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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1.

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. 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

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 Savile 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. 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 contribution. 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 commitment 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.

"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

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 differentiation 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 particular, 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

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.
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 acquisition, 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 differences 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 constraints 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 systematisation. The bulk of our data on occupations
8.

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 specialised 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 otherwise, 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 organisation of the game, and the occupation linked to it, have passed. In order to explain not only the type of organisational and occupational framework which characterise each

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.
3. **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 historians and sociologists, to realise that the apparent irreconcilability 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 challenging the entire intellectual apparatus employed by the other, the metatheoretical postulates, the theoretical and conceptual constructs, and the methods of data-collection, refinement, 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 assumptions 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, recognition 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 assumption 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 conclusions 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

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 introduction. 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 hallmark 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 vogue 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 statistical 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."

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

"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 practitioners' 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, 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, involved an approach to social phenomena that was


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.
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 differential 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" 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 unfortunate consequences it had for the preparation and organisation of empirical research. It is this consequence of "functionalist" sociology that is most relevant to my discussion 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. 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.

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 regularities 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 application of sociological techniques of analysis to historical situations and processes. 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 historical 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 difficulties 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 presuppose 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 fundamental 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 establishment of "co-ordinates" which relate theory to the empirical world a particularly taxing problem. When the sociologist is


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 revolutionise 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 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.

"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 initiates, 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 investigator 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 meaningful 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 assumptions 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

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 Pareto² and Dahrendorf³ proved to be particularly

¹ J. Bensman & A. Vidich, op.cit., p. 166.
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 development 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, constructive, 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, undesirable 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, nationally-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 deficiencies 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 Englishmen 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

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 metaphors 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


2 In advancing this claim, I am aware of the fact that according to other indices, - for example, recent attendance figures at county matches - popular support for cricket is declining rapidly. However, while such statistics 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, Wodehouse⁴ - 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 proffered 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 Dickens', 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).

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 understanding 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

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

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 investigation have failed to overcome. But this problem has never prevented some historians from attempting to formulate explanatory models of the earliest stages in the development 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 psychology 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,

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 uncontaminated 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."

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 unchristened baby was born, maybe, thousands of years before."

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). McDougall, it must be noted, did not consider

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

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 Old English Cricket, 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 important 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

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 attributed 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 unforgivable 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." 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 forthcoming, 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

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 querist 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." 

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,
erved 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 socie-
ties 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 bounda-
ries 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.

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 deficiencies 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 Denison, Sketches of the Players, (1867)
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 confronted if one adheres rigidly to a developmental 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
Here, it is important to note that this approach, or perhaps, more accurately, the acceptance of its central theoretical premise - that social phenomena are interdependent - 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 understanding 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 assumption 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 characteristics 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 distinguishing 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 - 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".

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 passage 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

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 obligations 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,

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
coop-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...."  

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."  

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

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

1 Ibid., p.169.

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 etymological analysis of certain words in the game's vocabulary.

In the search for the origins of cricket, highly imaginative 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

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 categories 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 IO0s. 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

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 connection.

"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 vocabulary 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 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 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

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 originated 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 Guideford afore­
said gent, one of the Queenes Majesties Coroners
of the County of Surrey, being of age of fiftie
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 schools¹

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 tremors 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 obligation and dependency which, in theory, functioned to cement the social order in a feudal society was irreparably fractured, a state of near anarchy was the norm. Recalling these times, one contemporary wrote:

"Nothing hath plagued England more than the many breaches and ever unsure, never faithful, friendshippe of the Nobles." ²

Lest it be thought that this state of affairs was somehow 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 provisions for war, and his sub-vassals did likewise. Of course, this had consequences for the

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.  

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." 

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."

1 H. Gerth & C.W. Mills, op.cit., p. 97.
2 E.G. Dunning, The Sociology of Sport, p.117
Though these pieces of legislation, and others like them, indicate the extent to which the dangers of folk-games were realised, their very profusion demonstrates the ineffectuality 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.

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

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 personalities 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 aristocracy 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 monetisation 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 functioning 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

"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 constitute 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 developed 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."  

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 shows clearly the extent to which the work of these craftsmen was subject to various discontinuities, 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.
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 traditionalism". 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."  

Typical of this approach to work and leisure - a phenomenon 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. From the point of view of the capitalist, not only did the manual labourer take regular - or perhaps irregular, 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."  

