

The Base Ball Player's

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Early American Culture and the Growth of Baseball by John Wilkerson

Since the early days of human history man has been playing sports. Whether it was a rudimentary form of basketball played by the Aztecs, where the loser lost his head, or modern day horse racing, where a loser loses his shirt, sports has been a part of human culture. The idea of sports as a part of a people's culture is just as true for the peoples of this country's early history. And despite the strong condemnation during this period from religious groups such as the Puritans, and from the frontier culture that thumbed its nose at leisure activity, sport has become one of the most important parts of our modern day culture. And in the

beginning of this country's history, one sport existed that has endured the long journey from its infancy, and has become the most popular sport in the country; America's past time, baseball.

Baseball's importance to America's culture could never be accurately gauged, or completely understood. But, baseball's evolution from humble beginnings to maturity can help us understand the development of

American culture in this country's early history. Baseball's evolution consists of three stages of development: its infancy, its adolescence, and its drive to maturity. Each of these stages reflects the development of Early American culture. Baseball's infancy shows the game in its earliest stage as unorganized, rural, and unpopular, illustrating the emphasis of frontier life during this time, and its sole focus on survival, that left no time for recreation. As baseball progressed to its

adolescence, the game became more popular as the market revolution created boomtowns with a thriving middle class, and newfound time to indulge in sport. And, finally, as the game stumbled its way into maturity, it became more organized, reflecting American culture's love for associations, societies, and early interest groups.

The colonial period of early America finds baseball at its beginnings, as a rough, rural unorganized game, played little, and condemned by

many. Baseball began as the country was focusing its energies on establishing a stable life, and looking for good prospects for the future.

The first mention of baseball came in 1700 from a Puritan Reverend, Thomas Wilson. He wrote that he had "seen...

baseball, crickets, and many other sports on the Lord's Day." It is noted by Robert Henderson that the entry was recorded with condescension.

Once again 44 years later in the children's Little Pretty Pocket Book. The book included a woodcut illustrating the game, and a description and moral of the sport in the form of a rhyme:

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"Base Ball" from the Book of Sports, 1834



VINTAGE
BASE BALL
ASSOCIATION

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In This Issue: On the Passing of "Old Dutch" Dieckmann
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Letter from the Editor

Gentlemen:

First of all, I would like to apologize for the late nature of this issue of the newsletter. I had planned on getting this out early in July, but my real job (running a brewery), has been taking up all of my time, and more.

Secondly, I would like to let you know of some proposed changes to the newsletter over the next couple of issues, starting with this one.

In this issue, I will begin to publish scores and game accounts from modern vintage games. The accounts I receive are from players or tally keepers from one of the teams playing.

If there seems to be several teams mentioned again and again, this is because this is the only information that I am receiving at this point.

If you'd like to see your team in print, send articles to Stinky Freyer at Fryorama@aol.com or fax to 708-499-6181.

I am particularly interested in information from areas that have not seen much coverage, Old Bethpage, Colorado, Nebraska or anywhere else there is a match. I feel that if I can provide information

and game summaries, that this may spur interaction between the teams from different areas and from different eras.

I recently made the trip to Hartford and played as a baseball mercenary for the Hartford Dark Blues. That tournament will be covered in the next issue of the newsletter, due to lack of space in this one.

I would like to say that it was invigorating to play 1876 ball, when I usually play 1860 or 1858 ball.. You do get a sense of the changes from year to year.

I think that events like this are good for vintage baseball and should be

**Keep those
game
accounts
coming!!!**

viewed as such, regardless of what year or years are represented. If you have the means, I highly suggest attending next years tournament, I

know I will.

Lastly, we will be slowly changing the format of this newsletter. The current issue is produced on Microsoft Publisher. Thanks to my friend John Wells, I now possess a Quark Xpress program, that will help provide better images and clearer tin-types and gives me the ability to communicate with Mac applications, which I cannot do currently.

That process may take some time, because I will have to learn a new program and like I said, I'm swamped with my real job.

So bear (or beer) with me, when it is all said and done, this will be a publication that the VBBA will be proud of., but please, send me game accounts, especially tournaments, e-mail pictures, mail me pictures, do whatever you can to keep the flow of information going, because this will benefit everyone in the organization.

I would also like to receive any information on new teams. I have noticed in some accounts and schedules that I have read that there are new teams around. Even if they play one game per year, I want that information, so we can correspond and keep them abreast to the interest for the game.

If Hartford was any indication, Vintage Base Ball is here for good.

Do you enjoy the Newsletter? Join the VBBA

The VINTAGE BASE BALL ASSOCIATION needs your support. The cost to continue printing this newsletter comes from membership fees.

The VINTAGE BASE BALL ASSOCIATION exists to try to educate fans about the origins of America's Game.

The VINTAGE BASE BALL ASSOCIATION is trying to expand the sports' focus, by using tools like the Newsletter

and the VBBA Website (www.vbba.com) to further communicate the "Glory of the Game."

Individual Membership costs only \$10 per year, which includes four issues of the Base Ball Player's Player Chronicle. Even if you play for a team, join as an individual and help support our cause.

Just starting a team? Become an Associate member: it's only \$35 per

year.

Have an established team? Become a Full Member and help us push the VBBA to the next level. Full Member ship is only \$50 per year.

