CRAIG OWEN JONES

THE FAILURE OF AMERICAN CRICKET TO FLOURISH during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is the Rorschach inkblot test for sports historians — each sees in the failure whatever they wish to see. Arriving at a viable explanation, one that takes into account class distinctions, practical considerations, differences of national character, and exactly how much weight to assign to the influence on would-be cricketers of baseball in the second half of the nineteenth century, has been a long and arduous process, summarized by George Kirsch in his excellent recent overview.¹ Scholars, however, have been able to agree on one thing: changes in clubs’ membership composition is crucial to understanding the subject. For much of the nineteenth century, cricket was a sport that straddled class divides; in Philadelphia, the spiritual home of American cricket, the game was the province of working-class players just as much as it was of their middle-class and upper-class counterparts.² As the century wore on, however, in places where middle-and upper-class British immigrant society patronized the game, the promoters of cricket ultimately failed to convert enough sportsmen to play beyond their class ranks. When the stream of new arrivals from the United Kingdom dwindled, so too did cricket as an endeavor that was able to reach beyond the niche of English American society. Following changes in immigration patterns during the 1890s, the demographic balance shifted from the British Isles and Northern Europe to the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe, especially following the 1921 Immigration Restriction Act and subsequent legislation.³

The history of cricket in Oregon provides an interesting corollary to this model. American cricket player Tom Melville has convincingly demonstrated that “the inability of the immigrant English community to translate their game to Americans in the context of their own sporting culture” was a key factor in cricket’s decline, and Oregon cricket is certainly no exception.⁴ For a period at the end of the nineteenth century, however, the state’s most prominent cricketers made strenuous efforts to proselytize on cricket’s behalf, fostering
THE PORTLAND CRICKET CLUB, pictured here in 1909, was organized in about 1878. This photograph appeared in an August 11, 1909, Oregonian article that listed the players’ last names. In the back row (left to right) are: Neame, McKenzie, Cummings, Bailey, Berridge, Crocker, Phinn. From left to right in the front row are: Mallett, Coppinger, Shipley, Sisley, Churchley, Fenwick (Captain), Greaves, Smith, Gjedsted, Blakely (President).

Contact with baseball players and clubs in an attempt to bolster membership by appealing to U.S.-born athletes. These efforts came to an abrupt halt in the second decade of the twentieth century, by which time numbers of English and British immigrants were far fewer than they had been in the 1870s and 1880s when cricket took hold in the state.

This article provides an overview of the advent and growth of cricket in Oregon, a hitherto unstudied subject. It shows that contrary to what sporting guides of the 1900s indicate, cricket was far from being confined to Portland and was played in places as far apart as Albany, Astoria, and Corvallis. It also analyzes cricket in Portland, with an emphasis on cricket clubs’ sociological and demographic makeup. As time wore on, one of the city’s principal clubs, the Portland Cricket Club, took on the exclusionary bent of elite members that eventually constituted Philadelphia’s cricket clubs, and it ceased efforts to broaden the game’s appeal — leading to cricket’s ossification in Oregon during the 1910s.
CRICKET IN OREGON: AN OVERVIEW

The history of American cricket is concentrated geographically in New England and Pennsylvania, where the game flourished in expatriate English and American circles for many years before disappearing from view in the early twentieth century. On the West Coast, attention has remained firmly focused on cricket in California, where Bay Area teams practiced the game for many years with a supply of players being replenished primarily with English and Australian immigrants, and more recently with players from the Indian subcontinent. To date, no survey of cricket in Oregon exists, although there is ample evidence of its presence in Oregon’s larger cities during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Oregon clubs regularly played against each other as well as teams from Canada and the Bay Area until well into the 1920s, when dwindling interest finally ended efforts to sustain the sport.

Earlier research conducted by Kerry Jeffries of Multnomah Cricket Club placed the beginnings of cricket in Oregon in the 1880s, but the sport was being played at least about a decade prior. The Oregon Daily Journal made reference in 1903 to the appearance of the game in Oregon in about 1870. The earliest contemporary reference I have been able to trace is an 1873 newspaper account of a series of three matches played between members of St. George’s Cricket Club in Portland. The circumstances of the club’s founding may well be recorded in a notice printed in the Morning Oregonian on July 5, 1873, which called for “all those who take an interest in cricket [to] meet this evening. . . . for the purpose of organizing an English cricket club.” By 1878, however, the Portland Cricket Club is referenced in several press reports and seems to have joined (or, possibly, superseded) St. George’s.