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. 55-65.  
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

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

"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

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 collective 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" could be ritualistically acted out in forms of combat - football is but one example - which were sanctioned by tradition. 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 earmarked for such a public encounter."

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 persistence 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 Puritanism, 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

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 \textit{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 \textit{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, and 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, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 292.
\(^2\) C. Hill, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 142
\(^3\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 124.
\(^4\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 125.
\(^5\) Quoted in D. C. Coleman, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 294
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.
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 aforesaid,
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 September, 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 breakfast 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, drunkenness and unlawful games", 2 which so restricted the productive 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

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". The naivety of these assertions lies in their unquestioning acceptance of the success of this Statute. Their proponents 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 agricultural 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 recognition 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 conversion of these notions into specific rules of conduct, the statute of artificers falls short of what might be expected in a measure designed to..."
reduce chaos to order and drafted under a single direction and in one co-ordinated operation."  

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 needlessly 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 philosophy 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 institution in Tudor society, capable of exerting enormous pressure on the structure of every-day life, that was implacably

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 *locus classicus* of this doctrine is to be found in the *Homily against Idleness*.

"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, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 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

1 *Sermons and Homilies appointed to be read in Churches* (1802), pp. 443-4.
development of modern western capitalism. Weber's explanation 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". 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." In England,

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.  

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."  

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".

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."  

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 1531, 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 ascendance 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" 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."  

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." 

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

1 S. Bethel, The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell (1688); quoted in C. Hill's Puritanism and Society, p. 128.
"Watch against inordinate sensual Delight, even in the lawfulest sports. Excess of pleasure in any such vanity doth very much corrupt and befool the mind."  

Folk-games, then, incurred the wrath of Puritan preachers on two counts: first, they often occupied valuable time which could better be 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."  

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,

2 Ibid., p. 139.
Puritan divines were adament: "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'." 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." 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." 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. In 1627, even the poor rector of Shenley in Hertfordshire was presented for ploughing on a saint's day.

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
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. 

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 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'."

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

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

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 capitalism 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 traditional 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.

¹ See C. Hill, op. cit., Chs. IV & V; W. Haller, op. cit., Ch. 2; Patrick Collinson, The Elizabethan Movement (1967).
"In the seventeenth century there was only one way in which the industrious sort could be protected from themselves; by the total prohibition of Sunday work and of travel to and from markets; and by strict enforcement of this prohibition, 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 political 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 forbidding 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 government 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

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 sabbatarian 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 professions, 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 observance 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 other 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 circumstances, 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,

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,

² C. Hill, op.cit., p. 155.
the fact that a large number of statutes were passed prohibiting 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 stringent than the one before, but each growing in its absolute prohibition of games, sports and pastimes on the Sabbath."

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 pastimes, 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 parishioners for playing the game on a Sunday. Similar prosecutions, though not necessarily involving cricket, were brought against infractors of the Sunday observance code in towns up and down the country. 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 effective 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 contrarie 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."

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 characteristic 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 congregation 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.

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

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 Sociology 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 following 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 destruction 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.
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 presentations led to convictions varied widely. For example, E. R. Brinkworth has shown that in Oxford very few presentations 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

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 administration 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 entertainment 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 activities 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, thought 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 communities. Whereas, in the latter both the form of the local status hierarchy, 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 development. 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 commensurate 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.  

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' conceptions 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. In at least one case, the discrimination practised by members of the aristocracy and gentry in their choice of games was supported by an Act of Parliament. 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." 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."

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, 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." In Of Nobility, Humphrey singles out moderation in dress, diet and

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, apparyle, buyldinges, they must observe dignite, 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 somewhat 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 spporte....Wherein if others excess, gayne, and covetyse of lucre be left; if honest pleasure, not filthy 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 aristocracy 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:

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 predictability 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 aristocracy 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 Ozelisÿ (1711), p. 142.
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 seventeenth 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 interests.

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 football, 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 Chamberlayne³ and Stow⁴ 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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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'.”

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 references 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

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 aristocracy 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 highlight 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 incorporate in his perception of this process some understanding of the transformation 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 pasture 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 relatively 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 minuteness 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."

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

1 F. W. Lillywhite, op.cit., p. viii.
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 contradict most of the theoretical analyses of relationships between classes in this type of society. In addition to these conceptual deficiencies, 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.
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 development 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.