Make checks or money orders out to the Vintage Base Ball Association. Mail to the Treasurer of the VBBA: John Wells 40 N. Winthrop Columbus OH 43214

On the Passing of 'Old Dutch' Dieckmann

By Gary Monti

It was a hot summer day in 1994 at Old Bethpage Village Restoration. It was the fourth inning of a vintage base ball game between The Hempstead Eurekas and The Mineola Washingtons. I was the umpire that afternoon and between innings I heard someone call out, "home plate is wrong." I turned and standing just under a grove of shade trees was a skinny little guy with a beard and round eyeglasses. I answered, "How should it be?" He said, "It should be round like a dinner plate with a line crossing through it." I said, "Put on a uniform." This marked the beginning of Al "Old Dutch" Dieckmann's involvement in the Old time Base Ball program at the village, and also the beginning of his involvement in vintage base ball nation wide.

Old Dutch though small in stature was a commanding presence. His knowledge of the game was extensive; the energy he devoted to researching the old game was monumental. His contribution to the program at Old Bethpage was enormous. He transformed its 1860s program into one of the country's best.

Al reached out to the teams of the Midwest most notably to the Muffins and the Black Swamp Frogs. This

coast teams in four states.



Old Dutch

has resulted in a useful exchange of information and ideas, and in no small way led to the establishment of the VBBA; Al was one of the organizations first officers. In the east, Al's influence led to the growth of Old Bethpage's program from four teams to eleven. He can also be credited for helping to establish six other east

What made Al special was far more important than his knowledge of the history of base ball. Everyone who knew him genuinely loved Al. He was the finest, kindest, most popular man that I have ever met. There are more than two hundred people on Long Island alone that are grieving his loss and who will miss him terribly. Al and I found ourselves on two sides of an interpretive controversy that became quite strident. This, however, did not come between us as friends. We had a high regard for one another despite everything. Whenever we came down to the field, he and I would come together, shake hands and catch-up. We then would get down to the business of the day.

Al had a great sense of humor. We all enjoyed playing practical jokes on him. The best was a conspiracy hatched by a number of the players after a tournament in the summer of 97. Al was fanatical in his research on origins of the game. In 97 there were news reports on the restoration of sections of the Erie Canal. We concocted a story that Tim Wiles of the Hall of Fame

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Writers, Photographers and Correspondents Needed

Have an interesting story? Know someone with a cool job outside of baseball? Do you take really good pictures at Base Ball games? Well my friend, we need you.

The Base Ball Player's Chronicle is

looking to expand its information base. We are looking for the following stories to include in our next issue: General Baseball History, Team History, Current Players' Profiles, Travelogues, photographs and anything else pertaining

to Vintage Base Ball. Don't be shy about submitting an article. This is definitely not the Reader's Digest.

To submit, send to John Freyer at fryorama@aol.com or fax to (708) 499-6181.

Old Dutch (Continued from Page 3)

Museum contacted Ken Balcom at Old Bethpage Village to tell him that a trunk was found in one of the Erie Canal's old wharf houses that contained scorebooks and newspaper accounts about a base hall team made up of canal workers from Ohio (Al grew up in Cincinnati). The artifacts described baseball in 1817, played in a way that was indistinguishable from the Knickerbockers' game. I called Al to tell him what Ken Balcom told me. Al called others who were all in on the joke.

He was so devoted to base ball research that he planned to quit his job, and move to the Cooperstown area to volunteer his time to research the new findings. It was only when he told Ed Elmore of the Atlantics that he planned to call Tim Wiles the next day with the good news that he was let off the hook. Al loved the joke. It was a great time for us all; a great time with a great guy, Al "Old Dutch" Dieckmann.

I am pleased to announce that Old Bethpage Village is creating a championship cup for the 1860s program the "Old Dutch" cup, in Al's memory.

On a personal level, I will wear a Reds cap for the rest of this season to honor my friend.

Gary Monti, Senior Advisor
Old Time Base Ball Program
Old Bethpage Village Restoration

Atlantics Pay Tribute to 'Old Dutch' versus the Roxbury Nine by Peg Ellsworth

On June Saturday, June 16th the Roxbury Nine welcomed the Atlantic Base Ball Club to Kirkside Park marking the season opener of the "Nine's" inaugural Vintage Base Ball Season. The Nine took an 8-3 loss in the first match against the 1864 Atlantics, yet left the field with a better understanding of the customs and rules of that era and smiles on their faces an enjoyable game to say the least.

The break between games provided both teams the opportunity to forge new friendships and exercise the tireless subject of base ball. Prior to the second game, both teams lined the bases and gave tribute to Al "Old Dutch" Dieck-

mann, and the moment Ev Ellsworth began to read aloud of Al's contributions to Vintage Base Ball, the 100 year old bells, of the neighboring church, rang the hour as if Al was had just broken the communication barrier between heaven and earth.

Game two lead the Nine to their first victory, leaving the Atlantics behind with 21-3 final after 5 innings, but the post game BBQ clearly was the social event of the afternoon. Conversations of rules and customs, accompanied by laughter echoed through Kirkside Park. Some nicknames for the newly formed "Nine"

began to fall into place with the assistance of some Atlantic ball players. Team Captain Rich "Rib Eye" Ellsworth was dubbed after tales of his broken rib in the last year's game against the Mutuals. Andrew Walker gracefully accepted his name as "Sticks" when attention was brought to the somewhat thin structure of his arms. All in all, it was a great pleasure to host the Atlantics in Kirkside Park.