In most respects, the operations of these early clubs closely resembled those of their English exemplars. Club members played matches that were often organized by marital status, with unmarried men playing against married men, an arrangement common at English cricket clubs when members wanted to play a game and no opposition presented itself. Scattered references to Oregon cricket matches being organized or played appear in newspapers during the second half of 1873. The fact that a cricket club existed by late 1873 suggests that the St. George’s team had been in existence for at least the duration of the 1873 season. The club organized again in May 1874 for the summer and entered a yacht race later in the year. The tendency for English cricket clubs to support various other physical activities can also be found in Portland’s case. By 1881 the club had changed its name to the Portland Cricket and Foot Ball Club, implying summer and winter activity.

By the end of the 1870s, cricket was beginning to spread beyond Portland. The game reached Albany no later than May 1878, when the State Rights
IN THIS 1873 photograph, Oregon’s first cricket team poses near their playing grounds. According to the photograph caption, the field was located in south Portland (now Southwest Portland) south of Gibbs Street.

*Democrat* reported that a club had formed and “will be playing soon,” while the Corvallis Cricket Club formed at the end of March 1880.14 The Portland and Corvallis elevens — a cricket term referring to the eleven players on the field — played a two-day match on July 5 and 6 “on the ground west of the depot,” as reported in the *Corvallis Gazette*. A reference to the Portland players’ being housed “on the various English houses” provides evidence that the game was the province of English immigrants in that city as in Portland. For example, the club’s first chairman, Alfred E. Acklom, was an English merchant who moved to Corvallis in 1879. The *Corvallis Gazette* described him as a “very intelligent and affable gentleman,” and “an addition to the large number of Englishmen already in Benton County.”15 Astoria also hosted a cricket club by 1890, and that same year it played an eleven from Tacoma, Washington, losing a one-inning match by forty-one runs.16 The club’s vitality and longevity, however, must be placed in some doubt. By 1900, a reporter with the *Daily Astorian* claimed with impunity that “our local athletes have never made a specialty of the game,” suggesting the club was moribund at the very least.17

It is hard to gauge the wider popularity of cricket in the state during this time. It certainly experienced a drop in popularity in Portland during the 1880s — references to matches cease by mid decade, and by 1890, rumors in the press indicated an imminent re-establishment of the Portland club for those harboring an “old-time interest in the game.”18 That said, continued
THE PORTLAND cricket grounds in south Portland are pictured here in 1873. According to newspaper accounts, this was about the time that cricket first made an appearance in Oregon.

references to the town’s cricket ground throughout this period imply that people continued to play the game in casual settings, and it certainly had enough of a following to justify newspapers’ printing stories about matches on the East Coast and in the Canadian provinces adjacent to the border as well as frequent reports from England. Additionally, an Albany newspaper advertised in 1888 a medicinal oil endorsed by David Scott, a prominent cricketer with Victoria Cricket Club in Melbourne, Australia, suggesting a readership who, if nothing else, were at least aware of cricket and its rigors.

The atmosphere at Oregon matches was convivial, if not quite commensurate with the air of English formality experienced at Lord’s or the Oval.
cricket grounds in England. Reports of matches in Oregon from this period are usually sparing, neglecting everything but the result and, sometimes, the odd line on individual performances. English lawyer Wallis Nash left an account of an 1880 game between the Portland and Corvallis clubs at the Oregon State Fair that is worth quoting at length:

