater
becomes the player's dependence on him. If the size of
the audience is small, it follows that the activity is
not popular. This subordination to his audience gives
rise to much of the ambivalence and uncertainty exper-
ienced by the cricketer in his work. The problem can be
stated simply: for the present generation of established
cricketers, the traditional skills of the occupation are
not necessarily those needed to satisfy the demands of the

majority of audiences. In short, the M.C.C. Coaching
Manual is not necessarily compatible with the demands
of "brighter cricket".

There is one vital respect in which the position of
the cricketer differs from that of the dance musician.
His choice is not whether to perform to entertain an
audience, or to play according to the established stan-
dards of the occupation. The cricketer is neither an
artist nor a robot. One salient feature in his definition
of the situation is the state of his personal career.
Unlike the artist or the robot, he cannot interpret a
favourable audience reation, or a display of technical
perfection, as automatically constituting an advance in
his career. The organisation of the county cricket
championship as a team competition prevents this. His
success is closely linked with that of his team. As a
professional or contract player, he is paid to perform
specific tasks. Unless an exceptionally talented indi-
vidual, his performance is not sufficient to determine
the outcome of a match by itself. It is but one contri-
bution out of eleven, and the decision as to when and how
it should be made is taken not by the player himself, but
by the team's captain. The ultimate goal towards which
all such decisions are oriented is not individual glory
but team success. It is an old axiom, but one which is
given much credence in cricket's milieu, that "success
breeds success"; that is, a winning side attracts the
biggest crowds, which in turn, guarantees the financial
viability of the particular county cricket club and,
ultimately, the security of the player.

Thus the cricketer is placed in an unenviable position. His immediate financial security depends on his performing, as a member of a team, tasks which may not gain him the appreciation of his audience or of press reporters; the audience because they have paid to be entertained, and the reporter, because his own market situation depends to a considerable degree on creating a favourable impression amongst his readers. But in following this course of action, the cricketer is required frequently to compromise those standards which form the original basis of his occupational identity and to forgo that style of perform- ance from which he derives the greatest satisfaction. In the face of these challenges, the standard reaction of the majority of cricketers is to assert the ignorance of "out- siders". For example:

> "I don't think they (the public) know much
> about it. They see a bloke hurling down a
> bit of leather and another bloke with a bit
> of wood at the other end. They don't realise
> how physically and mentally hard it is - or
> how much skill is involved. It is just an
> ordinary labourer's job."

Another player expressed these same sentiments in con- junction with an elaborate exposition of the more fundamental "professional or artist" dilemma with which the cricketer is confronted:

> "Cricket has been criticised so much over the
> years that this must have done something to the
> public who would normally come to watch the
> game. Sportswriters, many of whom have never
> played the game at a very high level, which
> means that they don't appreciate what it means
> to face a ball coming down at 90 m.p.h., find
> it easy to sit down and say you should have done
> this. It is a different thing to go out there
> and do it. They don't get it over to the public
> that this is an art, that it is a battle between
> bat and ball, that the bowler isn't coming up
> specifically for the batsman to hit 'sixes'.

He is trying his hardest to get him out, and
if he can't do this then he is going to try
to stop him scoring runs. That is his job,
that is what he is paid to do. If this was
put over to the public in a better way, I
think they would accept the game is a hard
game. The public loves to see 'fours' and
'sixes' - who doesn't? Batsmen love to hit
'fours' and sixes'. You do find occasions on
which the batsman fails to take the initiative
 - I've done it myself. But I have also faced
many bowlers on wickets which are helping them,
who have continued to bowl to a defensive field.
But there again, the people who write about the
game should appreciate that on bad wickets, they
could not afford to turn in bad figures, and
that the only way to ensure avoiding this is to
bowl to a tight field, and eventually you will
probably get a wicket. The bowler has a job
to do, the batsman has a job to do, and some-
where down the line, we have got to entertain
the public."

Players saw as the cause of this predicament what was

variously described as an increasingly defensive or

technical attitude to the game. With the disappearance

of the amateur, much of the "play" element has left

cricket. The modern "professional" approach, which has

as its centre-piece the minimization of the risk of losing,

is dictated to the player by the economic circumstances

in which he finds himself. Once it is accepted by persons

who depend on cricket to provide their livelihood, whether

players or administrators, that success is the only

guarantee of financial security, then cricket becomes

dominated by an ethic in which pleasure find no part. The

majority of players explain the declining size of audiences

in precisely these terms. That they should have to accept

responsibility, and bear the brunt of criticism, is wholly

unjustified. Unlike the archetypal amateur, their actions

and attitudes are determined by the structure of competition

in first-class cricket. For those players whose careers

started before the "play" element in cricket had not been
supplanted entirely, the modern approach constitutes the
antithesis of many of the techniques they learnt. As one
player noted:

> "Cricket has changed - certainly when I
> started as an opening bowler, I was told
> to pitch the ball up to the batsman and hope
> that if it swung at all and the batsman drove,
> you would get an edge caught behind the wicket.
> All my career I have tried to pitch the ball
> up, but nowadays this is not the trend. The
> bowler is afraid to be hit so he bowls it just
> short of a length and wears the batsman out."

Regardless of the extent to which players feel they
would like to entertain their audience, they are constrained
to play in a "professional" manner not only by the demands
of the immediate situation, but also to maintain the
integrity of their self-image. They see themselves no
longer as playing a sport. On the contrary, since cricket
is no longer a sport, it would be irrational to see their
participation as other than a job of work. But as the
following remark illustrates, it is expediency tinged with
regret:

> "Let's face it, it is no longer a sport as it was
> known twenty years ago. Cricket has got to be-
> come the same as football has become, and many
> other sports like golf - a business. It is
> lovely to play them with a 'don't care' attitude,
> but when you are paid, and my county pays me to
> score runs, whatever happens I will do my utmost
> to justify their faith in me. So you see that I
> couldn't go out on the field and not give 100% -
> and I think there are very few players who could.
> I feel that it is a job of work. The game has
> now become so technical that every strong part
> of every batsman is now blocked off immediately.
> Jack Robertson once made three hundred runs in
> a day - now I don't believe that batsmen of today
> are any worse, in fact they are probably better
> equipped than they were then - but no batsmen
> will score three hundred runs in a day now. (If
> this happens in the next ten years, come and see

me and you can have the best drink in the
house.) Bowlers don't attack the wicket as
they used to. I have had days when they
deliberately aimed a foot outside the off-
stump, and going even further. They think of
their figures, and say 'if you want runs,
get them'."

Reminiscences such as those contained in the previous
statement may be common in our data, but they must not be
taken to imply that the modern established cricketer
believes that this type of cricket is an inferior version.
To the extent that the modern cricketer sees himself as
"professionalised", to incorporate his work expertise
into his self-image he must have a belief in the intrinsic
value of his activities. It is a totally mistaken con-
ception to see the modern cricketer as engaged in a
Proust-like search for "lost times". The majority of
players would concur with the sentiments expressed in the
following statement:

"It may not be attractive to watch, but to play,
it gets better to me. As it gets more competi-
tive, it becomes a better game to play."

But this statement expresses the essence of the contra-
dictory position in which the player is placed - and a
contradiction which is incorporated into his self-image.
For if the modern cricketer believes that the changes in
the structure of the game, and in the requirements of
his role, over the last twenty years, can be described
adequately as a process of "professionalisation" he is in
fact succumbing to a desire common in many occupations, to
emphasize conversion to the professional attitude of
confidence in each other coupled with a demand for con-
fidence from the public. Everett Hughes was among the

first to note the way in which "concepts may be blinders"!

> "I started this study with the idea of finding
> out an answer to the familiar question, 'Are
> these men professionals?' It was a false
> question, for the concept 'profession' in our
> society is not as much a descriptive term as
> one of value and prestige. It happens over and
> over again that the people who practise an occu-
> pation attempt to revise the conceptions which
> their various publics have of the occupation and
> of the people in it. In so doing, they also
> attempt to revise their own conception of them-
> selves and of their work. The model which these
> occupations set before themselves is that of the
> 'profession'; thus the term profession is a
> symbol for the desired conception of one's work
> and, hence, of one's self." [1]

In the case of the cricketer, the reasons for trying

to professionalise his self-image lie in the every-

increasing marginality of the position he occupies. It

can be seen as a self-defence mechanism which reflects

the insecurities stemming from this marginality, for if

the public, his audience, can be induced to see the

cricketer as a "professional", then immediately he is

liberated from any obligation to them other than to

provide a professional service. Once this relationship

is established, his expertise, his attitudes, his whole

philosophy of life, are admitted to be a special domain,

acquired through years of specialised training, which

creates an authority and an autonomy which the public is

not qualified to question and to which they must acquiese.

Put another way, the audience become clients and admission

charges become fees. This is a mistaken self-concept,

however, because the process in which the structure of

cricket has been transformed over the last two decades

has not been one of "professionalisation", however many

1   Everett Hughes, op.cit., p. 44.

of those involved in the game would like to believe it
so, but one of "bureaucratisation." Post-war changes in
cricket can be understood best as an uninterrupted process
in which rational, impersonal aspects of organisation and
control are being introduced at the expense of the existing
patrimonial, highly personalised forms. When the 1955
P.E.P. Report wrote of county cricket becoming a part of
the entertainment industry, the basic change to which it
alluded was the introduction of those characteristics of
bureaucratic organisations which, as Weber indicated, were
designed to promote the most rational methods of attaining
the desired goal, in this case, economic solvency. The
bureaucratisation of cricket has not been confined to the
sphere of formal organisation. It has had a similarly
dramatic effect upon the employees of the new enterprise.
To understand the attitudes and values held by cricketers,
it is necessary to realise that they are following careers
at a time when the structure, organisation and ideology
of the game are in a process of transition. While, at the
time of writing, the institutional fabric of cricket has
lost much of its patrimonial character, it is still far
from being fully bureaucratised. Although the goals of
such a process have to a large extent been accepted by
the various administrative bodies within the game, both
the decision-making process and the selection of personnel
recruited to take these decisions, still reflect the game's
elitist past. That cricketers, however, are coming to
realise and accept their role in a bureaucratised organi-
sation is evidenced by the following quotation:

> "I would put the main reason behind our winning
> the championship this year down to what is
> fashionably called these days as professionalism.
> I prefer to label it efficiency. We play at
> maximum output as often as humanly possible." [1]

(4) Occupational Career Patterns

Nowhere is the impact of this transition from patri-
monial to bureaucratic organisation more evident than in
its impact upon the careers of professional, or contracted
cricketers. On the one hand, it is generally accepted
that.as a business, cricket must achieve financial viability.
Every county club has accepted that there is an unavoidable
relationship between success on the cricket field and large
audiences and high rates of membership, which until very
recently had provided their major sources of revenue. On
the other hand, players have accepted the necessity of
success and have adjusted their styles of playing, strategy
and attitudes accordingly. In truly rational fashion,
captains, batsmen and bowlers have attempted to develop
the most efficient ways of winning, whilst at the same time,
minimising the chances of failure. However, it was realised
rapidly that since the structure of the County Championship
allowed only a small proportion of teams to achieve that
level of success which attracted crowds and members, for
all clubs to survive, alternative means of fund-raising
had to be introduced. Within the last decade, new types
of competition, dependent upon the benificence of large
industrial enterprises, and lasting only one day, have been

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[1]   M. J. Stewart in The Guardian, Tuesday, September
       14th, 1971.

established. Today, it is these competitions,[1] which are proving most attractive to spectators, and hence, most remunerative for clubs. Players realise that, in all probability, the future holds a radical reorganisation of the County Championship, which may result in a decrease in the numbers of cricketers employed.