They are a team of gentlemen and athletes and we look forward to seeing them again in Hartford.

The Roxbury Nine

Baseball Poetry by Priscilla Astifan

Baseball had also begun to inspire poetry. The following verse, written by "a baseball enthusiast," was printed as follows in the *Rochester Evening Express* on August 26, 1870. It also appears, with a slightly different form but identical wording, on the inside cover of *BASEBALL FOR THE FUN OF IT*, a Society for American Baseball Research publication co-written by Mark Alvarez, Mark Rucker, and Tom Shieber (Society for American Baseball Research, 1997, EBSCO Media, Birmingham, Alabama.) It is indicated as c. 1860s, author unknown.

***How dear to my heart
is the green-covered
ball field.***

***Where good rival captains
their men rightly place.***

***The pitcher, the catcher, the
right field and left field.***

***The good men, the true men,
who guard well each base:***

***The short stop so lively, the
centre field handy,***

***The ball and the striker who
aims to send high.***

***But dearer than all to the
hearts of good fielders***

***Is the leather-clad base ball we
catch on the fly -***

***The Jolly old base ball, the well
covered base ball.***

***The leather-clad base ball we
catch on the fly.***

St. Croix's Beat Quicksteps

Gentlemen,

I wish to report that the St. Croix Base Ball Club experienced an outstanding match game today. At the outset we determined that reaching 21 aces was going to take too long, so we stuck with 1860 rules (how long did today's Muffins match last? Rain here would have ended an 1845 game early anyway.)

Our captain and club founder, Mr. Peterson, was taking in his day with his two girls and wife, so I was handed the captain job by default. Three batsmen had not played with us before, so determining the striking order was a crap shoot. But I must have done O.K. for we handily defeated the SABR boys, the Quicksteps, 9-0. Of course, I take complete credit for this outstanding feat.

It was my best game so far this year

(and quite possibly my best game ever). I muffed only once, got on base three times, reaching the home base once in the 2nd, and was put out by a caught foul ball in the 9th. So why should you care? Watch out, boys. By Ohio Cup time I will be a vintage base ball machine! If all goes as planned, look for the "Minnesota North Stars" at this year's cup.

Wishing you striking success and may all your fly balls go over their heads. Deano

Deep River Grinders off to a Hot Start

Saturday, June 9. Grinders traveled to Three Oaks, MI, to meet the Berrien County Cranberry Boppers. It was a beautiful day weather-wise and each team was eager to begin play; for the Grinders, to finally meet an opponent on the field of play. One Grinder was assigned to the Boppers for the game to even the player count—nine per side. The ground was very wet in left field, some of which ended up on the pants of the left fielders, and no where on the

playing field could the ball be caught on the bound, because the ball did not bound! The match ended with the Grinders being victorious, 31-3. After the game, the players shared a meal together before the Grinders climbed into their big blue van and headed west, to Indiana.

Grinders 4 4 8 0 4 2 5 4 -31
Boppers 0 0 1 0 2 0 0 0 -3

Sunday, June 10 Grinders hosted the

Rock Springs Ground Squirrels from Decatur, IL, on Grinder Field on another beautiful day. Thirteen Grinders were on hand to vanquish the ten players from the Squirrels. These teams really enjoy playing each other and have many tales to tell of their times together. The game proved to be all Grinders as they bested the Squirrels 11-1. Again, the two teams sat down together to a meal before the Squirrels headed home into the sunset.

Grinders 1 0 2 0 0 4 0 2 2 -11
Squirrels 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 -1

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Grays and Blues Take Center Stage at McCoy Stadium

The Bristol Blues Base Ball Club traveled to McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket Rhode Island (home of the AAA Red Sox) on Sunday May 6th for a match against their Ocean State rivals, the Providence Grays. The game was played under the rules of 1884: fast, overhand pitching is allowed, and the fielders are not allowed to wear gloves.

A beautiful spring morning gave way to a fierce pitching duel in the five inning exhibition affair. Taking advantage of their "first-ups," the Bristols struck early, catching the Gray's lefty twirler Brian Travers by surprise. Thanks to some patient

batsmanship and speedy running on the base paths, at the end of the first half inning the Blues had collected an early 2-0 lead. Bristol's right-handed pitcher, Gregory "Foxy" Fox, backed by a solid Blues defense completely shut down the Grays' potent bats in the bottom half of the first. With a Gray on third and only one out, Foxy snared a line drive that was destined for the center-field. The runner, realizing Foxy had caught the ball on the fly, scrambled back to third base.

The clear-minded hurler threw the ball to the heads-

up third baseman "Slammin" Simmons, narrowly beating the returning base runner to complete the double play. The play left the Grays scoreless after one, much to the delight of the dedicated contingent of Bristol fans in attendance. Travers' settled down in the second, matching Foxy's per-



Bristol Blues

formance and holding the Blues scoreless. The Grays bounced back in the bottom of the frame, loading the bases with no hands out. Despite the Blues efforts, the Gray's batsmen were able to break through the tight-knit defense for four runs.

The Grays threatened more damage in the inning, but the Blues tightened up and were able to snuff out the remaining Grays rally.