(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 overlapped 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 elaboration, 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 relationships between these groupings;

(ii) The development of an occupational group based on cricket, the members of which may be seen as following one of a series of structured career patterns.
Chapter One  Early Records of Cricket.

"England, when once of peace and wealth possesses,
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.
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
rugby began to derive from the participation of the
aristocracy and gentry would have persuaded contempo­
raries 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.
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 aristocracy 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 interest 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

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.
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 capitalists 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 attributed 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 relinquishing 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


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 hind­
sight. 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. Throughout the period of the Tudor monarchy, the crown and parliament 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 thereafter 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. 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 responsibility 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.

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-communications, 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 Crécy 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

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 experience - or, as one authority has put it,

"If the Earl of Newcastle had had the professional expertise of Sir Ralph Hopton it might have been a different story."  

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 bodyguards - 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 1537, but his successor managed to survive with only 38 servants. 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 maintaining para-military retinues. Not only were such appendages 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 standards 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 beginning 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 seventeenth 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 discipline with its stern prohibition of livery and maintenance, its administrative jurisdiction and tireless bureaucracy, had put down private warfare 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 disproportionately in conjunction with this commercialisation of land. A combination of profits accruing from successful exploitation 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.

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 turnover 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 reorganisation. Professor Stone, for instance, has estimated that,

"between 1562 and 1633, 78 new names were added to the list of armigerous 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, particularly 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


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 representatives 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 deliberate 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 landowning families in ten counties in 1640, more than half still retained this property in 1874.\(^2\) Allowing for the fact that


by 1874 a fresh impetus to change in the profile of landowners had been provided by the maturing of industrialization, 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 whom 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 commentator 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 stimulating 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 distinctive feature of the aristocracy's existence. There are relatively few instances of the sort of rational, planned enterprise which Max Weber saw as the hallmark of modern western capitalism. 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 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 achievement 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 leaseholders 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, 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."  

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 transform 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

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 socialisation" during which the individual rejects the style of life of his present membership group 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 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

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 aristocracy 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 landowners 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 redistributed 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.

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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 authenticity, 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 disrupting 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 flourishing 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 composition 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 explanation, 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

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 consequence of patronage by established members of the aristocracy. The key element in this hypothesis is the exceptionally high rate of social mobility which characterised 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 possibility 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

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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 aristocracy'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 acceptable 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 maintain 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 lifestyle 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, when­
ever 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 aristo­
cracy, lords, both great and not so great, found themselves
increasingly obliged to accept the prescribed, highly styl­
ized, 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

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 aristocrats.
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 rivalries 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 aristocracy 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 prestigious, 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, Hampshire, 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 Cricket 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

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 1727: 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", 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
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 Middlesex, 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'."  

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 Distinction".

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 political 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, 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." 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


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 exercised 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 1683 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.
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.  

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.  

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.  

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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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".\textsuperscript{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

\textsuperscript{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.

\textsuperscript{2} King, op.cit., p. 60.

\textsuperscript{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 distinctiveness 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."

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," 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.

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 pursued 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 aristocracy, 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 distinction: instead of demanding half a hundred quarterings with their wives, and galling their inferiors by eternally dwelling on their inferiority, 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 aristocracy and gentry in games like cricket may be seen to have

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 gentlemen, 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 particular 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 expertise, 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-consciousness, 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 aristocracy 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 involvement 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

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.
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 stimulating 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 everyday 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 significantly, 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

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 introduced 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 government to protect the ruling elite from Crown encroachments. Though, perhaps, a digression, it is nonetheless significant 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 contrasted 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 contained 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 superseded 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 intervention 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

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 1323, 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 Brodieck, 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

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 occurrence; 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

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 Noblemen 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 century, 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 determine 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

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.

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 erroneous 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 aristocracy 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 durability 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 transformation 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 Sandwich 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 particularly 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 The Gentleman's Magazine 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 regularly 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 Bishopbourne." 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 Sissinghurst, 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 landowner 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, op.cit., 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 relationships 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 orientation 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 aristocracy 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 industrialisation, probably contributed to growing distance, and growing fear in inter-class relations. In this context, one must note that the apparent decline in the rate of aristocratic participation in cricket matches coincided 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.\ldots\) 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 provincial 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 Strathaven, Lord Montford, and Lord Waldegrave. Permanently resident in London, they formed

\(^1\) Hereafter referred to as the M.C.C.