If, in one sense the gradual bureaucratisation of cricket has provided the player with an unequivocal definition of his immediate goals, and, by the same token, the methods to be employed, it has also created even greater ambiguities than existed before. To the average county cricketer, it is now by no means clear how the success motive, defined with respect to his team and his county club, is related to his own personal aims and ambitions. By subordinating his own ambitions to those of the team, the cricketer could restrict his chances of reaching the highest levels in the game, Test cricket. Apart from the immediate prestige it conveys, the status of Test cricketers is associated with the greatest financial benefits, and the greatest opportunities for achieving that type of national reputation which will make the cricketer an attractive proposition to future employers on his retirement. As one player noted:

> "It is difficult, you know. You always feel
> there is a chance you might miss the boat by
> playing to orders. If the selectors are there,
> and you get out early chasing a few quick runs,
> or bowl wide to stop others getting them, they
> aren't going to be very impressed. It is like
> that these days - almost every time you go in,
> it is either a crisis and you have got to dig
> in, or a declaration's near and the skipper
> wants a few quick runs. You need a lot of
> luck - being in the right place, doing the
> right thing at the right time."

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1   The Gillette Cup, the John Player League and the Benson and
      Hedges Cup.

Though incorporating imperfectly assimilated goal
structures, the organisation of first-class cricket
imposes potentially conflicting demands on the player.
On the one hand, he is a paid entertainer, and on the
other, he is a member of a team, the success of which is
a crucial feature in the continuing stability of his work
situation. Between these demands, the cricketer has to
effect a compromise which satisfies his own career goals.
In the process of attempting to develop such a balance,
the cricketer comes to hold distinctive attitudes toward
various aspects of his work, his colleagues, and also to
his leisure pursuits. Where groups of players maintain
different attitudes, it can be shown that these differ-
ences relate to the varying degrees of success achieved.
Success was judged by the recognition accorded to the
player within the occupation. Here, the most significant
variable was whether or not he had played in Test matches.

It should be established immediately that the sets of
attitudes to be discussed differ in emphasis rather than
in extent. It cannot be argued that the most successful
player develops a perspective of his occupation totally
at variance with that of the average cricketer, but rather
that these two categories of players placed emphasis on
differing aspects of that occupation. The aspects upon
which differing amounts of emphasis were placed included
relationships with colleagues, material rewards, and pre-
paration for retirement.

(5) Colleagues and Material Rewards

Following the framework developed by Morse and Weiss,[1] players were asked a series of questions designed to probe the importance of work in their total existence. By indicating a desire to continue playing cricket should their financial circumstances no longer make it necessary, all respondents appeared to find that playing cricket provided a high degree of intrinsic satisfaction. For example, one player replied:

> "Yes, I'd go on playing the game. I'm a bit of a masochist at heart. You put thirty overs down in a day and come off shattered, but you have got that inner glow, that reward of a job well done."

When respondents were asked what they would miss most by not continuing to play, approximately 90% said that they would miss the companionship sustained by cricket's milieu. It is significant to note that the remaining 10%, who gave as their reason either a dislike of doing nothing or loss of earnings, included all the most successful players. Though these players indicated later that they liked the atmosphere which normally accompanied a cricket team, that this element was only of secondary importance clearly differentiated them from the average county player, for whom it constituted a main source of work satisfaction.

In his analysis of the dance musician, Becker showed how one standard reaction of the "professional" to the challenge of "squares" (outsiders) consisted of

1   Nancy C. Morse & Robert S. Weiss, "The Function and Meaning of Work and the Job", American Sociological Review, vol. 20 (1955), pp. 191-198.

segregating himself from both his audience, and in the
wider context, the community in which he lived. In this
way, he was able to retain his artistic and personal
integrity. While the position of the average county
cricketer is unlikely to be so demanding, there are,
nevertheless, similarities in his reliance upon his
colleagues. Like Becker's musicians, the cricketer feels
that he possesses a "mysterious artistic gift" which many
believe themselves to have been born with. Whereas to
the musician, it is the immediate audience, and there-
after society itself, which threatended his integrity,
to the cricketer, the challenge to his status comes from
other, less traditional occupations. In response, he
attempts to develop a highly favourable occupational
identity, based on a series of largely stereotyped ideas
of his own and these other occupations. Differences
between cricketers and other sportsmen were of three
kinds. First, cricketers were seen as coming from a
higher social class. For example:

> "Having played both cricket and football, there
> is clearly a different type of person playing
> the two sports. It is simply the people them-
> selves. The people who come into cricket I
> think come from better families - being quite
> frank. Cricket is an unusual game - not every-
> body enjoys it. It has a limited appeal because
> of the time it takes to play, and also I think
> because the type of people who play it are
> different."

Second, cricket is seen as recruiting more intelligent
participants than other sports, especially football. One
player argued that:

> "By comparison with soccer, the intelligence of
> the average cricketer is high. They are far more
> mature people - though I think soccer has improved
> over the last ten years."

That cricketers believe themselves to be in a higher intellectual category was related to a similar belief in the intellectual superiority of the game itself. As a player noted:

> "I think that compared with rugby and football, cricket is a game where the standard of thinking is very high. You have to study each individual bowler, what he does with the ball, and then, as a batsman, you have to adjust to this. There are some bowlers for instance who don't like being hit for two or three fours early on: there are others who, irrespective of how much "stick" they get early on, will still come on and spin the ball - and so consequently, an awful lot of thought goes into the game. It runs through your whole life."

Third, it is believed that the game of cricket acts as a socialising mechanism. Through participating in first-class cricket, players are "educated" into accepting the standards of the game, and believing in the traditions on which they are based:

> "The cricket team as a sporting unit is about the best behaved in terms of dress, manners, etc. The game itself has its own level based upon its aristocratic traditions, and this you come to accept."

As Becker suggests in the case of the musicians, the conceptions cricketers have of their colleagues and of the occupation itself, play an important part in combating the anxieties which derive from its structure. Unlike the jazz musician, however, the cricketer cannot resolve the conflicting demands made upon him by withdrawing into an isolated, protected world, populated only by people subjected to the same pressures. Cricket exists only as a business or a pastime. It has no underworld capable of providing emotional and even financial support for the

individual who refuses to compromise his standards.
There is a further complication. The actions which the
game of cricket comprises involve a basic element of
competition between its players. To an extent, individ-
ual success in first-class cricket must always be at the
expense of another. To the average county cricketer, for
whom ambitions of gaining international recognition are
rarely supported in the actuality of his achievements,
the establishment of strong intra-team relationships
goes some way to combating the threats of audience and
opponents. In fact, membership of a team serves a dual
function. It provides a milieu in which cricketers can
expect to find a degree of understanding of the precar-
iousness of their position which is totally beyond the
capacity of outsiders, and it also provides a means of
socially distancing themselves from a threatening public.
As one player put it:

> "The great thing about cricket, especially
> about batting, is that failure is at your
> right elbow. There is no shadow of doubt
> about that. You can have a bad day at the
> office, but you can still make a come-back
> at 4.50 p.m. and do something right. But
> cricket is so final - if you get a good ball
> early on, or you are in bad form and get out
> to a bad shot, you are irretrievably lost.
> You sit down and watch everybody else for the
> rest of the day. That is not only frustrating,
> but it is very hard to get going again. It is
> a great worry - you take it home with you which
> is bad for the family. This is why cricketers
> have this tremendous feeling of togetherness.
> They create it themselves because it is the only
> thing which can give them security. You feel
> part of a team, and you almost forbid anybody
> else to come in. It works that way only because
> you feel so unsafe."

However, the emphasis placed by the average cricketer
on the companionship provided by team membership does not

exclude completely the ambivalences stemming from the
financial instability of the occupation. The majority
of players recognised that most county clubs were in a
parlous condition, and adjusted their orientation to
their careers accordingly. For example, one remarked:

> "You don't play cricket for the money - you might
> when you are twenty, because if you get your cap,
> you get the same money as someone who is thirty-
> eight. At twenty, you are well off compared
> with what you would be earning in a normal job,
> but by the time you are thirty, you are worse
> off."

At face value, this is a striking statement of the
cricketer's imperviousness to the attractions of monetary
rewards. By implication, what he loses financially is more
than compensated by the style of life he leads. This is
wholly consistent with earlier testaments to the attrac-
tiveness and general desirability of the cricketer's way
of life. If this disregard for material considerations
appears unusual, it simply confirms that cricket as an
occupation has unique properties which can only be under-
stood by its members. However, other sections of our data
suggest that the "mystical" properties of the occupation
did not compensate for the anxieties and frustrations
which it maintained. Cricketers' beliefs in these pro-
perties result partly from the ideological traditions in
which the game is steeped, but in the main, they must be
seen as a defence against those structured inconsistencies
which colour the perception of their own situation. The
intrinsic satisfactions accruing from participating in
first-class cricket do not dispel the frustrations which
respondents reported centring on two features of their

work situation. First, a belief common to average
cricketers is that the demands of the career prevent them
from playing the game as they would ideally wish. Given
the hypothetical situation in which they would play as
amateurs, most felt that they would be able to achieve
far greater success, both in entertaining the audience
and in furthering their own careers. There is a distinct
tendency to resent the presence of "occasional players",
not only because they displace a fellow professional, but
also because, with no concerns about their future in the
game, they can produce performances which audiences con-
trast favourably with those of the regular professional,
who has these responsibilities. For example:

> "Any county who allows people to play when they
> want to, unless they are really top-class, is
> going to ruin team spirit. Bob Barber plays
> for Warwickshire when he feels like it - it
> is debatable whether he is good enough to be
> accepted on those terms - but even if he is,
> if it happened in our county, it would cause
> considerable ill-feeling. You never know
> whether you are going to be the one left out
> because he feels like a game."

Second, the intrinsic satisfactions of cricket are
not sufficient to isolate the player for all material con-
siderations. Our data indicate that cricketers engage
in a constant process of evaluating their own status,
financial and occupational, in relation to members of
other occupations, sporting and otherwise. For the
average county cricketer, the results of these compari-
sons led to considerable dissatisfaction. As one such
player noted:

"There are fourteen county cricketers out of
the whole population of this county, but there
are more than fourteen company directors.
If you try and compare the two, the county
cricketer has far more natural ability, but
he get only one fifth of the salary. There-
fore we are not paid according to our skills.
Other sportsmen, like Arnold Palmer, are paid
according to the contribution they make."

It is indicative of a high level of commitment that
this process of comparison, even when self-inflicted, has
rarely prompted cricketers either to renounce the occu-
pation, or to take collective action to improve their
situation. The player is prepared to incorporate a stage
in his career at which he accepts the unlikelihood of
progressing to the status of Test cricketer without
taking steps to move into another, more secure and
probably more remunerative occupation. During this
period, there is no consensus of ambition beyond the
promise of a "benefit year". Unless he represents one
of the most powerful county clubs, in which case team
success becomes an important consideration, the player's
ambitions are either vague, or centred upon a relatively
minor, highly personalised achievement. For instance,
one player noted:

"I don't think I have any conscious aims
other than playing the game and taking a
few wickets."

Whilst another said his greatest ambition was "to do the
double". [1]

The anticipation of receiving a "benefit" becomes an
increasingly important consideration as the player reaches
the later stage of his career. At this time, normally

1   Take 100 wickets and score 1000 runs in a season.

approximately from the age of thirty, this relatively
instrumental consideration acts as a rational foil to
the emotional, and as the duties of marriage and family
life weigh more heavily, irresponsible "love of the
game" - it satisfies the widely publicised need for an
orientation toward the future. As one player put it:

> "By the time I was 28, the thought of a benefit
> was uppermost in my mind. I had got over the
> initial keenness and zest for cricket - origin-
> ally this was all I wanted to do - and the
> thought of a benefit led me to continue playing
> full-time - but I do enjoy cricket."