The Bristol Nine returned to the bench determined to draw the score even, but it was not to be a hitter's day. A

harsh wind from right to left kept otherwise well struck balls well within the field of play. The two clubs battled back and forth for the remainder of the exhibition. Sure handed defense on both sides, particularly by the first basemen and

Bristol-resident catchers Jim "Pudge" Towers (Blues) and Gil Faria (Grays), was the order of the day. Fine relief work by Jim "Scally" Regan of the Bristols, and a second double play anchored by Blues second baseman "Iron" DiGiovanni kept the scoring at 4-2 by games end.

The contest left both teams, the fans, and the PawSox looking

forward to the return engagement at McCoy which is scheduled for August 26th at 12 noon. All interested fans are strongly encouraged to attend and cheer on the team! Time (subject to change) is scheduled for 1pm. Please visit www.bristolblues.com for up-to-date information on the Blues and ways to get involved in vintage base ball.

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VBBA.
ORG**

Growth of Baseball (Cont) by John Wilkerson

BASE-BALL

The ball once struck off,
Away flies the Boy
To the next destin'd Post
And then Home with Joy

MORAL

Thus Britons for Lucre
Fly over the Main;
But, with Pleasure transported
Return back again
In 1760 the book reached America
via Hugh Gaine, a well-known New

York printer, who pirated the book for American consumption in 1762. The book became very popular, and went through several more pirate editions. However, despite evidence identifying the existence of the book, the only copy recovered is a 1787 copy from Worcester, Massachusetts. With the entrance of the Little Pretty

Pocket Book into American culture, baseball began its evolution towards its American form, a move that reflected America's attempt to break away from British culture. The Worcester edition is the same as the British in contents and outward appearance. But, in examining the book closer a distinct difference is found in the pages referring to baseball. The American edition changed the rhyme describing baseball from Thus Britons for Lucre to Thus Seamen for Lucre. The difference is slight, and hardly worth mentioning, except to show a product of the American culture of the time, the need to remove Britain from the American way of life.

Baseball's infancy was also a time that the sport found great opposition, from a great deal of the population who disapproved of recreational

activity. Sports were not accepted into the culture because of the focus on survival during the country's early history. In addition, the culture placed much more emphasis on spiritual and moral, rather than physical development. Varning Lansing Collins' Princeton, which documents life at Princeton, contains several mentions of sports at the school. An account from March 22, 1786 recorded: "A fine day, play baste ball

"The reason for such condemnation of baseball is due to the focus of survival, and the strong Protestant work ethic deeply embedded into American way of life."

in the campus but am beaten for I miss both catching and striking the ball." But, the account shows more than the playing of baseball during this time, it also shows Princeton's, not uncommon, refusal to allow sports to be played at the school. Baseball was not allowed on the campus because "play...with balls and sticks...is itself low and unbecoming..."

The reason for such condemnation of baseball is due to the focus of survival, and the strong Protestant work ethic deeply imbedded into American way of life. The people of the time had no time to partake in leisure activity; their sole focus was on surviving in a new world with new dangers. In addition, the Protestant work ethic, which focused on achievement, and the religious fervor, allowed no room for playing what they described as dangerous

games, such as baseball. With the focus on achievement and religious fervor, children of the time were to be raised with a strong spiritual and moral foundation.

As the 18th century ended and the 19th century began baseball emerged into its adolescence, and found its popularity growing as America moved into the market revolution. The market revolution was an economic transformation that saw the beginnings of industri-

alization, the growth of cities, the emergence of a new middle-class, and the emergence of middle-class values. Baseball itself moved from a rural sport of the early 1800's to an urban sport by the 1830's, mirroring the transformation of American population from rural to urban. It was during this time that Rounders, which is commonly referred to as the father of modern baseball, found

its way to America. Rounders (the name Rounders was used over base-ball because Rounders was in more common use in Britain at the time) was an English sport, which found its rules printed in 1828 with the publication of The Boy's Own Book. This was not the first time the rules had been printed, but it was the first time the rules had been printed without the focus on morality. This reflected a shift in the cultures' view of sports, from condemnation to early signs of acceptance. The game was played much the same way as modern day baseball with notable differences—oblong infield rather than diamond infield, and posts instead of bases. American forms of the game also began to emerge. Town-ball, One-cat, Round-ball, and Game-ball were several American forms of

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A Book Review from Jim Tootle

From Pastime to Passion: Baseball and the Civil War. By Patricia Millen. Heritage Books, Inc., 1540E Pointer Ridge Place, Bowie, MD 20716, 2001, 95 pp., \$12.95 paperback.

Reviewed by Jim Tootle

This slender book is unpretentious, but should not be underestimated as a succinct, yet comprehensive examination of the relationship between the Civil War and the game that was in the process of becoming the national pastime. The text is packed fuller than a soldier's haversack with factual information about baseball in the 1860s. The book constitutes "must" reading for those associated with the vintage game, both for the historical information it contains and its controversial premise regarding the effect of the war on the development of baseball.

Ms. Millen's thesis takes exception to "standard baseball histories... [which] credit the War for the transformation of the game from a regional pastime to a game of national character...." Her position is that "bat and ball games were no revelation to soldiers in army camps," since they "were well known to men in the Union and Confederate armies" when they went off to war. Other historians have concluded that baseball's increased popularity in the latter part of the nineteenth century was the result of soldiers learning the game while in the military. Ms. Millen takes the alterna-

tive view that "Long before the first shot of the Civil War was fired at Fort Sumter, ...the game had already entrenched itself into American society and was well on its way to becoming the 'America's National Game.'"