\(^2\) Lord Harris, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 80.
the nucleus of a loosely structured coterie known as the "London Club" which, between 1735 and 1751, when its Chairman, 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 together 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."

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. F-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 Artillery 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.
"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."  

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."  

The extent to which these early promotions were financially 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."  

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. 33.  
2 H. T. Waghorn, op.cit., p. 15.  
3 The demarcation of specific boundaries is a developmentally 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.

"Thus Gloucester... contained nine brewers, fifteen maltsters, 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 population." 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 significant 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


2 Chamberlayne, op.cit., p. 84.
professional sections of society was nearly as great as that of the landed aristocracy.\textsuperscript{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."\textsuperscript{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."\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1} G. King, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{2} D. Defoe, \textit{The Complete English Tradesman} (1726), p. 376.
\textsuperscript{3} Laurence Stone, \textit{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."  

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."  

John Chamberlayne describes cricket as a "recreation of citizens and peasants", an assessment which becomes

1 Quoted in P. Laslett, *op.cit.*, p. 41.
3 J. Chamberlayne, *op.cit.*, p. 84.
more meaningful when compared with the classification made by Thomas Smith of "Citizens, Burgesses and Yeoman", 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. Littleboy, a book-binder in Creed Lane at their head, and some Gentlemen of the Borough of Southwark, for 20 guineas a side."  

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 flexibility 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

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."

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

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 popularity. 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 outweighed by the sense of community identification it engendered. As often as not in these cases, members of the local aristocracy and gentry participated in the organisation 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 chronologically 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 contests 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 framework. 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

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."

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 particular form they exhibited may be seen as the result of transferring typically Gemeinschaftliche 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 aristocracy 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 structure of the matches can be seen in the provision of an extra day's play, should the contest not be resolved on

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. 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."

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 Assistant to the House of Commons. From this admittedly approximate estimate, it is possible to hypothesize that the impetus behind the phenomenal success of Hambledon between 1760 and 1765 emanated from support received from relatively diverse groups within the middle and upper strata of English society, harnessed by the relatively 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., 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."

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 1681, 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 beastliness 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 turpentine - genuine Boniface! - This immortal viand (for it was more than liquor) was vended at twopence 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, consisting 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."

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

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 disappearing 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 aristocracy. 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 collectivity 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". 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", 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 neighbourhood: 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", whilst a similar minute of the 10th May, 1774, allowed Purchase "two shillings and sixpence whenever he attends the meeting". 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.
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."  

Members who attended the club "Practice" dined afterwards 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 1760 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

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" signalled 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 developments 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 organisation should have remained supreme for so many years in a part of the country so difficult of access."  

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, The Hambledon Cricket Chronicle, 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 aristocracy. 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 1732 by a number of gentlemen recruited from a still older institution, the Je-ne-sais-quoi Club, 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, discontinuous. 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, coterie. As an off-shoot of the White Conduit 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 themselves, 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 organisational 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 1300, 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 intervals 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.
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 nineteenth 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 insignificant; 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. 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."

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.

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 interschool 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. 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 repressive 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.

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 following 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'être 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". 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 administrative 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 foundation, 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 traditional 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 introduction 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 standardised form, code of rules, and organisational structure, it could not have developed a distinctive occupational structure. 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."  

It was not until the "adoption" of the game by members of the aristocracy and gentry in the eighteenth century that conditions favourable to the development, 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

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, represented 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. 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."

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

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 Eighth Earl of Dorset, was the patron of the side. Long Robin appears to have been a "drop-out" from the ranks of the aristocracy. 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 greatest 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'."  

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 Horsmonden. Two features of this team are worth noting. In the first place, Mills, Hodswell and Cutbush, as skilled craftsmen, 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 manufacturing 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."

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". 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. Of the later generation of players who were recruited from beyond the immediate locality of

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 described 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 relationships between aristocrats and non-aristocrats in the eighteenth 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 aristocracy. 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 surprising. 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 exceptional degree of respect even from members of the aristocracy. 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 thoroughbred old English yeoman than Richard Nyren. He was a good, face-to-face, unflinching, uncompromising, 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 trenching 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

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 beloved 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 sanction of Sir Horace Mann. Old Nyren, who being the link between the patricians and plebeians in our community - the 'justice milieu' - was always applied to in cases of similar emergency, 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 quest. 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 conventions 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 aristocratic 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" 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, created a situation...