In lieu of this, cricketers are prepared to accept
the relatively poor monetary rewards yielded by their
job and the insecurities to which this may give rise.
They are conscious of the fact that the majority of
county clubs cannot afford to pay larger salaries. They
realise also that this inability stems from their own
failure to attract crowds of the size needed to make county
clubs flourishing enterprises, even though this raises in-
evitably the familiar dilemma - how can county cricketers
be both entertaining and successful? Many feel that they
are caught in a "vicious circle": the modern structure of
cricket produces a defensive approach on the part of the
player; this, in turn, deters spectators from attending
matches, and in their absence, players lack the incentive
to give of their best:

> "If no one is coming in at the gate, it makes
> wage demands very difficult and, there again,
> it is a bit dismal playing in front of two men
> and a dog. The lack of atmosphere out there,
> especially on a huge ground like Edgbaston where
> you can lose three thousand people easily,
> doesn't exactly spur you on to great things."

One indication of cricketers' lack of concern with material rewards, other than the "benefit", is the fact that although they accept that the monetary rewards to be gained from cricket are low in comparison with other occupations, until very recently only once has collective action to right this position been contemplated. Even the formation of the Professional Cricketers Association is not seen by the majority as likely to lead to any radical change in their financial prospects. The major function of this association is to reduce the insecurity of the player's position within the existing structure. To this end, it provides insurance policies to cover against the possibility of injury, and to ensure that cricketers do derive some benefits from the additional funds brought into first-class cricket by sponsorship. A comment by a member of the Executive Committee of the P.C.A. described the degree to which any attempt by the association to improve the financial status of players was conditioned by the impecunity of most county clubs.

> "Some players said they should get £500 instead of £200 for playing an extra day's cricket every week - but the clubs just can't pay it. I have talked to the Committee of our club, so I know the state they are in. They would love to pay more money but they just can't do it. We will all be out of work if we demanded £500, and that is directly due to the fact that people aren't paying to watch."

In general, the attitudes of the average county cricketer towards various aspects of his career could be described as "accommodating". In return for the enjoyment derived from playing, and the promise of a benefit towards the end of their career, players were prepared to accept the financial losses they believed themselves to

be incurring. In contrast, a minority, including a large
proportion of the most successful players, saw the career
in more instrumental terms; that is, they held as their
prime objective the desire to achieve substantial and
lasting improvements in their financial and social status.
Both attitudes and actions were geared to achieving this
end. Like the average county player, they enjoyed playing
the game and derived satisfaction and support from member-
ship of a collectivity, but, unlike that category of
players, these could not be said to constitute the raison
d'etre of their career.

In one respect, this approach to the cricket career
serves only to emphasise the marginality of the occupation.
It assumes a realisation of the precarious state of the
game and, in fact, is oriented primarily towards reducing
the impact of this problem. However, the success achieved
by these players allows them to take those actions and
adopt those attitudes which substantially minimise the
anxiety and uncertainties created by the marginality of
the occupation. The precise nature of the relationship
between career success and the possession of this distinc-
tive approach towards the career is difficult to ascertain.
From our data, it is impossible to discover whether, or to
what extent, one or the other of these factors assumed a
causal influence. It is likely that the two closely inter-
acted in determining the type of career followed, though
the strength of the relationship may be exaggerated by the
fact that highly motivated individuals who realised that
they were not going to realise their financial and social

ambitions through playing cricket, would turn at a
relatively early stage to an alternative occupation where
such prospects did exist.

While the average county cricketer does not play
cricket "for the money", for this minority group, financial
advancement is the basic reason for participating. Though
the financial motive is paramount, monetary aspirations
are limited often by a realisation that cricket is not in
a prosperous condition. As one player said:

> "You are in the game for money, even though
> there is not much money to be had."

It is a central feature of this approach that the value
of a cricket career should be calculated in terms of its
economic benefits rather than the emotional or expressive
satisfaction it permits. The cricket career cannot be
evaluated by standards different from those applied to
other careers followed during a total work life. It is
not accepted as an unproductive enclave in this totality.
Players believe that the occupation itself should be
capable of supporting the level of financial prosperity
they require. Although the present condition of the game
makes this difficult to imagine, they see the situation
improving. For example, one player argued:

> "The day may not be too far distant when a
> chap could live from his salary. This is as
> it should be. I believe that if a chap is a
> professional and wants to sit on his backside
> all winter, then that is his prerogative. If
> you are a professional you should be able to
> live from your profession."

At present, however, the cricketer had to succeed to
justify remaining in the occupation. The career is worth-
while only -

"providing you do reasonably well. There is
much more money coming into the game now
because of the Sunday League and the picture
is going to change over the next few years.
The good players will get better county salar-
ies rather than having to rely on getting into
a Test team to make up their money. It makes
a £600 difference if you play in the five Test's,
and that's a big difference when you are talking
about a basic salary of £1,000."

The emphasis placed on success has a significant
effect on the successful player's conception of the majority
of his colleagues. Through judging his own career by
relatively demanding standards, the financial status of
the average county player is downgraded automatically.
As one player claimed:

"The average cricketer - he plays for a benefit
alone. But a Test player can make a fair
living - plus the fact that he will make out-
side contacts which will bring in the money....
Over the last ten years, probably only twenty
players have made what I would call a good
living."

As a result of ranking the position of county cricketer
according to the financial benefits it commands, successful
players are deterred from recommending the career to any-
one else, even allowing for the fact that radical changes
in the organisation of cricket in the near future may make
the career more attractive. To this minority, the career
can only be worthwhile at the highest levels. As the
following quotation indicates, the career of the average
cricketer can be justified on grounds of necessity:

"I see the picture of professional cricket
changing. In four or five years, it could be
quite a useful profession. We see the game
being limited basically to the weekends - a
Saturday, Sunday and Monday game, and possibly
a couple of one day matches. The only profit-
able things now are one day matches and Test
matches to bring up your Test players. But,
the problem is that there will always be a lot

of county players who will never reach the top.
I wouldn't recommend this to anyone - this type
of player must really love the game to play it."

One consequence of the primarily instrumental orientation of successful cricketers is a lack of commitment to the traditional organisational framework of first-class cricket: the more success a player experiences, the less he sees himself, and the future of the game, in terms of conventional stereotypes. The occupation loses its autonomy, and is seen rather as an introduction to a more permanent, prestigious and profitable career. Because county cricket can only continue as a business enterprise, it must be re-organised to take account of the limited occasions on which it can reasonably hope to attract large audiences. On these occasions, the audiences must be able to watch only players capable of providing entertainment. One of the major reasons for the decline of county cricket has been a surplus of players incapable of entertaining, but who continue to be employed by county clubs, because of their obligation to provide teams seven days a week. By dispensing with these players, first-class cricket would improve its standards and become more attractive to spectators. As one county captain put it:

> "I love playing the game though the element
> of playing in front of big crowds has gone.
> This is partly to do with the game's admini-
> strators, but it is also the fault of cricketers.
> There are many professional cricketers who should
> never be playing - they aren't good enough. They
> are not good to watch and they worry every time
> they play. But because of the structure of the
> game, you need a certain number who you can rely
> on. I favour the system they have in Australia
> - in the Sheffield Shield, where they play for
> thirty days plus Test matches. The players are
> paid, but have other permanent jobs. We play

seven days a week for four and a half months
a year, which is ridiculous. I said five years
ago that we should play at the week-end, when
people can watch, and the Gillete Cup."

(6) Retirement and the Future

The problems of retiring and embarking on another
career midway through the normal work life are amongst
the most distinctive features of indeterminate careers.
For cricketers, the problem has existed ever since they
ceased to be retained by members of the aristocracy for
the duration of their lives. In the earlier analysis of
the career of retired cricketers, it was argued that a
combination of factors - economic depression, high un-
employment rates, and the relatively high status of the
game before and immediately after the war - gave to the
cricket career an autonomy which made retirement a sudden
and frequently unconsidered event. Where an anticipation
of retirement did give rise to uncertainties and anxieties,
these were countered by the presence of a belief in the
employment-creating properties of cricket - a belief
generated and perpetuated by the occupation's ideology.
Only in a retrospective assessment of their careers did
the majority of cricketers question the advisability of
ignoring the problem of retirement. This group felt that
although, in their own cases, it was justified, the con-
temporary generation of cricketers should always provide
themselves with such skills or qualifications as were needed
to obtain alternative employment.

The position of the cricketer in the established stage
of his career today differs inasmuch as he is no longer

excused by tradition and ideology from a responsibility to his own future, and that of cricket. Because of the bureaucratisation of first-class cricket, the financial state of the game impinges directly on his future. Throughout his career, he is required to sustain a consistent level of performance, not to safeguard the future, but to guarantee the present. The instability of this position is both highlighted and increased by the fact that the majority of cricketers receive only one year contracts. For the average county cricketer, the impact of this condition is most intense. By the time he has discounted himself as a likely England player, he is confronted with the prospect of needing to succeed just to maintain his present status. Assessment of success or failure takes place not within the occupation's milieu, but amongst the audience upon whom the economic survival of the game is seen to depend. As one cricketer explained:

> "This obviously puts him in a position where he is dispensable. He can go tomorrow for all the crowd that turns up cares. If, like me, the county cricketer realises this, he begins to wonder what he is supposed to be doing."

To counter these doubts and ambivalencies, players tend to take refuge in the collectivity of their colleagues. A further source of support is provided by the incorporation in the occupation's structure of a series of stages demarcating the recognition of technical expertise. The most important of these is the awarding of the "county cap". That the attainment of this "qualification" gives the average cricketer both a measure of security and some confirmation of his occupational identity is illustrated in the following quotation:

> "I am an established, capped player. Once
> you have proved yourself, your ability doesn't
> fly out of the window - you get another chance.
> If I have a bad season, I know that unless I do
> something stupid I will be back even though I
> only have a one year contract."

The importance of such career contingencies as the
winning of the "county cap" is an indication of the extent
to which the player's perception of his situation is
oriented towards the present and the immediate future.
Without the realistic anticipation of an international
career, the recognition conferred by the awarding of the
county cap does little more than increase the likelihood
the player will be able to retain his present status until
retirement. As the following statement indicates, because
of the structure of the occupation, the skills which
cricketers perfect in the early stage of their careers do
not provide the opportunity to gain promotion within the
present occupation, and do not qualify him for entry into
any other occupation:

> "You can't rise in the job, because it comes
> to an abrupt end just when you are beginning
> to think of making good. If I started work
> in a bank at 16, by the age of 35 I might be
> looking for a managership, whereas a cricketer
> is faced by the problem, 'What am I going to
> do now?' "

In this situation, the average cricketer typically
takes one of the three possible courses of action. The
first, followed by a small minority, requires an early
recognition of the dangers of indeterminate careers, and
consequent efforts to develop an alternative career
whilst playing cricket. Typically, this involves
studying during the winter months, either at a night
school, or through a correspondence course, for

professional qualifications, and once acquired, attempting
to gain actual experience of the work before retiring from
cricket. The problems faced by the cricketer following
this course of action are numerous. Apart from having to
find sufficient time and energy to study at the same time
as working in a normal occupation, the player then has to
find the opportunity to use these qualifications. The
second course, followed by the majority of players,
exposes them to a greater degree of risk and uncertainty.
It involves being able to actualise the claims of the
occupation's ideology - that is, finding a source of
employment through the social interaction in which the
player is constantly involved. One way in which cricket-
ers attempt to rationalise the risks involved in following
this course is by advancing the idea that a permanent
source of employment may be discovered in the process of
a temporary job during the winter months. Although the
development cannot be relied upon, it does give the
cricketer an advantage over other professional sports-
men. As one player noted:

> "Cricket has a big advantage over football in
> that it doesn't pay not to work in the winter.
> You have to find a job, and if you have any
> sense, you try to find one that you can go
> back to each winter, and you can do full-time
> when you finish cricket. The majority of
> cricketers do this - it is easier said than
> done."