This year the visitors had a new sensation in seeing cricket played on the fair-ground, to most of them a new sight. Portland is blessed with a cricket club, mostly supported by the emigrants from the old country. Corvallis has a similar advantage. The Portlanders, in the pride of their strength . . . had come for wool and gone home shorn. So, as a return-match was under discussion, it was determined to accept the invitation of the fair committee and play the return on the fair-grounds for the amusement of the visitors. Accordingly, the game was duly played out, and ended again in a one-innings defeat of proud Portland, to the delight of the spectators from the valley, who are generally a little jealous of the airs and graces of [Portland]. There was some difficulty in keeping the ground clear; the ladies particularly could not comprehend the terrible solecism they were committing in tripping bravely across, to speak, to “point,” and chat with the wicket-keeper. If you could but have seen the horror-stricken faces of one or two of our eleven, accustomed to the rigor of the game at Cambridge, Rugby, or Cheltenham! Such goings-on would doubtless have confirmed Londoners in attendance at Lord’s or the Oval in their prejudices regarding the uncouth manners of Americans. There is, however, much evidence to support the idea that the most enthusiastic adherents of cricket in Portland were adamant that the spirit, and indeed the manner, of their sport should be preserved.

THE PORTLAND CRICKET CLUB

Corvallis and Albany may have had their clubs, but the beating heart of Oregon cricket was in Portland. For many years, the club’s members were the principal proselytizers for the sport. An analysis of their backgrounds, how they popularized cricket, and how they attracted new players reveals much about attitudes toward the game in the state. Distinctions along class lines are immediately apparent, with a substantial presence of middle- and upper-class players, although this picture changed significantly over the lifetime of the club.

Scorecards for the very earliest matches are lacking, but a later report gives the names of five of Portland’s earliest members (see Table 1). There is doubtless some confirmation bias here — these names derive from a newspaper article detailing the history of cricket in Portland, and it is unclear whether these men were thought worthy of inclusion due to their cricketer
The identities of these men, therefore, cannot resolve whether there was a working-class contingent in the membership, but they forcefully speak to the presence of the most eminent members of immigrant communities from the United Kingdom and the British Empire in the ranks of the Portland Cricket Club. At its head was James Laidlaw, the “first full consul” appointed by the British Government to Oregon, who took up his post in 1874. He was also heavily involved with the British Benevolent Society, formed in late October 1872. George H. Andrews shortly rose to a position of status when the Oregon and California Railroad Company elected him to a director’s position in 1887. A.M. Crocker began his career as an office clerk but had ascended by 1885 to the position of manager.

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### THE TABLE ABOVE

The table above lists information compiled by the author on Portland’s earliest cricket players. All sources referencing U.S. Census data were compiled from the Multnomah County population schedules for Portland, Oregon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>BIRTH YEAR</th>
<th>BIRTH PLACE</th>
<th>IMMIGRATION YEAR</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samuel L.N. Gilman</td>
<td>ca. 1846</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Auctioneer</td>
<td>1880 U.S. Census, page 2, dwelling 11, family 12; 1900 U.S. Census, sheet 3, dwelling 47, family 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Bourne</td>
<td>February 23, 1855</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Attorney, Oregon State Representative, U.S. Senator</td>
<td>see endnote 26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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prowess or merely because of their status in the city. The identities of these men, therefore, cannot resolve whether there was a working-class contingent in the membership, but they forcefully speak to the presence of the most eminent members of immigrant communities from the United Kingdom and the British Empire in the ranks of the Portland Cricket Club. At its head was James Laidlaw, the “first full consul” appointed by the British Government to Oregon, who took up his post in 1874. He was also heavily involved with the British Benevolent Society, formed in late October 1872. George H. Andrews shortly rose to a position of status when the Oregon and California Railroad Company elected him to a director’s position in 1887. A.M. Crocker began his career as an office clerk but had ascended by 1885 to the position of manager.
in Portland of the R.G. Dun and Co. Mercantile Company. Jonathan Bourne, meanwhile, was the son of a Massachusetts shipping magnate. He dropped out of Harvard in 1877 to live a life of adventure. He ultimately settled in Oregon, involving himself in various commercial and legal enterprises, and became a state representative by 1885 and a U.S. Senator by 1907. Samuel L.N. Gilman’s Canadian origins are noteworthy. During the 1890s, Portland cultivated connections with Canada’s western cricket clubs, and Canadian immigrants — such as Peter Beutjen and Harry Molson — frequently appeared among Portland’s ranks, making clear that Canadians composed a significant strand of the club’s membership, whose exposure to cricket was presumably more frequent than of those born in the United States.