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 "outsider" 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 understand 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 eighteenth 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"
in which the value of many functions attributed to cricket was questioned, and in which the greatly expanded popularity 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.

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 conveyed 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 aristocracy 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 opposition, 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 aristocracy, 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

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 company. 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, associating 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 wholesome 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 themselves 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 propagates 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 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 countenances 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."  

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 participants, 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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"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 excessive gambling."  

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."  

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 facilitated 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.

1 Lord Harris, *op.cit.*, p. 23.
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 participation 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

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'."

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 converted 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

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. Fenney, in a conversation with the Rev.
J. Mitford, described how mistrust reached such a pitch
that even the most innocuous 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 birthplace, 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 employment as coach to the Ashford family, of Eye in Suffolk. The insecurities involved in pursuing this type of prolonged 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

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!"  

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 differential rates of change between rapidly expanding urban and more traditional rural locations, nevertheless its ramifications were sufficiently distinctive to be noted by contemporaries. 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 gentleman'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 neighbouring 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, manufacturers, 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 proletariat, the "bourgeoisie" was a collectivity constructed of various status levels which may have displayed the relatively high degree of integration associated with classes in the struggle for political enfranchisement, 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 internal 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 interrelationships 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."

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

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 relationship 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 comprehensive 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.

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", and on the other, to that process which, later that century, was to culminate in the "triumph of the plutocracy". 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 communication 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.

1 Quoted in H. A. Perkins, op.cit., p. 133.
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."

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

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 transformation 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

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."  

In one respect, the gentry may be said to have occupied 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, the continuous process of assimilation of parvenus into the gentry contributed significantly to the perpetuation 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

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 bourgeoisie 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 attribute of birth than an extension of wealth. Literally applied, this definition effectively precluded members of the bourgeoisie from attaining that status which represented 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

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". 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 development 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."

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 subordinating 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:

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"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

1 Thomas Hughes, Tom Brown's Schooldays (1858); St. Martin's library (1956), 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.
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 individuality 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 curtailling 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 undergoing 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 synonymous 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

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, 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 Minutes 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 difficulty 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 southeast 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 identification 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 weakening 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 arbitrary 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

1 Ibid., p. 20.

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. 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 increasingly 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 batsmen 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 professional cricketer during the first half of the nineteenth century is complicated by the lack of cohesion and consensus 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. 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 quarter of 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 anti­thesis 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."  

The M.C.C.'s case in answer to these claims was put by Mr. W. Denison.

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."  

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,
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. 37.
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

2 Quoted in W. Denison, op.cit., p. 122.
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 organisational 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 professionals 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 incorporated 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, Talks with Old English Cricketers, (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."  

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 organised 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 morning and after a restless night, from anxiety 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, perhaps, 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."  

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.

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. Knatchbull-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 exceptional 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 increasing 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 situation 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 described 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

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 conversation 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." 

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, Macclesfield, 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." 

One of its members, Richard Daft, described the excitement which a visit of the Eleven to a provincial centre provoked.

1 Richard Daft, *Kings of Cricket* (1893), p. 84.
"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 entertainments 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 Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, and eight from Cambridge. Only in the case of those players born in the vicinity of Nottingham 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 tobacconist, a licensed victualler, and a brazier. The largest group in this sample, those born in the south-east, contained 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 predominantly 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 formulation 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
tools 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
ment, 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 approximately 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 outside 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 Derbyshire 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 distinguished, 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 financial 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 welfare 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 ownership 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 investing 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 combined 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 before 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 1793, 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." 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 professional 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 day's 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

¹ Albert Shaw, Reminiscences of a Cricket Career, p. 10.
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 Edinburgh 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 asylum 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 Anderson 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 excessive 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 breakdown 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 breakaway 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."

From 1852 until 1870, when the professional Elevens were both the most popular and the strongest teams in

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."

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
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

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 superseding 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. Profiting 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 professionals, 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." 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,
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 Stephenson 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 dispute 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 politi­
cian. 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

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
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 gratuitously, 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 prosperous 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

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 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.\textsuperscript{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 Victorian 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.

\textsuperscript{1} The fate of the professional Elevens highlights a characteristic of many sports which has become increasingly important during the twentieth century. Experience 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."

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 formation 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
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 stereotypes 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."  