In discussing her case, Ms. Millen shares a vast array of letters, dairies, newspaper accounts, and other specific references to games played by soldiers in camp, including an 1862 match contested by Union troops occupying Hilton Head, South Carolina, which reportedly attracted a crowd of over 40,000 spectators. She also presents an excellent analysis of games played by military prisoners. Especially enlightening are her observations regarding the familiar illustration of a game at the prison camp at Salisbury, North Carolina. Ms. Millen believes that this painting, which has been frequently reproduced, misrepresents the truth regarding prison camp conditions, the frequency of games, and their role in spreading the game to the South.

The point is also made that baseball games between the well-established clubs of New York City and Brooklyn continued during the war. Some players left their clubs for military service and some teams played fewer games during the war, but we are assured that the civilian version of the game remained relatively strong throughout the war years.

While a knowledgeable student of nineteenth-century baseball might question the author's thesis or differ on an occasional point, the information about early baseball presented in the book is of great value. Ms. Millen's superb chapter on the Mills Commission and the emergence of the Abner Doubleday myth is as fine an explanation of that confusing series of events as the reader is likely to find anywhere.

The book's biggest shortcoming is its inappropriate and misleading cover art which features a five-sided home plate and a pure white baseball stitched in the modern figure eight pattern. As the vintage community is aware, in the Civil War era, home plate was round and the ball was darker in color and sewn in the lemon peel design.

With the exception of the cover, the illustrations are engaging and well chosen. The index, footnotes, and thorough list of sources cited are helpful for the reader who wants to know more. The volume may be slim, but the literature has definitely been enriched by Ms. Millen's well-informed study, a brief but compelling work which both answers and raises questions about baseball in the Civil War era.

Jim Tootle, retired assistant dean of Arts and Sciences at The Ohio State University, plays on two vintage clubs, the Ohio Village Muffins and the Columbus Capitals. He is associate chair for vintage baseball of SABR's Nineteenth Century Committee.

Grangers Jump Swamp Frogs from the Telegraph Wire

Rochester Hills— May 26th_ The Rochester Grangers stowed their implements of labor, climbed into their buckboards and slogged towards the first game of the new season. The day wasted its aqueous aspect as the Great Black Swamp Frogs met the Grangers on the now saturated green that is Hallbach Field. The scene, as beheld through the mist and sodden oaks was, nonetheless, one of growing excitement.

A most gracious and plentiful body of cranks lined the first base path and would do much throughout the game to brighten the day. Today's official, the honorable Mr. Hunkle, started the contest with a mighty call, "Striker to the line."

Immediately the fine gentlemen from the south

forthrightly struck the ball in a crisp and smart fashion. Thus, the Ohio club tallied five runs in the first three innings. Although most of the balls were traveling with firm precision, a few muffs proved that the winter was indeed long and the Grangers were far from having their harvest hands.

As the match continued, the Granger club settled into a more normal nature and began to strike and field in a justifiable manner. A 7th inning surge, in which the Grangers tallied 5 aces, gave the hometown club the lead in the match and the eventual victory

BATTING					
GRANGERS	HL	R	FROGS	HL	R
Grace, lf	0	2	N. Ballmer, lf	3	2

Sorna, cf	2	0	Smith, lb	1	3
Maas, lf	1	1	D. Ballmer	3	0
S. Prasatek, lb	1	1	Montgomery, h	2	1
Johnson, 3b	2	1	James, cf	3	1
McKay, h	1	2	Stough, b	4	0
Pfeifer, rf, b	3	0	Wisler, 2b	2	0
G. Prasatek, ss	2	0	Backus, 3b	2	0
Zelenak, cf, ss	2	0	Layman, rf	4	0
Lytle, 2b, lb	2	1	Bones, rf	3	1
Rosonke, cf, rf	2	1			
Iwabuchi, rf, b	2	1			
C. Tripp, ss, cf	1	0			
N. Tripp, lf, 2b	2	0			
Dawlet, lb, 3b	1	0			
Waldeck, 2b	2	0			
Wynne, h	1	1			
TOTALS	27	11		27	8

The Growth of Baseball (Cont.)

Rounders. The growth of new forms of baseball in American culture and new found popularity reflects the growth of the market revolution, and new found success which allowed more time for recreational activities. The first account of baseball being played for healthy recreation was found in Rochester, New York. According to Thurlow Weed, a resident of Rochester in his youth, there was a flourishing baseball club. Rochester was a busy industrial town, its growth a product of the industrial and market revolution, but "its citizens found leisure for rational and healthy reasons." In fact, Weed lists several prominent names of the community as members of the baseball club. The recording of baseball being played in Rochester, and more importantly its organization and acceptance sheds light on the relationship between baseball and early American culture.

Ball games, before this time, were not accepted due to a lack in leisure time and a focus on survival, but with the increasing wealth and prosperity growing in cities like Rochester, people who shared in these regions' success became increasingly able to partake in leisure activities. Baseball became a sport enjoyed by the upper middle-class children, who could afford and enjoy the sport. The well-established and increasingly successful New England villages became the flowerpot used to cultivate the growth of baseball. These villages, which soon grew to cities, created their own version of the sport. The "New York game", the "Massachusetts game", and the

"Philadelphia game" were the most common versions of the game. And a mention of one game in an area of another could result in a fistfight between the boys of different regions.