The presence of such men in its ranks as Laidlaw, Andrews, and Bourne helps to firmly situate the Portland Cricket Club within a broader middle- and upper-class milieu, one that is in keeping with the situation in the East; and if the club had followed Philadelphia’s pattern of exclusionary policies that enshrined cricket club members’ status, the course of cricket in Portland might have been far narrower and more difficult to navigate for those outside these classes. Available evidence, however, points to a substantial and sustained attempt to popularize the sport among the local population, particularly baseball players, during the 1870s and 1880s. By the 1880s, Portland had its Turnverein and its Caledonian Games, and a Willamette Rowing Club was in existence by 1888. Baseball, however, had been played on an organized basis on Portland since shortly after the city’s foundation. The formation of the Portland Pioneer Club in 1866 was fairly early for the West Coast, and a regional association, the Oregon and Washington and Idaho Territories Association of Base Ball Players, was created in 1868. If there was a likely pool of potential cricketers in Portland, baseball clubs would surely provide it.

In 1878, the Portland Cricket Club played a series of three matches against a team of local baseball players. Among the “base ballists” who tried their hand at the game was Joseph Buchtel, an Ohioan who settled in Portland in 1853.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>BIRTH YEAR</th>
<th>BIRTH PLACE</th>
<th>IMMIGRATION YEAR</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenneth H. Bailey</td>
<td>ca. 1882</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>Art china merchant</td>
<td>1910 U.S. Census, sheet 8, dwelling 172 family 184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Job (J.J) Churchley</td>
<td>ca. 1868</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>President, Churchley Bros., Inc. (coal and wood supply company)</td>
<td>1900 U.S. Census, sheet 8, dwelling 92, family 114; <em>Portland City Directory</em> (1900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin Fenwick</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Railroad company clerk</td>
<td>1910 U.S. Census, sheet 8, dwelling 157, family 175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles E. Gjedsted</td>
<td>ca. 1878</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>before 1908</td>
<td>Metal works mechanic (later clerk)</td>
<td>1910 U.S. Census, sheet 6, dwelling 128, family 147; 1920 U.S. Census, sheet 2, dwelling 28, family 55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION** on 1911–1912 Portland Cricket Club members compiled by the author is listed above. Included are players’ birth years, birth places, years of immigration, and occupations. All U.S. Census data listed in this table comes from the Multnomah County population schedules for Portland.

and earned money as an inventor and photographer. He was one of the first photographers to capture the Columbia River Gorge in stereograph and is notable for documenting regions across the state during the mid-nineteenth century with a portable camera. Buchtel’s contribution to sports in Oregon also cannot be underestimated. His enthusiasm for baseball and talent for organizing led to his founding the Portland Pioneers team in 1866, and he was also elected the first president of the Oregon and Washington and Idaho Territories Association of Base Ball Players. Having individuals of Buchtel’s standing in match-ups between cricketers and baseball players — which were sometimes treated with levity elsewhere — speaks to the seriousness of the games. William Effinger, a Virginia lawyer, was a baseball player who took part
in the series as well as a member of the Portland Cricket Club.\textsuperscript{32} Newspaper reports of cricket matches frequently addressed adherents of the two sports in tandem, indicating that cricket and baseball fraternities in Oregon were close; for example, the St. George’s Cricket Club played the Portland Pioneers in a series of cricket matches in 1874.\textsuperscript{33} An 1879 news report documents the cricket club members’ awareness of the need to appeal beyond the confines of the expatriate community: “The Englishmen of the city are endeavoring to create a liking for cricket.” The correspondent implied, however, that these efforts were doomed to failure, as “American boys find the game too slow.”\textsuperscript{34}

References to the Portland Cricket Club are sporadic in the 1890s, and therefore resistant to analysis.\textsuperscript{35} By the first decade of the twentieth century,
however, references become more numerous, and it at once becomes clear that Portland’s position had undergone a subtle change. Analysis of members’ backgrounds, selected from two separate lists dating from 1911 and 1912, demonstrate a preponderance of men in clerical work, with a smaller number of men in business.