The difficulties experienced by players who attempt to
follow this course of action are two-fold; first, players
have to find a firm or individual willing to employ them
for only six months of the year, and second, only in
exceptional circumstances can the type of employment they

find be converted into full-time employment without the
individuals suffering some loss of earnings.

The third course of action involves the greatest
element of risk, and for this reason, it tends to be
followed only as a last resort. Dependence on the sum
of money raised during a 'benefit' year is perhaps the
most traditional approach to retirement. The circum-
stances under which such dependence arises are described
in the following quotation:

> "You don't think about retirement until you
> have to. It is a silly way of looking at it
> - suddenly you have to think, 'Now what can
> I do?' - and it comes as a big surprise to
> some players."

The amount yielded by a benefit year can be substantial.
Though it is the most famous players who reap the largest
returns normally - in some cases, in excess of £10,000 -
the average county player can anticipate between £4,000
and £7,000. As many players noted, few occupations provide
this kind of bonus. But the prospect of a 'benefit' year
does contain less obvious hazards. Not only can it tempt
players into remaining in cricket longer than is advisable,
but it almost inevitably takes the place of any other type
of planning for the future. One cricketer, to whom a
benefit had just been granted, decribed his attitude
toward retirement in the following terms:

> "I'd like to carry on if they want me next
> year simply because it gives me more time to
> look around for another job...... I have got
> to make the best of this benefit money I have
> received. How am I going to do this? I don't
> know yet. I'm hoping that I will be able to
> use the money to create a job for me for the
> rest of my life."

In comparison, the attitudes of the most successful
players towards retirement differed in several signifi-
cant respects. As a result of the opportunities created
by their achievements in cricket, and the more instru-
mental attitude they had adopted towards the playing
career, retiring was conceived of as more a financially
advantageous move than a problem. That many of the most
successful cricketers in recent years have terminated
their careers before the normal retiring age is indica-
tive of the strength of this sentiment. All respondents
in this category had either established their own businesses,
or had gained a permanent position within an organisation
or profession which ensured an economic status at least
compatible with the best they had achieved as cricketers.
In these cases, cricket had acted as a means of achieving
upward mobility. It is significant that these players had
taken, or were in the process of taking, steps to develop
alternative careers at a relatively early stage in their
playing life. One of the most famous of post-war Test
cricketers expressed the belief that:

> "ideally, you want to build up a business of
> your own when you are about thirty."

One common consequence of an assessment of their
careers was that players were unwilling to recommend it
unconditionally to other aspiring cricketers. While
only a small minority found themselves unable to recommend
cricket under any conditions, the majority insisted that
any prospective player should gain sufficient qualifications
to enable him to develop another career on retiring from

cricket. The consensus of opinion was that a cricket
career was an enjoyable and rewarding experience providing
the player did not have to depend on it as his only means
of earning a living. A typical response to the question,
"Would you recommend cricket as a career to a close
friend or relative?" was:

> "Yes, I would, but I would make damn sure
> that they did have something in the way of
> qualifications - not just the ability to talk
> - behind them. People say flippantly 'You
> should have something behind you' - I really
> believe they have got to have something, and
> if they haven't got it, then they mustn't go
> into cricket. Twenty-one is plenty early
> enough to go into cricket - you don't need
> to be a Compton going in at 16 or 17 these
> days. You can start playing cricket at 21,
> having gone through university, and still
> play for fifteen years."

(7) Self and Public Image

Previous studies of marginal occupations have suggested
that they are often characterised by a confused public
image, and that a similar area of confusion and uncertainty
is to be found in the self-image of members of these occu-
pations. In his analysis of the "engineering technician",
W. M. Evan concluded:

> "Given the heterogeneous nature of the work,
> the multiplicity of occupational titles, the
> varied training and reward structures, we
> should expect them to differ appreciably in
> their self-image. Further, the public at large,
> probably have a very nebulous idea of what the
> engineering technician does, what his career
> opportunities and aspirations are, and what
> his relations are with other occupations." [1]

In order to discover to what extent, if at all, cricket-
ers conformed to this pattern, our respondents were asked

1   W. M. Evan, op.cit., p. 248.

questions designed to probe the following areas:

1.   The cricketer's conception of the public image
     of his occupation.

2.   The social class rating given to the cricketer
     by virture of his occupation.

3.   The cricketer's ranking of the status of his own
     occupation in comparison with others.

Responses to these questions tend to point to the
development amongst cricketers of a variety of different
self-conceptions, and similarly a number of different
conceptions of the status ranking of their occupation.[1]
Where patterns are discernible, they are simple. Players
who feel that the public image of cricket has fallen over
the last twenty years, also have a low self-image in terms
of their social class position, and tend to rank cricket
as being on the same status as clerical or skilled manual
occupations. The following three quotations can be said
to represent a distinct constellation of attitudes:

1.   "Probably about twenty years ago, it was a very
     desirable occupation. But now everyone seems
     to be so money-conscious that it is not so
     attractive. All people are interested in these
     days is a good future, and there are a lot of
     jobs which are better than cricket in this respect."

2.   "I'd like to think being a cricketer places us in
     the middle class but I know that it doesn't really.
     If your position is of no security, the sudden
     earning of £8,000 at the end of your career is
     not going to put you in the middle-class bracket
     if you haven't got an income to look forward to
     afterwards. I would say it is definitely a lower-
     class job, although it's income for a time might
     place cricketers in the middle-class."

1   The relationship between self and public is of particular
     significance in the case of cricketers since as members of
     a service occupation, they are vulnerable to what they feel
     to be an ambiguous or critical response by the public to
     their work.

3.   "I would say a job with the same status as
     cricketers would be a machine operator -
     he'd be more secure, but otherwise on a
     par."

Alternatively, the player who saw the prestige of the
occupation as having risen, gave himself a high class
rating, and compared the occupation with other high
status occupations:

1.   "I think the majority of people look upon
     the cricketer as a man with a profession.
     I am certain they don't look down upon him
     as I am sure they did in the early 'twenties'.
     Then the cricketer was like a showgirl in the
     1880's."

2.   "It puts you not in the upper class but some-
     where near. People look up to you rather
     than down."

3.   "I would say it had the same status as an
     estate agent or a small bank manager."

While these quotations represent cohesive combinations
of attitudes, the groups whose opinions they could be
said to express are small minorities located at either
pole on a success/failure continuum. The majority of
players hold opinions which range less coherently and
represent a far lower degree of internal consistency.
Within this range, it is difficult to isolate distinctive
patterns. What is perhaps more significant is the diff-
iculty experienced by cricketers in estimating their own
class position, and the relative status of the occupation.
As Evan has suggested, this condition must be seen as a
manifestation of the ambiguity and uncertainty character-
istic of marginal occupations. Though a large majority
of cricketers felt that the county cricketer was a member

of the middle-classes, this was subject to the condition
that they found employment which supported a comparable
standard of living. In other words, the occupation of
cricket did not comprise more than a part of their total
work-based identity. Similarly, the majority of players
found it difficult to compare cricket with other occupations
in terms of status. Where this type of comparison was
attempted, the occupations cited as being of comparable
status to cricket differed widely. They represented a
wide range of status levels within the occupational
structure of British society, including bank clerks,
schoolteachers, journalists, lawyers, sales representa-
tives, and assembly-line workers.

The difficulties experienced in comparing the status
of cricket with other occupations were very much a
reflection of their own doubts concerning the status of
the game. Many were uncertain whether the status of
cricket was sufficient to transform the relatively high
prestige they derived from being a 'public figure' into
a permanent dimension in their extra-work social relation-
ships. These doubts were best expressed in the following
response to being asked to compare cricket with other
occupations:

> "It is difficult to answer. Take the example
> of the county cricketer who is invited out to
> mid-day drinks. If he walks into a room con-
> taining twenty people, then initially fifteen
> of those will want to talk to him rather than
> a doctor or a solicitor - such is his standing.
> Whether or not anyone is talking to him in an
> half-hour's time depends on his own personality."

Approximately one quarter of our respondents asserted
that the public image of cricket was irrelevant because
the general public knew so little about cricket or crick-
eters. This state of ignorance is best illustrated by
the general public's totally misguided impression of the
financial situation of cricketers, an issue about which
the majority of players showed a particular sensitivity.
Despite the majority's denial of the importance of the
material rewards offered by a cricket career, these
considerations play an important part in the cricketer's
assessment of his own class position, and the status of
his occupation. The factor with which the concepts of
'class' and 'status' were most readily equated was income.
That the majority of county cricketers were particularly
sensitive to inaccurate assessments of their financial
status is indicative possibly of the experiencing of a
degree of relative deprivation, the cause of which can be
sought in the declining prestige of the occupation in the
wider society. In the following quotation, it is signifi-
cant that the player in question is particularly aggrieved
by the existence of a partly unconscious process whereby
members of the public equate the financial rewards provided
by careers in cricket and football, and hence gain an
exaggerated impression of the cricketer's situation:

> "I think the bloke in the street thinks cricketers
> are millionaires simply because they read their
> names in the paper. They read about footballers
> getting over £100 a week, but they don't realise
> this doesn't apply to cricket. Alex Bannister
> has written that cricketers are going to get a
> considerable rise now that Sunday games are on -
> but this is a complete load of rubbish."

However, these players do not respond by advocating taking collective action to gain higher financial rewards. Instead, the combination of the general public's ignorance, and their own financial deprivation is seen as providing cricketers with a degree of autonomy and immunity from public critcism. The true essence of a cricket career is beyond the comprehension of "outsiders", it is an experience which cannot be conveyed in terms of objective criteria:

> "Cricket is something apart from living and
> working - it is truly a way of life."

(8) Work and Leisure

One hitherto unconsidered aspect of cricket as an occupation concerns the manner in which players organise their leisure time and the functions they see leisure as serving. The position of leisure in relation to cricket has two exceptional dimensions: first, cricketers "work" in a sphere of activities which the majority of society would describe as 'leisure'; second, cricketers claim that their experience of work cannot be analysed in objective terms. A consideration of this question was stimulated by the exploratory studies carried out by S. R. Parker[1] and H. L. Wilensky.[2] In "Work and Non-Work in Three Occupations", Parker compares members of three occupations at broadly the same status level but who

1   S.R. Parker, "Work and Non-Work in Three Occupations", Sociological Review, vol. 12 (1964), pp. 64-75.

2   H.L. Wilensky, "Work, Careers and Social Integration", International Social Science Journal, No. 4 (1960),pp. 543-560.

differed substantially in the type of work they did and
the conditions under which they performed. His compari-
sons focused on "the specific components of these varying
work situations....the role which work played in the
lives of the people concerned", and an attempt to discover
"whether they have typical ways of relating the work and
leisure sphere." From his study, Parker succeeded in
constructing three hypothetical modes of relating work
to leisure. They can be summarised as follows:

1. Extension: members of such occupations as
   youth employment and child-care have leisure
   activities which are similar in content to
   their work activities; they make no sharp
   demarcation between work and leisure; they
   are work-involved, and the main function of
   leisure to them is to develop their person-
   ality.

2. Opposition: for members of such occupations
   as mining, ways of spending leisure are
   typically contrasted with the way in which
   they work; the content of work and the content
   of leisure is sharply differentiated; work
   being performed typically to earn a living,
   and leisure functions as a compensation for
   the dangers involved in work.