Violence was a common part of the game during this time as well, primarily with children indicating children's tendency to engage in violence as part of young life. An early rule of the game was the practice of "soaking" or "plugging" a player. Be-



Zouave BBC Potsdam, NY
Photo: Transcendental Graphics

ing soaked meant that when a man hit the ball the other team hit him with the fielded ball in order to get him out. Fighting because of a "soak" was not discouraged, and became a part of the game. The early game was

rowdy, simple minded, and violent. But, the violence of the game was not viewed as a negative aspect of the game, merely a representation of the children of the time. A bloody nose, or any injury resulting from a fight did not discourage the children from returning the next Sunday to play, and possibly fight, again.

Memoirs, letters, and journals of the time are riddled with references to the playing of baseball as a child, but whether baseball was played in every part of the country is difficult to determine. Reports have varied about the existence of baseball in other areas of the country. According to a book published by Horatio Smith in 1830, the game of base was played in other sections of the country, outside of the New England area. However, the West is not commonly thought to have partaken in leisure activity. The focus of survival in the frontier, which is most certainly true for the inhabitants of the West, did not allow time for games. In addition to the West, the South also did not play baseball, but the reasons for a lack of baseball in this region differs from the West.

Baseball's growth in the New England area, and the lack of growth in the South reflects the sectional divisions that began during baseball's adolescence. Baseball was not commonly played in the South due to the domination of the aristocratic planter-class, CONTINUED PAGE 10

I NEED HELP in Nebraska, Colorado and New York

I need volunteers to send me information on any of the following associations: Nebraska VBBA, Colorado

VBBA and the Old Bethpage Program on Long Island. Any info, box scores, summaries, pictures, etc. will

be used in the newsletter. Contact: Stinky Freyer at: Fryorama@aol.com

which preferred fox-hunting over the rough rowdy common man's game, baseball. However, this may explain only a delay in the emergence of baseball in the South. Accounts of baseball can be found in the South, but only early forms, which were decades behind its Northern counterpart.

The delayed emergence of baseball signifies a resistance to such a common sport, and also a resistance to the new market revolution. The planter-class of the South, which felt distinguished from the rest of the country, resisted the emergence of baseball a product of the market revolution, just as they resisted the emergence of a market economy. This resistance reflects the sectional differences and tensions of the time, and baseball's slow growth into Southern culture is a perfect example of that resistance.

The 1840's began baseball's stage of maturity, and a new era of prosperity to the industrial centers of America, giving baseball the environment it needed to take shape and mature. By 1840 baseball had become a common sport throughout the New England area, and was making inroads in others. There were not many places that a reference to "town-ball", "goal-ball", or baseball would no revive a thought of a game played with a stick and a ball. The game had evolved from being played by young boy's and college students, to an outlet of energies for America's new urban population, which had grown by 90 percent. Baseball's reach for its maturity hinged on the first true organization of the game, and the adoption of an official set of rules. And on September 23, 1845 Alexander Cartwright provided the piece that made the game complete-rules. Cartwright has been credited with the first rules of baseball, however the rules were already around, and Cartwright, basically, made them famous and gets the credit for laying out the first diamond infield. Cartwright has since been known as the father of modern baseball. Cartwright's baseball club was the Knickerbocker Baseball Club of New York

City, and the first game played with these new rules, on June 19, 1846 at Elysian Fields in Hoboken, New Jersey, resulted in a route of the Knickerbocker by the New York Club.

The Knickerbocker club illustrates American culture's love for organization during the 1840's. During the 1840's America began to focus on ac-

"By 1840 baseball had become a common sport throughout the New England area..."

tivities that brought together peoples with like ideas. Associations focused on temperance, abolition, and women's rights sprung up in American society during this time. And the Knickerbocker Baseball Club is just that, an association bringing together a group of gentlemen to play baseball.

The Knickerbocker Club also reflects the influence of the Jacksonian era on American society. During this time, the President was Andrew Jackson, and he represented the common man, and the right of every man to have a voice in political decisions. The Knickerbockers embodied the democratic nature of the Jacksonian Era, by allowing every member the same stake in decision making inside the club. Everyone was equal inside the boundaries of the club, emulating the Jacksonianism.

Baseball is the most popular sport in the country, and has been on top for quite a good portion of this country's history. Why has baseball become the most popular? The answer is simple. Baseball has become so popular because it has grown alongside the culture of America, linked hand in hand with the economic, social, and cultural changes since the very early days of this

country. Baseball is truly America's pastime, and forever will be.

About the Author

John Wilkerson is a 21-year-old senior at the University of Central Arkansas, in Conway, Arkansas. He is a double major in political science and history. And will be receiving his bachelor of arts on May 12th. John is originally from Conway, Arkansas, and has plans to continue his education and go to law school the next school year. He has played and been a fan of baseball all of his life, his favorite team is the St. Louis Cardinals, and all-time favorite player is Babe Ruth, and favorite active player is Rick Ankiel. Although he has just recently been involved in 19th century baseball, he has found the subject fascinating, and hopes to learn more in the future.