Again, the lack of American-born cricketers is testimony to the failure of the Portland cricketing fraternity to win over many converts. The most accomplished of these members from a cricketing standpoint was, without a doubt, Arthur Foderingham Tarilton, brother of renowned West Indian cricketer Percy Tarilton, who had played first-class cricket in Jamaica and worked at the British Government’s consular office in Mississippi before moving to Oregon. Nevertheless, cricket teams in Oregon were made up of a staunchly middle-class demographic, even if there were notable exceptions. By 1912, Portland Cricket Club boasted the likes of George Langford in their ranks. Born into poor circumstances in London in 1845, Langford’s early life was as wretched as could be imagined — both his parents and all nine of his siblings died of cholera, doubtless during the epidemic of 1853–1854 that claimed the lives of thousands of Londoners. Having immigrated to New York state in 1862, Langford, who had been an apprentice mason, turned his hand to contracting. By 1876 he had arrived in Portland; in the years following he built several of the city’s most important early buildings, including the Portland Hotel, the Worcester Building, Portland’s first waterworks, and farther down the Columbia River, the North Head lighthouse near Ilwaco, Washington. By 1912 he was a leader in the Portland Cricket Club, as were other prominent local men, including club president Charles Blakely (who lent his name to a cup given to the highest scorer in the annual Over Thirty-Under Thirty match every season); club secretary J.C. Cumming, who forged a successful career in banking and transport and was elected club captain in 1913; and Charles Edward Gjedsted, a mechanic who later went into clerical work but whose social status was doubtless bolstered by his rapid rise up the ranks in the Oregon National Guard — he was also made vice-captain of the cricket club in 1913.

During this period, the Portland Cricket Club made some effort to attract new recruits and encourage spectators, but these efforts seem to have been more fitful than during the 1870s and 1880s. In 1904, club members played an exhibition match, and those with an interest in the sport were invited to attend, a clear attempt at popularization.40 During the six-year period from the beginning of the 1908 season to the end of the 1913 season, when the Portland Cricket Club was arguably at its zenith, the demeanor of the club was remarkably inward-looking. Under the presidency of Charles Blakely, the club seemingly prospered. By 1912, it boasted six acres of grounds and a well-appointed clubhouse, the best in the northwest, according to one
Also noteworthy was the seriousness with which the club’s members approached playing the game. In 1912, the club’s finances were in such a healthy state that it retained a professional coach for the season, a common enough arrangement in England and the western United States, but a rare luxury for the cricket clubs of Oregon. The first eleven were sufficiently well regarded to interest clubs in Washington and Canada, particularly in British Columbia, where cricket enjoyed far greater popularity and clubs such as Victoria drew large crowds. When the famous Frankford Cricket Club of Philadelphia visited Portland in 1911, the popular press described it as a “red letter day,” avowing that the match would serve to boost the game in the state.

It was, perhaps, a far-fetched aspiration. The Portland Cricket Club was no fly-by-night club; indeed, it is the only Oregon club listed in Spalding’s

THE 1911 PORTLAND CRICKET CLUB team members are pictured in this image published in Spalding’s Cricket Guide.
Cricket Guide, the yearly barometer of the American cricket scene. Nevertheless, when even the well-heeled clubs of British Columbia fielded oversized teams to compete with the Australian champions who toured North America in the early 1900s, it was inevitable that Portland, a geographically isolated club with competent but less-experienced players, would find it difficult to secure a match from the touring side. As late as March 1913, newspaper reports still eagerly floated the idea that the Australians visit Portland, but they were soon disabused. The Portland Cricket club balked at a request for a $1,500 appearance fee, and while the Australians played many teams on the western and eastern seaboards — including Montreal, Toronto, and Germantown in the east, and representative Calgary and Vancouver XVs in the west, not to mention a flurry of three games in Chicago during transit — no U.S. team on the West Coast received a visit.44
Even as the 1913 season dawned, ominous signs pointed to the club's dissolution. The failure to bring the Australian eleven to Portland diminished many members' enthusiasm, and in July 1913, the club announced that its playing ground would be torn up while a sewer was constructed. Although a team indicated it was actively looking for a new home, and expected to sell the ground for a tidy profit, the Oregon Daily Journal reported that “the present season is a rather dull one for the local players.” Although no ground sale seems not to have gone ahead — the cricket ground was still there in 1915 — such lack of interest in it did not bode well. By the end of 1913 the club’s entry in Spalding's Cricket Guide was reduced to a few lines, stating that in terms of membership and finances, the club was in dire straits. According to the guide, operations had not begun until well into April and no games were played after June. There would be an attempt to revitalize the club in 1914, “with what success it is hard to say.” The writer elaborated on the root of Portland’s problems:

_The fact of Portland being isolated. . . . or at least removed by a considerable railroad fare from those cities in which cricket is played, is mainly responsible for the lack of interest. If they could have outside matches there would not be the slightest doubt of having a flourishing club._

This was probably not the sole reason for the club’s decline — the situation had been no different in previous seasons.