3. Complementarity: for members of such occu-
   pations as banking, leisure activities are
   different from work, and a demarcation is
   made between them. But these people are
   neither so engrossed in their work that they
   want to cary it over into their spare time,
   nor so damaged by it that they become hostile,
   or develop a love-hate relationship with it -
   they are just indifferent to it and unmarked
   by it in their leisure hours. Similarly, they
   are led neither towards "spill-over leisure",
   nor "compensatory leisure", but rather towards
   a middling "pattern of relaxation."

In concluding this study, Parker stated that it seems
clear that the work-leisure relationship was more than
just a personal preference. It is conditioned by various
factors associated with the way people work. From the data

collected on the occupational lives of cricketers, it was
clear immediately that, in "working" at cricket, players
were subjected to a number of pressures which conditioned
not only their work involvement, but also the way in which
they related work and leisure. If cricketers' attitudes
towards their work and leisure contained ambivalencies
and contradictions, this could be interpreted as a further
manifestation of the marginality of the occupation.

On the basis of Parker's work, and to a lesser extent
the conclusions reached by Becker in relation to dance
musicians, it might be anticipated that the cricketer's
conception of his work and its relationship with leisure
would approximate most closely to the "extension" pattern.
In this case, cricketers would exhibit a high degree of
work-involvement, see very little difference between the
content of work and leisure, and finally, define the
functions of leisure as the development of personality.
To a point, cricketers do fit this pattern. It is unneces-
sary to devote many words to displaying the extent to
which cricketers get involved in their work. In justi-
fying their choice of occupation, cricketers gave what
amounted to a stock answer:

> "What can be better than getting paid for some-
> thing you love doing."

Since sport is one of the most popular forms of
leisure, it is not surprising that the majority of
cricketers have another sport, most often golf or foot-
ball, as their major leisure pursuit. The following is
one player's account of his leisure activities:

> "We usually take our swimming stuff when we
> play away, because when it is raining it is
> about the only thing you can do. I've never
> taken golf up, unlike most of the others - it
> is too expensive for me at the moment for the
> amount I would play. If we have a really long
> spell off, we go up to the Y.M.C.A. and have a
> few games of badminton. We even play a bit of
> five-a-side football on the concrete outside.
> But other than that, about the only relaxation
> I get is to take the family out for a drive on
> Sunday."

Hereafter, there is evidence to suggest that the
actions and attitudes of cricketers conform more to the
'complementarity', and, in some cases, the 'opposition'
pattern. Though the spheres of activity in which the
cricketer typically works and takes his leisure are
similar - they are both sporting - cricketers do make a
demarcation between the two. Very few cricketers reported
being able to relax whilst participating in first-class
matches, and looked to leisure to perform this function.
For example, one noted:

> "Once you play first-class cricket, there is
> nothing relaxing in fact, though different
> people show it in different ways. You need
> to relax from it - golf is a great way of
> relaxing."

Further comments by respondents indicated the degree
to which cricket can become a physically and emotionally
exhausting type of work. Under these circumstances, the
cricketer wishes he could separate himself temporarily
from cricket as a sphere of work. This wish is experienced
by the majority of cricketers regardless of the success
they have achieved. As one player expressed it:

> "You don't consciously relax at all during the
> season. I used to play golf on Sundays, but
> now we play seven days a week, that's gone.

> Generally three-quarters of the way through
> the season, I hit a patch when I feel 'Oh Christ,
> I don't want to be here'. But you have got to
> go on. You can't get away from it when you wish
> you could."

From our data, it is abundantly clear that the structure of modern first-class cricket creates in the player a deep-seated ambivalence in his attitudes towards cricket, which is reminiscent of a Freudian love-hate relationship. When players speak of their "love of the game", they are referring to an idealised version of cricket in which the emotional and physical strains are absent. In speaking of their work, players reveal frequently the extent to which the realities of their work situation produce reactions close to hostility. For example:

> "You can't relax at cricket - I've come home
> some days when we haven't bowled a ball, feeling
> exhausted - yet all we have done is play cards
> all day. As soon as there is a break in the
> clouds you think, 'we'll be playing in an hour'.
> If you are next in, or five wickets away from
> going in, it is still on your mind you will be
> going in. There is a lot more nervous tension
> in cricket than in football. That is why you
> drink, I suppose - it is not the drink, but just
> to forget cricket. I think all our side hate
> people talking cricket when they are in the bar -
> if someone comes up and starts talking cricket,
> we have a few polite words and then say 'excuse
> me' and go somewhere else. We used to have Sun-
> days off, but again, this has been changed - and
> I used to play golf and that was a great relaxation."

It is likely that the effects of the pressures generated within the structure of first-class cricket are not confined to the immediate sphere of work. As well as creating an ambivalence towards work, a significant proportion of players indicated that by the end of the season, this attitude had extended into their relationships with colleagues.

In answer to the question, "To what extent does your
social life revolve around other members of your team?"
one player replied:

> "During the season, a great deal obviously
> - you can't get away from them. By the end
> of the season, you probably wish you could."

At first sight, this sentiment appears completely
inconsistent with the emphasis which all players place
on the collectivity of cricketers. In view of the nature
of my sample, and the fact that it was not a general
response, the significance of this finding should not be
over-stated. It is possible that this type of ambivalence
was stimulated by the particular situation of the team -
for instance, a consistent lack of success - or that it
was the result of personal hostilities, the causes of
which lay outside the sphere of cricket. However, it is
true that players do tend to see relatively little of each
other during the winter months. The occasions on which
they meet are mainly formal functions organised by the
county club. The relationships formed between cricketers
in the sphere of work do not appear to form the basis of
the regular informal social activities in which they
participate during the winter. In itself, this is not
significant, since it is rare for all players to be re-
cruited from one major centre of population and consequently
they tend to disperse to widely separated locations during
the winter. But the tendency for a player's social life to
revolve around two separate locations and hence involve
two discrete sets of relationships, does indicate a further
potential manifestation of marginality. While one of the
major advantages claimed for the cricket career is the

opportunity it provides for developing more extensive circles of friends, several of our respondents pointed out that the separation of summer and winter work and non-work spheres of activity have led to their losing friends.

The Aspiring Cricketer[1]

There are two major reasons for including a section
on aspiring cricketers in this analysis, even though
they have not advanced beyond the "trial" stage in their
careers and there is no guarantee that they will do. In
the first place, it provides an opportunity to compare
attitudes towards the occupation and the wider society,
at different stages of a player's career, and to examine
the extent to which these changes, if they are shown
to exist, can be seen as structural dimensions of the
total career. In the second place, it allows us to
analyse the extent to which the changes in the structure
and status of cricket since 1945 have extended an awareness
of the marginality of the occupation to the point where it
becomes apparent at the earliest stage of the career. If
this is shown to be the case, it is legitimate to predict
that the "love of the game", which was the decisive
factor in the recruitment and early careers of both retired
and established cricketers, will be replaced at a much
earlier stage by the greater concern for the instrumental
benefits - and the insecurity - offered by a cricket career.

The objective situation in which the majority of county
clubs are placed today is not such as would recommend
cricket as a career to any but the most ardent supporter
of the game, or those individuals who, by virtue of their
social and financial circumstances, find the rewards

1   The respondents in this category had been members of
     county cricket clubs for under three years, and had not
     received their county caps.

offered by the career irrelevant, or relatively encouraging. That the majority of clubs are in a financial state dagerously close to bankruptcy is no secret. Indeed as many players noted with a mixture of chagrin and regret, many cricket commentators in the daily press hover over the game like vultures anticipating death, occasionally dropping a wounding article to hasten the process. One ex-county cricketer, an amateur, reviewed the present condition of county cricket in the following terms:

> "Half a dozen bank managers could kill county cricket tomorrow morning. The figures are well enough known. The seventeen first-class counties made a loss of £175,000 last year. Only two, Worcestershire and Leicestershire made a profit, and that was counted in hundreds, not thousands." [1]

In a later section of the same article, the results of a special survey are revealed. The major points it makes are as follows:

> "Six Counties - Derbyshire, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire and Somerset will collapse unless something quite unforeseen occurs.
>
> Income from membership, traditionally between a third and a half of revenues, is declining against the rising trend of costs. The average daily attendance at championship matches last year was 581 and that includes a near - 30,000 crowd for the Saturday of the second Roses match. Supporters' clubs, cricket's props in the fifties and sixties, are declining. They depend on membership enthusiasm for sales and last year's revenue dropped by £46,000 to £92,000." [2]

No doubt, some of the game's loyalist administrators could challenge justifiably both the individual conclusions

1   R. Marlar, "Cricket's poor get poorer", Sunday Times (May 2nd, 1971), p. 26.

2   Loc.cit.

reached in this survey and the general picture it presents.
The precise economic status of county cricket clubs is not
the point at stake here. Few prospective employees precede
their application with a minute examination of their
potential employer's financial credibility. But, from the
point of view of cricketers, it is scarcely possible to
avoid reaching the conclusion, some mention of which appears
in every daily paper about once a week, that county cricket
as a business is in a parlous condition. Again, the long-
term viability of county cricket would be of less relevance
to the prospective employee in a society which placed
little or no emphasis on developing a reliable, materially-
rewarding career. But in contemporary British society such
considerations are becoming ever more important. If, as
one piece of sociological research has suggested, a signifi-
cant proportion of the total labour force is adopting a
more instrumental attitude towards work,[1] the impecuniousness
of cricket cannot but deter them from following a career
in the game. The headlines of one article comparing average
annual earnings in British sports advised:

> "Don't play cricket.....if you want to turn
> your sport prowess into cash." [2]

and reached the following conclusion:

> "Today a schoolboy's dream is of scoring a
> soccer hat-trick at Wembley. Few dream of
> playing at Lord's or the Oval. The wealth
> and glamour of the modern footballer - indeed

1   See J. H. Goldthorpe, D. Lockwood, F. Beckhofer and
     J. Platt, The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure,(1969)

2   "Sporting salaries", Evening Standard, (October 24th,
     1969), p.18.

a jockey, golfer, and tennis player too - makes cricket the poor relation in British professional sport." [1]

The facts presented in such articles may be inaccurate, the arguments frequently illogical, but their significance lies in the general conclusion which they arrive at: that for a variety of reasons, a career in cricket is no longer nearly such a desirable prospect as it was before 1950.

It is the conclusion which provides the basis of the recommendation contained in several serious and official career guidance publications. In the Central Youth Employment Executive's publication, "Professional Sport", the following comment was made:

> "Although the county cricketer has seen a financial improvement in the post-war years, he is still not highly paid when compared to professionals in some other sports. There are a few exceptions, mainly well-known and well-established players, whose reputations as cricketers have gained them financial rewards above the average." [2]

Another section of this same publication indicates the difficulties and uncertainties involved in following a cricket career. Again, the advice provided does not enhance the attractiveness of the occupation:

> "It is important to note that only a few of the hundreds of boys given trials by their counties show enough promise to be offered an engagement and the proportion of failures amongst those engaged is high.
>
> For the first few seasons, the young player gains experience in club and 2nd XI cricket...... if at

1   Loc. cit., The implications contained in this article were vigorously attacked by J.A. Bailey, Assistant Secretary to the M.C.C., in a letter published in the Evening Standard, November 1st, 1969.