John would like to thank the following for their contributions to this study:

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From the Telegraph Wire

FROM ILLINOIS

Peoria - June 3

Peoria Distillers 424 000 002- 12
Rock Springs 002 000 040- 6

Peoria		Ground			
Distillers	HL R	Squirrels	HL R		
Dyke	2 0	McGee	2 0		
Poshard	2 0	Szymkoski	3 1		
Snell	3 1	Morrow	3 1		
Collins	0 2	Landers	3 1		
Klusendorf	3 1	Grindy	1 1		
Olson	1 2	Longbons	2 0		
Tomsovic	0 1	H. Warrick	0 0		
Unes	3 0	D. Warrick	3 0		
Martiness	1 1	Groves	1 1		
Knight	1 2	Graczyk	2 1		
Wheeler	1 2				
Mantick	3 0				
Whitaker	2 0				
TOTALS	22 12			20	6

Elk Grove Village- May 22nd

Elk Grove Bucks 000 200 000- 2
Rock Springs 300 200 020- 7

Elk Grove	HL R	Squirrels	HL R		
Szerszen	3 0	Johnson	2 1		
Amborse	2 0	Longbons	3 1		
Michalak	1 0	Dowell	1 0		
Wendel	1 0	Landers	1 1		
Kurczodyna	2 1	Grindy	2 1		
Loster	3 0	Crisler	3 0		
Anderson	3 1	Morrow	2 1		
Wendel	2 0	Powell	1 2		
Jay	2 0	McGee	1 0		
Grish	2 0	Graczyk	2 0		
TOTALS	21 2	D. Warrick	3 0		
		Groves	3 0		
			23	7	

Decatur May 12

Game One
Ground Squirrels 503 411 x- 14
Washington Eagles 301 001 2- 7Game Two
Eagles 020 300 0- 5
Ground Squirrels 000 020 0- 2

GAME ONE

Squirrels	HL R	Eagles	HL R		
Bricker	0 2	J. Farris	3 1		
Szymkoski	1 1	M. Phillips	3 1		
Morrow	0 2	Aubuchon	0 2		
Dowell	1 1	D. Phillips	4 0		
Landers	1 2	M. Farris	2 1		
Dettro	1 1	Ferkel	1 2		
Grindy	2 0	Brinkman	2 0		
Crisler	1 0	Bush	0 0		
D. Warrick	0 1	Powers	1 0		
H. Warrick	2 0	Corcoran	3 0		
Groves	2 1		19	7	
Wilnot	1 1				
McGee	1 1				
Graczyk	1 1				
TOTALS	14 14				

Game Two

Squirrels	HL R	Eagles	HL R		
Bricker	3 0	J. Farris	4 0		
Szymkoski	1 0	M. Phillips	2 0		
Morrow	0 0	Aubuchon	2 0		
Dowell	2 0	D. Phillips	3 0		
Landers	1 1	M. Farris	1 2		
Dettro	0 1	Ferkel	1 2		
Crisler	0 0	Brinkman	1 1		
H. Warrick	2 0	Bush	2 0		
Groves	2 0	Powers	2 0		
Wilnot	2 0	Corcoran	3 0		
McGee	1 0		21	5	
Graczyk	1 0				
Longbons	2 0				
TOTALS	17 2				



The Ground Squirrel BBC of Rock Springs, Illinois circa 2000

FROM OHIO

Sycamore, May 6th

Game One
Akron Black Sox 470 000 0- 11
Sycamore Grasshoppers 000 100 0- 1Game Two
Akron Black Sox 721 020 0- 12
Sycamore Grasshoppers 000 001 0- 1

Game One

Akron	HL R	Sycamore	HL R		
Searle	2 2	Trunks	2 0		
Zedak	1 2	Red	1 0		
Heppner	2 2	Rabbit	3 0		
Russell	3 1	Hamhock	2 0		
Smith	1 2	Peach Pie	1 0		
Hayes	3 0	Bandit	1 0		
Lee	2 1	Freight	3 0		
Kaiser	3 0	Red II	2 0		
Blasick	3 0	Scott	1 0		
Gault	1 1	Bugs	1 1		
TOTALS	21 11	Butcher	1 0		
		Kent	1 0		
		TOTALS	19 1		

Game Two

Akron	HL R	Sycamore	HL R		
Searle	0 1	Trunks	2 0		
Zedak	3 2	Red	3 0		
Heppner	2 2	Rabbit	2 1		
Russell	1 2	Hamhock	2 0		
Smith	4 1	Peach Pit	2 0		
Hayes	3 1	Bandit	3 0		
Lee	2 1	Freight	2 0		

Kaiser	1 0	Red II	2 0
Blasick	2 1	Scott	1 0
Gault	3 1	Bugs	1 0
TOTALS	21 12	Butcher	1 0
		Kent	1 0
		TOTALS	22 1

2001 Akron Cup Results
July 2001Akron Black Stockings 11
Canal Fulton Mules 1Canal Akron Mule Stockings 6
Hoover Sweepers 4Carriage Hill Clodbusters 1
Akron Black Stockings 0Lorain County Buckeyes 4
Chagrin Falls Forest Citys 3Lorain County Buckeyes 7
Summit Merinos 3Chagrin Falls Forest Citys 11
Amherst Stone Masons 3Hoover Sweepers 11
Summit Merinos 1Canal Fulton Mules 10
Chagrin Falls Forest Citys 9Lady Clodbusters 3
Akron Lady Locks 0