Newspapers occasionally referenced other clubs in the Portland area, but the lack of commitment of smaller clubs, such as the Salem Ramblers and Mount Tabor, likely meant that even when they played matches with the Portland Cricket Club, members of the larger club were unlikely to get a good game. Multnomah seems to have been the most accomplished of these smaller Portland-area clubs, then just outside the town, and its members played annual fixtures with the Portland Cricket Club by 1911. Other opportunities to play sometimes occurred with scratch teams assembled by steamers crews that docked in the Portland harbor. These matches invariably resulted in emphatic victories for the Portland eleven, although there were competitive contests on occasion. Farther afield, Portland’s annual match with Seattle endured to the end; however, the gap in batting quality between the two clubs was increasingly obvious. Portland scored a combined total of 126 in their two innings, while Seattle made 111 in their first. With Seattle needing only sixteen to win, a heavy defeat was likely for Portland, and only some inspired bowling by Portland’s attack during their second innings got Seattle’s top-order batsmen out cheaply and gave the
scoreline some respectability. Seattle won by the narrower, but still comfortable, score of three wickets. The Portland Cricket Club began the 1915 season, but no match reports appeared in local newspapers. A reduction in membership fees, combined with a plaintive appeal to “all cricketers in town, whether at present members or not,” suggests dwindling personnel and an unfinished season. By 1918 at the latest, the Portland Cricket Club ceased to play a role in the sporting life of the city.

There was, however, a final, curious denouement. In 1918, Dean Walker, the graduate manager of the basketball and athletics programs at the University of Oregon, organized a university cricket team. Walker’s interest in the game was influenced by John Leader, an instructor at the school and cricket enthusiast. Born in British India to Irish parents in 1877, Leader had been a career soldier until immigrating to Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1909. After serving for two years during World War I, an injury sustained during the Battle of the Somme ended Leader’s front-line career. In 1917, he accepted an invitation from the University of Oregon to train students and faculty alike for military service. Although he returned to Canada less than two years later, Leader’s enthusiasm for cricket rubbed off on Walker. The sports program at the university was insubstantial, being limited to varsity and baseball, and the immediate problem of introducing cricket was not a shortage of players, but acquiring the necessary equipment and learning the rudiments of the game. Fortunately for Walker, a previous member of the Portland Cricket Club donated the team’s old equipment, and Leader stepped in to provide instruction on the game. The cricket equipment arrived later than expected, and for a few days it was uncertain whether there would be time to train two student teams before the summer break. The shipment arrived just in time, and on June 12, 1918, the campus witnessed the university’s first-ever cricket match between teams captained by James Sheehy and “Dot” Medley. Unfortunately for Walker and Leader, the game was a non-event from a competitive point of view; occurring in the middle of the exam period as it did, interest was low, and several members of the crowd made up the numbers. Sheehy’s team defeated Medley’s by forty-seven runs to ten, while few spectators from the university and even fewer Eugene residents turned out to watch. Hopes to make cricket a minor sport at the university seem to have sagged accordingly. A “championship” held in Portland between two teams in 1922 failed to become a regular event. The sudden flurry of cricket matches in Portland after such a long hiatus is peculiar, and the author can find no explanation for it. All three teams disappear from view in 1923. The key mover in organizing these matches was P. Chapell Browne, an architect
and president of the Portland Soccer Football Association, and a prominent member of the British Benevolent Society.\footnote{57}

For all the alacrity surrounding these efforts, neither the University of Oregon exhibition match of 1918 nor the 1922 Portland “championship” became harbingers of a cricketing renaissance as their organizers had hoped. Any momentum that might have developed was stymied by the onset of World War II. After the war’s conclusion, there was no place for cricket in the sporting scene as identifiably American sporting activities were reasserted in the national consciousness. It is instructive that when the cricket-loving politician Harold Macmillan became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in 1957, and a photograph of the new premier — in cricket whites — circulated in American newspapers, cricket had been so forgotten by Oregonians that the \textit{Eugene Guard} felt it necessary to caption the photograph with the comment, “Cricket is to the English what baseball is to Americans.”\footnote{58} No such comment would have been necessary a mere twenty years before.