2   Central Youth Employment Executive, Professional Sport (1969), p. 18.

any time his performance fails to maintain its
early promise he could be well advised to seek
another career. He would be wise to do so, in
any case, if he has not secured a regular place
in a county side by the age of twenty-five, as
the successful player usually achieves this in
his early twenties." [1]

A similar report, produced by the Industrial and

Professional Careers Research Organisation Ltd., offered

not only the same graphically unfavourable comparison with

the golfer, the tennis player and the footballer, but also

ventured the conclusion that cricket could only regain

its attractiveness as a career if the entire structure of

the occupation were changed:

"Unlike the other three sports, cricket must be
classed as a declining occupation. Around 200
English-born professionals play for 17 counties,
earning low wages, playing before largely empty
stands, and taking second jobs in the winter to
make ends meet.....

Assuming fair progress, the average county
player now earns £1,500 for a six month season.
Even Test Match players seldom earn more than
£2,500 in a season and one or two international
performers find it possible to earn more from
broadcasting and other ancillary activities than
from actually playing.

Playing professional cricket, therefore, puts a
higher premium than most other sporting careers
on love of the game and a certain disinterest in
material rewards. In the 1970's it is hardly
surprising that fewer and fewer schoolboys seem
attracted by a career in cricket, coupled as it
is with a disjointed family life, seven days a
week commitment during the summer, uncertain
future and fading glamour.

For those still enraptured by the most English of
all sports perhaps it is best at this time to
concentrate on another full-time career and hope
that before long the cricket administrators decide
to copy Australian practice, cut the amount of
first-class cricket and depend on part-time pro-
fessionals paid only on a match-fee basis." [2]

1   Ibid., p. 19.

2   R. Knight, "Careers in Professional Sport", Daily
     Telegraph, (July 26th, 1971,)p. 17.

If these reports and commentaries provide a fair guide, the decline in cricket's status as an occupation since 1945 has been as dramatic as that suffered by any occupation during this period. In what ways, if any, has this decline affected the contemporary young cricketer's attitude towards various facets of his occupation, and his conception of its image in modern society? Has, as many players and administrators have claimed, the spate of adverse commentary received by the occupation so blighted the image of the cricketer that now many potential players are put off the career before they see the inside of a county ground, and those who do become cricketers respond by adopting primarily instrumental attitudes towards the game at the expense of its traditions? In short, is the contemporary generation of prospective cricketers more aware of the marginality of cricket as an occupation? These questions indicate the focus of attention in the following analysis.

A. Family Background, Education, and Early Work History.[1]

In all, fifteen aspiring cricketers were interviewed. Four had parents who were employed in occupations classed as partly skilled or unskilled: two held clerical posts, one was a postman, and one a long-distance lorry driver. All of these four players had attended secondary modern schools, and all had left by the age of sixteen. Three of the four began apprenticeships, though none of these were completed. The last player joined a county club immediately after leaving school.

Eleven of the aspiring cricketers in our sample had parents who were employed in professional, intermediate, or skilled occupations, Six were executives in industrial or commercial concerns, two were sales representatives, one was a company director, one was a local government official, and one was a landscape gardener. Five of the eleven players had attended secondary modern schools, which all had left by the age of sixteen. Four had attended grammar schools, two of whom had left at sixteen and two at eighteen. One had attended a comprehensive school, which he left at the age of fifteen. One had attended a public school, which he left at the age of eighteen. The only member of this group to continue his education at university previously attended a grammar school. Four of the five players who had attended secondary modern schools joined the staff of a county club within a year of

1   That the number of players in this category, fifteen, is five less than in the samples of established and retired cricketers is a condition dictated by circumstance. Young players were less willing to be interviewed than their older counterparts.

leaving school: the two with grammar school education up
to the age of sixteen also went directly into cricket,
though in one case, a move to a different county club
followed shortly. The player with a comprehensive school
education did not join a county club until the age of
eighteen. Both the university and public school educated
players joined county clubs immediately on completing
their education.

These results indicate significant changes, first,
in the social identity of the contemporary aspiring
cricketer, and second, in the structure of the career
pattern he follows. When compared with established county
cricketers, it is apparent that more young cricketers
come from a middle-class family background, but that a
higher proportion of those from both middle and working-
class backgrounds had worse educational records, judged
by their failure to reach grammar school. A similar
tendency recurs among those players who had attended
grammar schools. Whereas over half the established
players had remained at school until the age of eighteen,
among the aspiring players more than half had left by the
age of sixteen. Finally, the proportions of aspiring
players not only with grammar school education, but also
with a public school or university education, are signifi-
cantly smaller than was the case in the sample of established
players.

The paradox suggested by these results - of cricketers
coming from a higher social class background, but with
worse records of educational achievement - if taken at

face value, is difficult to resolve. In part, it is likely

that it reflects both a bias in the sample, and a general

inadequacy of data. It is possible that a significant

proportion of those fathers at present in middle-class

occupations only recently attained this status; i.e.

they are examples of upward social mobility. If this is

the case, then hypothesizing further, their conception

of their children's education may be more in line with

that of a working-class parent. But this type of argu-

ment is clearly fallible. In terms of the data at hand,

it is possible, at best, only to suggest certain general

factors which may have influenced these recruitment

patterns. First, it is likely that the expansion in the

number and range of middle-class occupations in society

at large at the time these aspiring cricketers would have

entered the secondary stage of their education had not

been matched by a corresponding increase in educational

opportunity. This situation would have had the greatest

affect on those children whose fathers occupied the lowest

status occupations within this middle bracket. Over half

of the occupations of the fathers of aspiring cricketers

would fall into this sub-stratum. Thus, if, as has been

claimed,[1] the post-war expansion in educational opportunity

has been to the advantage of middle-class rather than

working-class children, this would present a partial

explanation of the apparently declining educational

standards of aspiring cricketers. However, even if this

1   A. Little & J. Westergaard, "Trends of Class Differen-
     tials in Educational Opportunity in England and Wales",
     British Journal of Sociology, vol. 15 (1964), pp.301-316.

explanation is accepted as significant, it leaves un-
answered the question of why cricket appears to be a
relatively more popular occupation among this section
of society.

It is probable that an answer to this question lies
with several factors relating to the immediate situation
of the players involved. If the contemporary aspiring
cricketer is being recruited increasingly from a lower-
middle class social background, this suggests a degree
of compatibility between the parental aspirations of
members of this group for their children, and the present
status of cricket. In this case, it is important to
remember that, although cricket has suffered consistently
declining status since 1950, nevertheless it remained in
a very different category to manual and most clerical
occupations. Our data indicate that favourable parental
opinion was an important factor in the aspiring cricketer's
final choice of occupation. One country club's secretary
recalled that the advice of the father frequently ran
contrary and outweighed his own counsel:

> "In the majority of cases, despite my warnings,
> the father says 'you are only young once, you
> might as well see if you are good enough - you
> might lose your touch if you don't!, and we
> always get the chaps straight from school."

Whilst admitting the importance of the different status
of cricket, it is possible also that the father's relatively
favourable assessment of cricket as an occupation may be
based upon the immediate post-war popularity and prestige
enjoyed by the game, the time at which he was most inter-
ested in it. Thus his enthusiasm for the modern

occupation may represent an assessment based on its past glories.

For those of our respondents who had left school at a relatively early age, an exceptional ability in school cricket, and the absence of any alternative conception of a future career were common factors. All the players in this sample had achieved considerable success in the cricket they had played during school-years. For the majority, cricket was only one of the sports in which they had represented school or club. Whilst playing at this level, the individual was "spotted" by a county club and invited to a trial, then to participate in representative matches against other county colt XI's, and finally to attend "nets" during the winter. Through this process, the idea of becoming a cricketer attained a measure of reality. When asked when he first chose to follow a cricket career, one player replied:

> "This was the idea all the way through school.
> In the last years, I had been going to Easter
> coaching. The coach at the county grounds
> asked me what I was going to do, knowing I was
> in my last year at school. They offered me a
> contract - I was hoping this would happen and
> accepted immediately."

Early recognition of exceptional ability by a county club reinforced the likelihood of a sporting career, as the individual tended then to define the academic aspect of school life as of secondary importance. Once an involvement in sport had been given pre-eminence, the decision to leave school at a relatively early age was a logical consequence. When asked how much importance he had placed on getting a "good" education, one player answered:

> "Very little really - I was so busy with
> different sports that the rest of the time
> passed without really thinking about it."

In view of the tendency for secondary modern schools
to provide less well-organised sporting facilities than
grammar schools, that an increasing proportion of young
cricketers are recruited from the former appears contra-
dictory. In the cases of our respondents, this obstacle
had been surmounted by participating in club cricket. The
opportunity to play at this level was the result of the
player's father either playing for, or showing an active
interest in, such a club. A case in point was provided
by one player, who related that the secondary modern
school he attended,

> "didn't have any playing fields, so we never
> used to play cricket matches, we just used
> to knock around and have a bit of fun."

This player had represented his county at different
age levels, and had played for and captained an English
Schools' side. When asked how he had gained the oppor-
tunity to play competitive cricket, he answered:

> "Really, through my father. He played club
> cricket for a work's team, and I used to go
> and watch him every weekend. I met the team's
> coach and he suggested I came to the County
> for a trial, which I did when I was thirteen.
> From then, I had plenty of chances both to play
> and also to be coached."

If, for the player who left school at sixteen, the
decision to follow a cricket career was the almost inevi-
table consequence of the emphasis placed on cricket in
this context, the decisive factor in the case of those
players who had remained at school until eighteen, or who
had proceeded to university, was an absence of a firm

commitment to an alternative career at the time the opportunity arose. Lacking this commitment, but possessing qualifications which would provide an entry to another occupation should the cricket prove unsuccessful, the decision to play cricket was seen as a calculated gamble. The player believed that he could afford to spend three years "experimenting" with a cricket career without jeopardising his prospects of gaining an alternative source of employment.

Today, the aspiring cricketer is made aware of the disadvantages of the career as soon as he is offered a contract. The secretaries of county clubs make a point of advising the young players of the risks they take in making a career of cricket, and go on to recommend that they should make the attempt to obtain further qualifications before joining a county club, or during his early years in the game. As one Secretary put it:

> "When we have a promising young boy come down
> to the ground, we always suggest to him and his
> father the precarious nature of county cricket.
> If the boy can take an apprenticeship or go to
> university before he tries his hand at cricket
> he would be advised to do so."

In this way, the aspiring cricketer is made aware of the marginality of his prospective occupation. During the period that he is learning the techniques and strategy required of a county cricketer, he is advised to spend part of the time obtaining those qualifications needed to gain entry to a totally different sphere of work. Far from trying to develop a lasting degree of occupational commitment, cricketers' employers give advice which, if followed,

would deter the process of identification with crucial
aspects of the occupation. However, with one exception,
our respondents did not respond to the recommendations
of the county secretaries and career guidance agencies.
Though several had obtained winter jobs which paid wages
comparable to those they received as cricketers, not one
had succeeded in obtaining further educational, professional,
or craft qualifications. The reasons given by players for
not having done so were significantly similar; it was not
that players didn't accept the value of these extra
qualifications, but that they found it impossible to
devote enough time to studying for them. In reply to
the question, "Have you attempted to gain any further
educational or craft qualifications since leaving school?",
three respondents describe a similar situation:

1. "I was going to, but it has been a bit difficult
    with cricket and having to find a winter job as
    well."

2. "I play a lot of football which takes up three
    nights a week and what with being married as
    well, it doesn't leave much time for anything
    else."

3. "I'm afraid not - much as I would have liked to
    have done, I don't seem to have the time. I
    did go one winter, but, in fact, the exams
    would have been taken in the summer, which
    would have been very difficult."