FROM MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids- Rochester Hills Grangers
shared the Silas K. Pierce Cup with the
Ludington Mariners. The Grangers went
3-0 and defeated some fine teams.Game 1
Grangers 006 001 201-10
Berrien County 000 000 020- 2
Cranberry BoggersGame 2
Kent BBC #2 000 101 000- 2
Grangers 710 020 31x-14Game 3
Kent #1 200 300 120- 8
Grangers 101 052 00x-10

Game 3 Box

Kent #1	HL R	Grangers	HL R
Wolhuis, ss	4 0	Grace, lf	4 0
Turner, h	2 2	Soma, cf, h	2 2
Dekken, lf	1 2	G. Prasatek, ss	2 0
Westfall, 3b	4 0	Johnson, 3b	2 0
Brown, cf	3 0	S. Prasatek, 1b	1 1
Stewart, rf	2 1	Pfeifer, b	4 0
Kochanski, 1b	2 1	McKay, h	2 2
Kane, h	2 2	Wynne, 1b	1 0
Tap, 2b	2 0	Smith, cf	2 1
Boles, 2b	1 0	Hunkle, rf	1 2
Roles, b	4 0	P. Lytle, 2b	2 1
		S. Lytle, 2b	1 1
TOTALS	27 8		27 10



VINTAGE
BASE-BALL
ASSOCIATION

Vintage Base Ball Association
Communications Committee
John Freyer
9209 S. Central
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

CONTRIBUTORS

Cover Header Art:
"Foots" Walker

"Stinky" Freyer
"Doc" Lawson
"Deano" Thilgen
Jim Tootle
Cathy Herald
Mark "Old Reliable"
Rucker

"Slammin" Simmons
John Wilkerson
Linda Hunkele
Joanna "Flawless"
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www.
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Known Vintage Base Ball Teams

Arkansas

Fayetteville Roysters

California

Pacifica BBC

Canada

Woodstock, Ontario Actives #

Colorado

Broomfield Sweepers #
Littleton Rough and Readies
Colorado Vintage Base Ball Assoc.
Denver Pacifics
Central City Stars
Colorado Territorial All Stars
Colorado Lady Columbines
Denver Blue Stockings
Mastodon Mine Minstrels

Connecticut

Middletown Mansfields *
Mystic Oceanics *
New Haven Elm Citys
Hartford Dark Blues
Hartford Senators
Homestead Grays

Florida

Dunedin Railers *
Largo Crackers *
Tampa Tarpons #
Braidentown Breakers

Georgia

Westville Craftsmen & Biscuits #

Iowa

Ghost Ballplayers
Walnut Hill Blue Stockings

Illinois

Mackville Mudcats #
Chicago Salmon
Rock Springs Ground Squirrels *
Elk Grove Bucks

Indiana

Deep River Grinders *
Indianapolis Freetowns
Door Village Prairie Dogs
Bonneyville Millers
White River BBC#

Michigan

Berrien County Cranberry Beggars *
Greenfield Village Lah De Dahs *
Kent Base Ball Club *
Ludington Mariners *
Salt City Base Ball Club *
Rochester Grangers *
House of David

Minnesota

Saint Croix Base Ball Club *
Quicksteps Base Ball Club #
Roosters BBC *
Winona Lumber Barons
Barnesville BBC

Missouri

Washington BBC

Nebraska Vintage Base Ball Assoc.

Railroad Town Roadies
Ord Tigers

Fort Hartstuff Company C
Platteville Valley Bugeaters
Beatrice River Bats
Wahoo Plowboys

New Jersey

Elizabeth Resolutes *
Flemington Neshanock #

New Mexico

Albuquerque Telegraphers #
Ft. Bayard Centennial Assoc.
Ft. Seldon Leasburg Boys

New York

Old Bethpage Program
Brooklyn Excelsiors
Cold Spring Spiders
Glen Head Zig Zags
Hempstead Eurekas
Hicksville Ozones
Rockville Centre Observers
Sea Cliff Idlewilds
Bellmore Seminoles
Mineola Washingtons
Huntington Suffolks
Westbury Base Ball Club
Cooperstown Leather Stockings
New York Mutuals
Freeport Athletics
Brooklyn Athletics *
Roxbury Nine BBC

Ohio

Akron Black Stockings *
Akron Lady Locks #
Summit Merinos
Lorain County Buckeyes *
Aurora Base Ball Club
Forest Citys Base Ball Club *
Canal Fulton Mules *
Hoover Sweepers *

Sharon Woods Shamrocks *
Ohio Village Muffins *
Columbus Capitals *
Preble Aces #
1922 Giants
Lake County Pirates *
Middletown Laurels
Carriage Hill Clodbusters *
Pember Villains
Newtown Barnstormers
Sycamore Grasshoppers *
Great Black Swamp Frogs *
West Central Ohio BBC *
Canal Dover Red Legs
Big Ditch Boys
Amherst Sandstone Masons *
Cincinnati Red Stockings *

Rhode Island

1884 Providence Grays
Bristol Blues *

Texas

Ft. Davis Base Ball Club
Ft. Bliss Cannonballs #
Ft. Concho Base Ball Club
Sam Rayburn Museum

Utah

Salt Lake City Base Ball Club #

Virginia

Charlottesville Ragga Muffins

West Virginia

Parkersburg Base Ball Club

Wisconsin

Heritage Hill Base Ball Program

Wyoming

Laramie Lawmen