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 desideratum - 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

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

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 benefactors 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 exceptional 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 Yorkshire, 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 requirements of a factory system of production, handloom weavers retained a high degree of control over their work situation. 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."  

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 professionals 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."

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.

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. Subscribers 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." ^ That at one school, three cricket coaches were employed, was taken as a clear indication 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 establishment 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 threshold of the work-house." ¹

¹ Daft, op.cit., p. 167.
"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."  

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."  

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.

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 development 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 professional 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, Gloucestershire, Kent, Lancashire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire, Surrey, Sussex, and Yorkshire - that a championship was in any sense formally instituted. Even then, it was left to the sporting press to calculate the final result. That the Championship should have come into existence independently 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 demonstrate their membership of the ruling class, and to liberalise the existing, highly paternalistic, organisational 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, Gloucestershire, 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 recommendations 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 professional, 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 residential qualification, that should be left to the decision of the Marylebone Club.

(e) That a copy of these rules be sent to the Marylebone Club, with a request that they be adopted by the Club." 1

In one respect, these recommendations exemplify distinctive 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 compared 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, universally, 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, particularistic values. 2

When the "Qualifications for the County Cricketer" were submitted to the M.C.C. later that year, it attempted

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.

"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 Hertfordshire. Moreover, there seems to be a distinction between the county champions and the county championship. In other words, the county champions 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,

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."

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."  

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, established by the M.C.C. The majority of changes in the original format of the Championship can be

1  The Rev. R.S. Holmes, op.cit., p. 32.
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 entertainment 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 competitions, 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; 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 first-class cricket. These new Laws introduced 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 lifetime, 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 2,364 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."

But the significance of Grace extends far beyond his technical achievements. As a result of possessing not only exceptional athletic ability but also a particularly 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 different 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

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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 1360 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?


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 inextricably linked to a particularly pervasive ruling ideology. When Monsignor 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 development during the eighteenth century was due to a lasting popularity amongst the aristocracy has already been demonstrated. However, while this type of relationship was the decisive factor in the early stages of cricket's development, that it remained as influential during subsequent 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 eighteenth 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 popularity 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 nineteenth 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 interpretation 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 particular 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 development 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 participants 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 remained the exclusive domain of the ruling class, socially distanced and, under the banner of "amateurism", ideologically 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,

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, participation 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 elitism, the
latter stood for a measure of democratisation, the creation of more opportunities and facilities for a larger number of individuals from diverse social backgrounds 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 conclusion 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."  

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

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

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 Guest, 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 catastrophe 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 nearly 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

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
class 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 solidity 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
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."  

What differentiated this new "aristocracy" from previous generations of upwardly-mobile entrepreneurs was their retention of business connections at a stage when traditionally 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, however, 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 conjunction

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 businessmen, 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 substantially 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 shipbuilders, Thomas Brocklebank the Liverpool shipowner, Colonel Brocklehurst 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-eminence is still unchallenged - a factor of considerable significance in explaining the durability of many institutions 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 establishment 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 reconstituted 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 relatively 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 curriculum, 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", 

....../cont'd. p. 358.
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

.../cont'd. from previous page.

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 arbitrary, 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,

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 professionals 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 management 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 arrangements 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 Gentlemen versus the Players, I should like to see permission given to the Players to select their own side."

1 Ibid., p. 10.
In another letter to *Bell's Life*, 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."  

Further evidence of opposition to the attitudes and policies of the M.C.C is provided by Sir Pelham Warner. In *Lord's 1787-1945*, 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."  

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.

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1 *Loc.cit.*
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 composition 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". 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 headquarters 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 Championship 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.

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 aristocratic 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

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 selfishness."  

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". 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."

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

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.
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 disassociate 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 hallmark, 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, subordinate 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 segregation: 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

¹ That this formulation involves considerable over-simplification 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 admitting 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 stereotypes, 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 Ranjitsinhji, 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."

Bearing these circumstances in mind, it seems plausible to argue that the incorporation of the amateur-professional distinction represented a conscious attempt by those responsible 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.

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 equipped 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 elevens" 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!'

1 Ibid., p. 142.

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 something 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.
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!'  

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."  

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 generations, 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."  