Thus the contemporary generation of aspiring cricketers
is confronted at an early stage with a dilemma which stems
basically from the relationship between cricket and the
rest of the occupational structure. Those qualities required
of a cricketer, and which are developed during the early
stages of the career, do not relate to either those

qualifications which it is the intention of the education system to produce, or to the demands of the large majority of alternative occupations. Players are told of this incongruity by employers and elder colleagues, and are advised to protect themselves against the possibility of an abrupt termination of their employment. Yet, because of the structure of the occupation and because of other demands placed upon him, the aspiring cricketer finds it impossible to heed this advice. Since this situation is the result primarily of recent changes not only in the organisation of first-class cricket but also in the majority of occupations in society at large, it can be said that this generation of aspiring players have entered an occupation more marginal than that of their predecessors.

Consistent with this situation is the development amongst this group of cricketers of a set of substantially different attitudes towards work and the career. Evidence of this change can be found in the players' approach to many facets of the game. Unlike the retired or established cricketer, the aspiring player adopts a highly instrumental attitude towards playing first-class cricket from the start of his career. Although there can be little doubt that, in making the initial decision to follow a cricket career, he is strongly influenced by a subjective predisposition towards the game, his "love of the game", once under con-tract, the player sees cricket essentially as a type of work, and adjusts his actions and attitudes accordingly. In adopting this approach, he is motivated first, by a desire to succeed, and second, to benefit from the material

rewards offered by the occupation. When asked whether

he saw cricket as work, one player replied:

> "I have to, because I know that I have to do
> well in order to stay in the side, and to be
> successful for myself. You also have to
> think about the win-bonus and appearance money
> - you must do, it is your bread-and-butter."

This concern with material rewards is inextricably

linked with the player's particular definition of success.

The intrinsic satisfactions provided by playing cricket

come nowhere near to justifying his continued pursuit

of the career. Neither does the argument that it is

necessary to accept relatively low wages because county

clubs cannot afford to pay more. The ambitions of the

young cricketer centre on the level of international

competition, not directly for the honour and glamour it

brings, but because it is at this level that the financial

rewards and opportunities are greatest. With these

ambitions in mind, the modern young player adopts a more

rigorous process of self-evaluation than appears to have

typified his predecessors, though the standards applied

in assessing achievement are part of the occupation's

culture. They are learnt from senior players. The

following quotation, a player's assessment of the state

of his personal career, indicates a level of introspection

not found amongst either established or retired players:

> "At the stage I'm at, I should say that this
> is the season that will make or break me. I
> have had, so far, one very good season in the
> 1st XI, and one disastrous one. The first one
> probably kept me on the staff, because potentially
> I have still got it - having already done it once.
> All the senior players you talk to say that in
> the first year in the game you do a bit better
> than you are really capable of at this stage,

> because nobody knows how you play and how
> you get your runs. By the second year, they
> will have sorted you out and, in fact, you
> will find it very difficult. You won't get
> the type of bowling you play best. In the
> third season you tend to hit a happy medium
> and develop whatever ability you have got.
> So this season should decide it for me one
> way or the other. If the county signs a lot
> of new players in the winter and I don't get
> in the team, I don't think I will be sacked,
> and so know whether I am going to make it or
> not until I do get back in."

One consequence of setting one's ambition at this level is the development of a contempt for any inferior level of achievement, such as that attained by the county cricketer, reminiscent of that displayed by successful established cricketers. One aspiring player described his ambitions as:

> "to get into the side regularly and then to
> do well enough to play for England. Without
> these ambitions I would be wasting my time as
> an ordinary county cricketer - there is not
> enough in it financially. I like to make money
> out of the game, otherwise I feel I am not so
> much wasting time as marking time."

An extreme projection of this approach found among a minority of respondents, typically those with the best educational records, was a willingness to accept the relatively short-term contracts of most county clubs. Far from creating anxiety, this contract meant that the player was not tempted to relax and so lessen his chances of realising his ambitions. One respondent went as far as to welcome this type of contract because it meant that if the county club decided he was not going to succeed, he could leave without a long delay consequent on completing a contract:

> "If you have got it, you've got it; if
> you haven't, you haven't. You are only
> on a yearly contract, so if they don't
> think you are going to make the grade,
> they don't have to keep you hanging around
> for two years. I think this is a good
> thing."

For the majority of aspiring players, however, the
pressures which resulted from adopting a primarily instru-
mental attitude towards the career effectively reduced the
amount of intrinsic satisfaction to be derived from playing
cricket. In this sense, it could be said that these
players have become alienated from their work. Experience
of deprivation was heightened by the presence of an
alternative approach towards the game. Many of our
respondents felt that if they had the opportunity to
play as "amateurs", not only would they derive more
satisfaction from the game, but also their standards of
performance would improve. Nowhere was this consciousness
of the advantages of the "amateur" more evident than in
respondent's answers to those questions designed to dis-
cover the function and meaning of work for cricketers.
After stating that if his financial state permitted it,
he would play cricket as an amateur, one player went on
to give his reasons:

> "I would be a better player. It is very
> difficult to explain but like anything else,
> if your living depends on something, you'll
> be cautious and probably try too hard at one
> particular aspect of it. Perhaps Bob Barber
> is a good example of this. I remember him as
> captain of Lancashire, and although he was
> reasonably secure, cricket was something he
> became very engrossed with, and so he did not
> look a particularly good player - in fact, he
> was a very stodgy, head-down batsman. He
> changed clubs, went into business - cricket
> became his second love - and he played virtu-
> ally a shot a ball, and played for England."

One interesting consequence of this common envy of
the status of the amateur was a marked ambivalence towards
those cricketers who were in a position to incorporate the
amateur ideal into the modern conception of cricket. Such
players had a two-fold advantage. First, they could choose
the matches in which they were going to play and so avoid
what became for many the drudgery of playing cricket seven
days a week. As one young player put it:

> "Although we are all supposed to be 'cricketers'
> now, you still find the amateur-professional
> distinction. The amateurs can always take a
> break when they are getting 'stale', but the
> 'pro' can't - unless he wants to be dropped."

Second, they could play without being burdened with
responsibility. The combination of resentment and
admiration which reflects the player's ambivalence is
revealed clearly in the following statement:

> "I don't regret playing cricket, but at the
> same time, I wish I could have been in a
> position where I had the kind of job which let
> me look at cricket as real relaxation - some-
> one like Ted Dexter. I don't particularly admire
> him for leaving cricket at his peak. I thought
> he got a tremendous lot out of the game and he
> ought to have put something back into it. But
> I admire someone who has got the brains and money
> to do something outside cricket, and play purely
> and simply for relaxation. If you do badly then
> it is not going to get you down; you are naturally
> disappointed, but you don't worry about it. But
> you do if you are playing cricket and solely depend
> on it."

Thus, a combination of a largely instrumental attitude
towards cricket, and a more demanding and individualised
concept of success expose the aspiring cricketer of today
to the possibility of experiencing greater insecurity,
ambivalence and frustration than previous generations of
cricketers at this stage of their careers. It is significant

that respondents were united in their disinclination to recommend a career in cricket unless the individual in question had previously obtained qualifications or skills in another occupation. As one player put it:

> "I would say no, if they have got brains.
> If they had done well at school I would
> tell them to do something else - to get
> something else behind them. Because I
> didn't have much of a brain at school, I
> had to take what I could do best."

That the present generation of aspiring cricketers became aware of the marginality of their occupation earlier than their predecessors cannot be doubted. It is likely also that the occupation itself has become more marginal. However, neither of these factors has produced a greater desire to make detailed provision for retirement. Our respondents' reactions to the problem of retirement varied, but were characterised generally by a high degree of vagueness. As before, thoughts of retirement were dominated by the belief that a successful cricket career facilitated finding a future source of employment. The following comment amounts to a classic reiteration of this belief:

> "All players who make the grade find themselves
> fairly comfortable after their playing days.
> If I make the top-grade at cricket I think the
> job which I would like to do will come my way
> quite easily."

While impressive in itself, this statement indicates a striking failure to come to terms with the realities of retirement. Apart from believing that, through cricket, they will meet people who will eventually offer them a job, the majority had given little serious consideration to the problem of retirement. It is not surprising that few

players express preferences for particular jobs, for
to do this would be to ignore the fact that they have
little or no control over their future market situation.
To justify this lack of concern, respondents argued fre-
quently that planning for the future was meaningless since
it depended entirely on the amount of success achieved in
the present situation. Moreover, players believed that
their immediate standards of performance suffered from
too great a concern with retirement. As one player put it:

> "I don't think of the end - I try to think of
> now. You can't afford to think of finishing
> until you get to the top and if you think too
> much about it, you won't reach the top. When
> you are there, then you can think who shall I
> chat up for a good job now. This isn't possible
> at my age. I couldn't go to Slazenger and say
> I want a job as a representative now."

This type of statement suggests that the radical
changes in the structure and status of first-class cricket
during the last two decades have not led to a change in
players' response to the indeterminacy of their career.
Partly as a result of exposure to the often contradictory
opinions of cricket's administrators, and partly as a
reaction to the demands of the occupation itself, the aspir-
ing cricketer sees his future as a predominantly fortuitous
succession of events. The only exceptions are those players
who believe their future lies in coaching. Even amongst
these players, there exists an important difference between
those who see coaching as a vocation, and those for whom it
is an expedient. The difference is shown clearly in the
following two responses to the question, "Have you considered
what you are likely to do on retirement from cricket?"

1. "I always wanted to be able to coach cricket
    and football - to get the certificates and
    then a job in South Africa. This is what I
    have always hoped to do ever since I started
    playing cricket."

2. "I think I could get a school's coaching job,
    I would like it very much, but I haven't got
    any firm plans for this stage."

Conclusion.

It was Samual Butler who noted that "Life is the art of drawing sufficient conclusions from insufficient premises." [1] Bearing in mind that this observation is perhaps not totally unfounded, this conclusion will seek only to restate and to draw together some of the major findings of the preceding analysis of cricket and the cricketer.

The study had at its outset two major aims; to make a sociological contribution towards an understanding of the phenomenon of sport and of the type of occupation and careers which have come to be connected with it. By adopting a developmental perspective, it was hoped that a further contribution might be made towards overcoming the barrier which, many have argued, separates the "sociological" and "historical" approaches towards the analysis of social data. Cricket was chosen as the subject to be studied partly because of its intrinsic interest and partly because there was already in existence more than enough information relating to its history to sustain the type of analysis I wished to undertake. It required only for me to provide comparable data relating to the contemporary structure of the first-class game and the occupation associated with it.

In many ways, cricket occupies a unique position in British social life. It is a peculiarly British game.

1   Samual Butler, "Life", Notebooks, p. 7.

Outside of the British Isles, it has only achieved a
significant following in countries which have at some
time been part of the British imperial tradition. The
realisation that the development of cricket was somehow
linked to the processes of change occurring within the
wider context of British society was a decisive influence
on planning the research strategy to be followed. What
had started as a study of cricket thus took on a wider
significance as a means of gaining a greater understanding
of the complex process whereby British society acquired
its present form.

The history of cricket and the occupation linked to
it demonstrate very clearly the role played by the landed
aristocracy and gentry in the development of many social
institutions. The way in which members of this cadre
first adopted and then moulded the folk-game to satisfy
the demands of an existence devoted almost exclusively to
leisure is a testament to the strength and pervasiveness
of their influence in seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth
century English society. In the same way, many of the
changes in the organisation and structure of cricket
during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reflect the
complex restructuring of British society which occurred
in the course of industrialisation and urbanisation.

But cricket has functioned on several occasions as
something more than just a mirror of changes occurring
within the wider society. For one thing, the game has
developed its own dynamic. Many of the changes introduced
into the laws of the game came about as a direct consequence

of advances in the level of technical expertise possessed by its players. It is also true that cricket has played an active role in the development of various facets of British society. During the second half of the nineteenth century, for instance, it played an important part in the inculcating of ruling class norms, values and behavioural standards to future generations of that group.