Despite all of the preceding evidence, cricket’s failure to establish in Oregon in the way baseball did is self-evident. Reviewing its history is like watching the movie \textit{Groundhog Day} — one is at first bemused and then faintly dismayed about witnessing the same events occur again and again, as enthusiasts for the sport gamely proclaim its arrival, flourish for a while, and then dwindle in numbers, only for others in time to succeed them. Sometimes the baton passed from generation to generation, as English expatriates’ memories of the game shared with sons, nephews, and new immigrants, played a key role in cricket’s appearance and reappearance. Ultimately, the game’s fortunes were linked to the expatriate community that gave rise to it, and once the stream of immigrants from Europe dried up, the sporting endeavors they sponsored were bound to fail.\footnote{59}

Although cricket failed to catch the imagination of the state, it nonetheless played a persistent, if small, role in sporting life for almost three quarters of a century. Its absence from sports narratives in Oregon is more or less complete: no monuments, either physical or virtual, speak to its former centrality to British expatriate communities. When the history of sporting activity in Oregon is eventually written, the archival deposit of the Portland Cricket Club, covering the period from 1908 to 1914, awaits the author. The resurgence of cricket in the past thirty years, on Oregon’s university campuses and in the name of the Oregon Cricket League (with an almost exclusively immigrant membership from India lured to the state by tech industry jobs), will in time inscribe the sport’s narrative in the state yet again. In such circumstances, it would perhaps be fitting to afford cricket a paragraph or two.
The author would like to thank Oregon Historical Quarterly editorial staff, Erin Brasell and Helen Ryan, for their assistance with this article.


3. By 1930, just 34,276, or 3.6 percent, of Oregon’s population was born in the British Isles or Canada. WPA Writers’ Program, Oregon: End of the Trail (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, 1940), 76.


8. “Out Door Sports,” Morning Oregonian, October 18, 1873, p. 4. A fragmentary reference to a cricket club in existence at Fort Dalles under the auspices of Corporal Young in 1861 appears to imply the game was played by soldiers there for a period. “A Scrap of Biography,” Morning Oregonian, April 27, 1861, p. 3. An 1869 reference to the formation of a cricket club to play a team from Victoria may refer to a Portland club, but the geographical location is not specified. “From the North,” Morning Oregonian, April 22, 1869, p. 2.


12. “Local Brevities,” Morning Oregonian, October 7, 1873, p. 3. The reference to a canceled cricket match does not mention St. George’s by name, however.


17. “Around Town,” Morning Astorian, June 6, 1900, p. 3.


22. “Interest Grows in Local Cricket,”
Interestingly, the article adds that the men were playing cricket in Portland as early as 1870.

23. The British Benevolent Society was an organization with branches across the globe, typically established by British immigrants in order to provide financial aid for British immigrants in difficulties, but which also functioned to maintain the social cohesiveness of the British expatriate community. Laidlaw was elected a director of the Society in 1887 ("The British Benevolent Society, Morning Oregonian, May 12, 1887, p. 8), but the holding of meetings in the British Consulate for many years prior speaks to a longstanding sponsorship. For the formation of the society, see “From Portland, Oregon,” Sacramento Daily Union, October 31, 1872, p. 3. For Laidlaw’s position as consul, see John Dierdorff, Edmund Hayes, and Thomas L. McCarr, “Annual Meeting,” Morning Oregonian, June 10, 1887, p. 5.


29. “City — Cricket,” Morning Oregonian, August 31, 1878, p. 3.


32. Effinger’s first name is not recorded in the 1878 report, but there were only two males of that surname living in Portland according to the 1880 Census; the other was advanced in years. An Effinger, presumably William, was named in the line-up for a Portland Cricket Club match in 1878; “Cricket Match,” Daily Oregonian, August 6, 1878, p. 4.