Coinciding with this change, there also appeared within the upper strata of Victorian society a distinct division

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

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"

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." ^

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, resourcefulness, and unselfishness as no other form of education could" ^2- but the tendency was for boys to become

1 Ibid., p. 42.
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

1 Ibid., p. 97.
2 For an example, see Lord Roseberry's address to the 17th Trade Union Congress (1884), which was received with rapturous applause; quoted in George Bennet's, The Concept of Empire, (1951)
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 impeccable 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,

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, Southgate, 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

1 Mr. C. K. Francis, in W. A. Bettesworth, op.cit., p.207.
crowd-drawing, profit-making, enterprise, may be described as "liberal". 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 existence 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."  

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." Its home was a special arena, the County Ground, its rationale based on profit-making, and its motif, "spectacular."

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 participants. 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 themselves to it." ²

That professionals were considered an essential ingredient 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 expected to be keen...... It would be a distinct loss if such a body of men were to be withdrawn from our cricket fields...... Therefore, let us by all means encourage them to persevere 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 professionals 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.
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 subordination, a role which was based upon a tacit acceptance of the inherent limitations imposed on an individual by virtue of a working class upbringing. 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."  

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

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, Scorton 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."  

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

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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 independent 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. 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 professionals, 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 occupational 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.

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 unchallenged 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 professionals' 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 establishment 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 benefits 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 professionals, 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 potential 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 benefits 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:

2 F. Root, The Cricket Pro's Lot, (1937), pp. 43-44.
"A beneficiary 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, gate men, 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 cricketers 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

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 attendant upon the end of a cricket career is largely implicit in Hobbs' advice. But, in the observations of other contemporary 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 criticisms 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 before they 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

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

1 F. Root, op.cit., p. 50.
Conclusion

It may seem that in the previous chapter a disproportionate amount of attention is devoted to the development 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 establishment 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.
"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 organisation 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-professional distinction remained the major axis of differentiation. 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" 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 association - 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 inauguration 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 out. 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 excessively 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 traditionalists 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 competitive 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 radically 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 corresponding 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. 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. 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 behaviour expected of the person filling the role." 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, 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.


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 activities 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 marginality 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, uncertainty, 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, protection 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 cricketer 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 usefulness. 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 occupation. 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 occupation 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 institutional complex." 1

The subjective dimension in the concept of career is of particular significance in the case of marginal occupations, which, by virtue of the ambiguities contained within their institutional structure, permit the individual a greater freedom and flexibility in interpreting 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 determining 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 childhood 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 translation 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. 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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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 understand 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


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

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 occupation over the last twenty years.
The Retired Cricketer

A. Family Background, Education, and Early Work History.

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 intermediary 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

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 background 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 hallmark 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 compatible 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:
"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."

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 practising 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

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 paraphrasing 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.\textsuperscript{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 Secretary, 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 remunerative, would be likely to diminish their commitment to cricket.

However, this type of early career history was exceptional. 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.\textsuperscript{2} The decision to leave school had been made

\textsuperscript{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.

\textsuperscript{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 cricketers 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 professional 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 subscribing 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 unadvisability 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 cricketers 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 participation 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."

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 emphasised 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 contradiction 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 ambivalence 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 watershed 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 powerful 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 characterise 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 unaffected 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 respondents had successful careers, it cannot be gainsaid, of course, that such a degree of satisfaction did not necessarily 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, 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 identification 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 understanding of the capacity of other players, and a command of strategy. To the professional cricketer, an identification 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 groundsman 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 youngsters 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 the event 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 achievement 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 happening 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 credibility of one of the most deeply enshrined aspects of cricket's ideology; that a successful career in cricket automatically creates opportunities in different occupations which, if properly exploited, can only lead to upward mobility. A statement by one of the amateur cricketers 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 assistance 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 contemporary 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 unconditionally. 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 professionals interviewed. Their responses incorporated a greater degree of uncertainty and anxiety, which is consistent with an awareness of the marginality of the occupation. 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 attachment to their occupation. The variations referred to occur in the ways the majority of the respondents integrated 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 surrounding 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 conception of the relative advantages of a cricket career would suffer by contrast. An indication of the pervasiveness of this ideology is contained within another statement 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 subscribe 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 outweigh the influence of the occupation's ideology.