One of the fundamental propositions advanced in this study is that the occupational and career structure which developed around cricket can best be examined by drawing on concepts already in existence. By using the concepts of "marginality" and "indeterminacy" it has been possible to show how, from its earliest days, cricket's occupational structure has contained potential sources of ambiguity, uncertainty and strain. In the past, the impact of these factors upon the players has tended to be minimised, first by the benevolence of individual patrons, and later by an occupational ideology which presented the disadvantages of the occupation as a reasonable exchange for the exceptional opportunities that it offered. The marginality of the occupation has become most evident to players and administrators alike during the last twenty years. Partly as a result of changes in the wider context of the labour market and partly as a result of cricket becoming a service occupation, the modern cricketer is probably more aware than any of his predecessors of his vulnerability to a wider range of career contingencies.

It is in this situation that we leave the most recent cohort of aspiring cricketers. Yet such is the speed at

which the structure of first-class cricket is changing, it is quite possible that the attitudes of players towards the game may already have altered significantly. Some of the structured inconsistencies which have been described as integral features of the modern cricket career may have been resolved. This is a subject for future research. In this study, an attempt has been made to increase our understanding of an area of social life with which the majority of us are familiar, but which has been sadly neglected as a subject for academic study. Cricket is only one of a wide range of sports which could sustain similar analysis. Such attention would be of benefit not only to sociologists with a specific interest in sport, but to all who profess an interest in that discipline. For in the phenomenon of sport they will discover an ideal opportunity to appraise the general utility of much of the conceptual apparatus developed by specialists in other areas and, moreover, a source of great insight into the structure of social life.

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Appendix One

Method of Study

Two factors above all others exercised a decisive influence on the research strategy adopted in the study of the career patterns of modern, first-class cricketers. Both were reflections of a general state of ignorance in which any student of this type of occupation must inevitably find himself or herself. Since 1918, sport has established itself as one of the most popular forms of mass entertainment and, as a result, sportsmen and sportswomen must now rank as members of the most publicised type of occupation in western industrialised societies. Yet this development has gone largely unnoticed by sociologists specialising in the field of occupations. The first major influence upon this study, therefore, was the absence of any previous study in this area to provide guidelines. The second influence was the peculiar status of the individuals whose careers were the focus of attention. As one of the few students of modern sportsmen has indicated, the planning of any study of modern entertainers is influenced "by the salient fact that celebrities are exceedingly difficult to study as a group."[1] Part of the problem stems from the fact that the intensity of work activity required of the cricketer throughout the "season" precludes interviewing them at the time when, in a spatial sense, they existed

1   H. Charnofsky, "The Major League Professional Baseball Player, Self Conception versus Popular Image," _International Review of Sport Sociology_, vol. 3, (1963), p. 41.

as members of a group. During the non-playing season,
the majority of cricketers are involved in other types
of work and there is no organisational framework within
which they can be easily contacted.[1]

Thus I was faced with two major difficulties, a type
of occupation about which little was known beyond the
realms of hearsay, fiction and tradition, and a group of
individuals whose situation and geographical location
made them potentially unreliable respondents. The areas
in which the impact of these two problems was at its
most direct were the preparation of the interview schedules
and the construction of the interview sample. The
schedule was not intended to provide a mass of quanti-
fiable data, nor was it organised to allow the interviewer
to probe any one particular aspect within the general
field of the sociology of occupations, e.g. occupational
choice. It was designed to enable the interviewer to
elicit sufficient information to construct a description
of the major structural features of the occupation of
cricket, and a profile of the major career paths traced
by its members. To gain as wide a perspective as possible,
interviewees were selected from each of three career
stages, "aspiring", "established" and "retired". By
employing these "stages" as the sole independent variable,

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1   The County Cricket Clubs, their employers, were not
always willing to reveal their players' out-of-season
whereabouts, or even to act as intermediaries. When
they did co-operate and the players chosen expressed
a willingness to be interviewed, it soon became apparent
that the extent to which they had dispersed geogra-
phically was going to impose severe strains upon the
organisational capacity and economic resources of the
interviewer.

it was assumed that they represented significant lines of demarcation between clusters of objective and subjective factors in the work lives of cricketers.[1] In the process of interviewing, I became more sensitive to certain aspects of the cricketer's life than others and, in these areas, data gained from previous interviews were used to guide a more intensive probing. It was recognised that such a process necessarily restricted the extent to which my findings could be used as the basis of generalisations. But, in defence of this procedure, one can argue that, in the words of Everett Hughes, it permitted me to "penetrate more deeply into the personal and social drama of work",[2] and, beyond this, to indicate lines of enquiry which, if pursued by future researchers, may lead to the establishment of a more complete understanding of a hitherto neglected type of occupation.

1   The decision to make this assumption in the case of
     the cricket career was prompted by the findings of
     other studies of career patterns: see, for example,
     Oswald Hall, "The Stages in a Medical Career," American
     Journal of Sociology, vol. 53 (1948), pp. 325-339;
     and H.S. Becker, "The Career of a Chicago Public
     Schoolteacher," American Journal of Sociology, vol. 57

2   E. C. Hughes, op.cit., p. 87.

Appendix Two

The Interview Schedule

In Chapter Two of Part Five of this study, quotations from interviews conducted with "aspiring", "established" and "retired" players are introduced by way of either establishing or illustrating points made in the main text. The present appendix supplements this information by setting out in complete form the interview schedule used in these interviews. Questions marked with an asterisk are those which were modified to take account of the different age ranges of the three groups of respondents. In the majority of cases, such modification involved only a slight re-wording so as to make the questions appropriate to the different groups of respondents.

Career Patterns of Test and County Cricketers

Date: Name: Number:

Section One: Background Details.

Age ......

Married/Single/Divorced/Separated.

Birthplace ....

*1 What is/was your father's occupation?

*2 Do/did your parents have any connection with cricket?

        Examples: a) A county cricketer;

                b) A member of the administration of a county club;

                c) A keen amateur/weekend cricketer.

Section Two: Education and Sport.

1. What type of school did you attend?

> Examples: a) Preparatory - primary school
>
> b) Public/Grammar/Elementary/Secondary
>
> Modern/Technical College.

2. At what age did you leave school?

3. Did you go to a university?

4. What importance did you place on getting a "good
    education" whilst at school?

5. Has your attitude to education changed since leaving
    school and becoming a cricketer?

6. How important a part did sport play in your school
    life?

> a) How many school teams did you
>   play for?
>
> b) Did you gain any representative
>   honours, e.g. county colts?

7. At this stage in your life, did you intend to enter
    any branch of the sporting profession?

8. Have you made any attempt to gain any further educational
    qualifications since leaving school?

Section Three: Early Work History.

1. Did you go straight from school on to the playing
    staff of a county cricket club?

2. Why did you choose cricket as a career?

3. Do you feel that the early "apprenticeship" in cricket
    demands greater sacrifices than in other "normal"
    occupations?

* 4. Did/do you ever feel at this stage of your career
       that you weren't/aren't "going to make it" as a
       cricketer?   If so, what did you do?

Section Four: Cricket as Team Work,

  1. It has often been said that cricket teams have far
       higher standards of behaviour both on and off the
       field than football and rugby teams. Do you think
       this is true?

       If so, why?

       How are these standards maintained?

  2. What sort of qualities in your opinion make a
       successful cricket team?

* 3. Did/do you find that there is a great deal of differ-
       ence in the approach of the various county teams to
       the game?

  4. Are there any general principles of sportsmanship
       which apply in county cricket?

* 5. If, by some chance, you inherit/had inherited enough
       money to live comfortably without working, do you
       think that you would/would have retire/ed immediately?

* 6. Why do you think you would/would not (have) worked?

* 7. Suppose that you did/had stop(ped) working, what would
       you (have) miss(ed) most?

* 8. Did/do you have to work during the close season?

* 9. If so, what sort of work did/do you do?

* 10. During your playing career, was there/has there been
        any job offering approximately the same salary that
        you would rather have had?

Section Five: Extra-work Activities.

* 1. To what extent did/does your social life revolve

around other members of your team:

a) during the season;

b) during the rest of the year?

*2. Did/do you think that the continuous movement asso-

ciated with a county cricket season help(ed) or

hinder(ed) your social life?

* 3. Did/do you think that cricket provides sufficient

relaxation in itself or did/do you find it necessary

to take part in other sports, or other types of

leisure activities?

Section Six: Cricket and Family Life.

* 1. To what extent did/does being married help or hinder

your career in cricket?

2. Do you think that cricket is a secure enough career

to support a family?

3. Would you encourage your children to enter the cricket

profession, or any other sporting occupation?

Section Seven: Cricket as a Career.

1. In what ways do you think the occupation of full-time

cricketer differs from more common occupations?

* 2. What gave/gives you the greatest amount of satisfaction

in playing cricket?

3. How secure did/do you feel your job was/is?

4. Did/do you ever feel "pushed"?

5. How difficult is it to reach the top of the cricket

profession?

6. Are there any barriers other than the level of
   skill required?

* 7. How do you think that this decline affects/affected
   the position of the full-time cricketer?

* 8. Would you find it easy to find another job if county
   cricket was to stop at the end of this season?

9. Do you think that cricketers should be allowed to
   move between counties in the same way as footballers
   move from club to club?

10. Do you think that this would result in the formation
    of a few "super-counties", employing the best
    players and attracting the largest crowds?

11. Why do you think that it took so long for cricketers
    to establish their own "union", the Professional
    Cricketers Association?

12. If you could go back to the age of 15 and start life
    all over again, would you choose not to become a
    cricketer?

13. When you started playing first-class cricket, did you
    have any idea of what you might do on retirement?

Section Eight: Cricket as a Profession.

1. How do you think members of the general public feel
   about cricket as an occupation?

2. Do you believe that public opinion of cricket has
   risen/fallen since 1945?

3. Do you think that a successful career in first-class
   cricket provides opportunities which are not offered
   by other jobs paying approximately the same salary?

4. Some occupations have a higher status than others;
   e.g. doctors have a higher status than dustmen.
   What non-sporting occupations would you say rank

           a) above county cricketer,

           b) at the same level as county
                  cricketer,

           c) below county cricketer?

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CRICKET AS A VOCATION

A Study of the Development and Contemporary Structure

of the Occupation and Career Patterns of the Cricketer.

This thesis takes the form of an analysis of the development over the
last five hundred years of two particular features of the structure of
cricket, it's organisation and the occupational group which has come
to be based on the game..

The analysis is divided into five relatively distinct sections.
It begins with an analysis of the probable nature of folk-cricket and of
the social context in which the many variations of the games would have
been played. The development of the game is considered in terms of
four stages:

(i) ca. 1660 to 1830, when the folk-game in one or more of its forms was

taken up by members of the aristocracy and gentry, and playing

techniques, rules and the overall organisation of the game became

elaborated and more highly formalised. During this stage, the game

assumed an importance above all as a means of acting out prestige rival-

ries within the leisured elite. At the same time, the career as profes-

ional began to emerge under the patronage of this elite.

(ii) ca. 1830 to ca. 1870, when the patronage provided by members of the

aristocracy and gentry ceased, and teams of independent professionals,

dependent upon spectator support, toured the country.

(iii) ca. 1870 to ca. 1945, when the game became highly formalised and

regularised, based on the county as a unit of organisation and

identification, and when it developed a high degree of autonomy,

organisationally, economically, and in terms of the recruitment

of players - full-time amateurs as well as full-time professionals.

(iv)   post 1945, when the amateur-professional dichotomy collapsed and

       decreasing spectator support led to concern about the survival-

       potential of cricket as a spectator-spectator employing a large

       number of players.