35. Ibid.; “Another Astoria Victory,” Morning Astorian, August 7, 1894, p. 4; “The Bonds of Matrimony,” Morning Astorian, September 8, 1895, p. 6. The latter makes reference only to the “Portland cricket team,” which may or may not indicate the club; the context (a wedding at which members turned out) was not a sporting one, and the absence of game reports from this period is noticeable. A report alongside it referring to an eleven of the Portland Amateur
Athletic Club playing a “championship cricket game” against a team from Astoria appears not to refer to Portland’s cricket club.


39. “Cricket Colts Beaten,” Oregonian, May 16, 1910, p. 8; “Cricket Club Sees Good Year Ahead,” Oregon Daily Journal, November 11, 1912, p. 12. After working with Wells Fargo, Cumming joined Union Pacific, where he was promoted at least twice. See “Editorials on News,” Evening Herald (Klamath Falls), March 23, 1934, p. 4; Coos Bay Times, July 2, 1940, p. 6. For Cumming’s captaincy (and Gjedsted’s vice-captaincy), see “Portland Crackers Are Planning a Tour of British Columbia,” Oregon Sunday Journal, March 9, 1913, p. 23. Charles Edward Gjedsted made captain in the Oregon National Guard by 1917, and was a major by the time of his resignation in 1925. “Recruiting Under Way at Pendleton,” Oregon Sunday Journal, May 20, 1917, p. 12; “O.N.G. Officer Quits,” The News-Review (Roseburg), February 2, 1925, p. 5. Gjedsted appears to have resigned after being demoted by the adjutant-general — soon after, he publicly accused the adjutant-general of submitting “irregular” mileage vouchers, a charge that he later recanted and said was filed in an attempt to get revenge for his demotion. An investigation into the charges concluded, “due to his condition of mental distress, Mr. Gjedsted is more to be pitied than censured and your committee will make no further comment upon the man’s conduct in trying to besmirch the good name of his employer through a desire for revenge.” “Probes Exonerate Adjutant-General,” Sunday Oregonian, February 8, 1925, p. 10; “General White Cleared,” Morning Oregonian, February 20, 1925, p. 8. My sincere thanks to Helen Ryan for this reference. His household goods were advertised as to be sold by auction the following month. Capital Journal (Salem), March 5, 1925, p. 8.


48. “Time Too Short For Crackers To Finish,” Daily Oregon Statesman (Salem),
June 20, 1911, p. 7. The team is implied to be a bona fide cricket club at this time, though the absence of further references seems to suggest it was a casual offshoot of the short-lived Salem Rambiers baseball team. "Salem Boys Win," Morning Oregonian, June 15, 1905, p. 7.


49. See, for example, Portland’s five-wicket victory against a team from the steamship Suveric; “Cricketers Win From Boat Crew,” Oregon Daily Journal, July 25, 1909, p. 14.

50. See, for example, “Seattle is Winner of Cricket Contest,” Oregon Daily Journal, July 6, 1914, p. 9.


54. “Cricket Match Off; Material Not Here,” Eugene Guard, June 5, 1918, p. 6. “Cricket Match Held,” Eugene Guard, June 12, 1918, p. 5. Sheehy was a keen baseball player who later turned out for the baseball team of the Portland Telegram; George Stanley Turnbull, ed., Oregon Exchanges 4:4 (June 1921), 29.


59. The Turner movement, of which the Portland Social Turnverein was a manifestation, came to prominence in the 1850s, as large numbers of immigrants from Germany who crossed the Atlantic in the aftermath of the failed revolution of 1848 established Turnverein clubs in order to practice physical exercise and for social and cultural reasons. The Portland Social Turnverein sold its Turnhalle in 1946, by which time the organization had become dormant; “History,” German American Society of Portland, http://www.germanamerican.org/history.html (accessed June 27, 2019). Sarah Trudy Flores, “Portland-Seattle Turnverein Special Train,” Oregon History Project, https://oregonhistoryproject.org/articles/historical-records/portland-seattle-turnverein-special-train/ (accessed June 7, 2019).