This belief that the qualities embodied in the successful 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 consequences 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 retirement were restricted to such vague ideas as "getting a business." The idea of obtaining professional qualifications 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 majority, 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

A. Family Background, Education, and Early Work History

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, intermediate, 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
grammar schools, four had attended public schools, and one had attended a secondary modern school. 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 distinction 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 commonplace 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 recruited, 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, cricket retained its attractiveness 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 qualified 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 outweigh more objectively-based evaluations of the occupation'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 proportion 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 relatively 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 constituted 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 representative 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 opportunity 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 opportunity 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 described 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 fanatically keen on all ball-games and particularly cricket, it was my ambition at the age of thirteen 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 tremendous 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 opportunities 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 significant. The player in question had successfully completed a grammar school education, had received offers of employment 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 beginning 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 precarious 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 consideration of any alternative career, did not protect players from an awareness of the marginality of the occupation. 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 isolation 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 yourself. 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 combination 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 achievement. Thus, the player was placed in a potentially conflicting 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 rationalisations which were incorporated in estimations of their own performances. Of these, the first involved transferring 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 irrelevant - 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 institution'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 reprieve 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

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 hallmark and, as such, the anchor of his work-identity. It admitted the cricketer to a relationship 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 occupation 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.”

In adapting to this new role, the position of the cricketer was further complicated by the type of relationship 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 predictability and reliability, both as a batsman and a bowler, while it was left to the amateur to indulge in those eccentricities 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 knowledgeable 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

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."  

The explanation of the diminishing numbers of amateurs to be found in first-class cricket is probably more important 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.
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 difference in monetary rewards among the many occupations is extremely narrow. With the reduction 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 occupations 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 combine 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 significantly increased the players' awareness of the

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 ambivalences, 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 ambivalences, 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 important 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 position 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 undesirable 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". Furthermore, 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 prosperity of the county clubs who employed him. This appears to have been a crucial factor in determining the type of

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 instability 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 subordinance 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 experienced 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 standards 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 reaction, 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 individual, his performance is not sufficient to determine the outcome of a match by itself. It is but one contribution 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 performance 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 "outsiders". 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 conjunction 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 somewhere 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 become 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 100s - 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 conception 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 competitive, it becomes a better game to play."

But this statement expresses the essence of the contradictory 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 confidence 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 occupation 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 themselves 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 acquiesce. 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 organisation 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 patrimonial 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

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."

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 differences 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 preparation for retirement.
(5) **Colleagues and Material Rewards**

Following the framework developed by Morse and Weiss, 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

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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 thereafter society itself, which threatened 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 themselves. The people who come into cricket I think come from better families - being quite frank. Cricket is an unusual game - not everybody 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, individual 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 precariousness 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 attractiveness 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 understood 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 properties 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 contrast 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 considerations. 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 comparisons 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 gets only one fifth of the salary. Therefore 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 occupation, 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 26, the thought of a benefit was uppermost in my mind. I had got over the initial keenness and zest for cricket - originally 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 inevitably 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 membership 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 distinctive 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 interacted 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 salaries rather than having to rely on getting into a Test team to make up their money. It makes a £100 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 outside 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 anyone 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 profitable 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 loss 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 administrators, 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 Gillette 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 unemployment 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 contemporary 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 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 cricketers 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 sportsmen. 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 circumstances 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, described 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 significant respects. As a result of the opportunities created by their achievements in cricket, and the more instrumental 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 indicative 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 occupations. 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, cricketers conformed to this pattern, our respondents were asked

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 virtue 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 somewhere 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 difficulty 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 characteristic 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 representatives, 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 relationships. 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 containing 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 cricketers. 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 significant 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 criticism. 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. Parker¹ 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

differed substantially in the type of work they did and the conditions under which they performed. His comparisons 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 personality.

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 occupations 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 carry 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 unnecessary to devote many words to displaying the extent to which cricketers get involved in their work. In justifying their choice of occupation, cricketers gave what amounted to a stock answer:

"What can be better than getting paid for something 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 football, 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 Sundays 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 recruited 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

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 dangerously 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


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 significant 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


a jockey, golfer, and tennis player too - makes cricket the poor relation in British professional sport."

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."

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.

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."

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 professionals paid only on a match-fee basis."

1 Ibid., p. 19.
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.

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 significantly 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 argument 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

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 contradictory. 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 opportunity 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 inevitable 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 contract, 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 instrumental 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 discover 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 virtually 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 - someone 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 frequently 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 aspiring 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 Samuel 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 Samuel 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.
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

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 quantifiable 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 geographically 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. 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", 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

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 difference 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 retired edt 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 associated 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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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, its 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 rivalries within the leisured elite. At the same time, the career as professional 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.