



The development of organised football in Scotland: 1824–1875

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Declaration

I declare that the content of this thesis is my own original work. It has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification. Where other sources have been consulted, the relevant authors have been clearly acknowledged and referenced.

Richard McBrearty

Abstract

In the present day, organised forms of football can easily be found in communities throughout Scotland. For the rugby and association codes, visitor attractions at Hampden Park and Murrayfield Stadium help to tell the story of how the modern versions of each sport were developed in Scotland, from the early international matches of the 1870s into the billion pound industry of the twenty-first century.

What is less well known, is the history of organised football in Scotland decades before the arrival of the two dominant codes. Many of the early football histories within the United Kingdom considered football in the early part of the nineteenth century to be an unruly 'mob' game which was increasingly censured and inevitably died out. Such accounts argue that these wild and outmoded games were 'civilised' decades later, by the elite schools and universities who provided rules and regulations. However, whilst the elite institutions had an important role to play, there were wider influences on the development of organised football throughout the nineteenth century.

This thesis discusses the existence of older organised football traditions which predated the modern codes. The research also sheds light on the process of transition, particularly for the association game, which saw football teams and football players connected to traditional games adapt to the newer and more structured form of the sport. A study of football club members during the late 1860s and early 1870s forms part of the process.

An examination of the development of football clubs, commencing with the oldest documented club of 1824 and concluding with several mapping projects up to 1875, provide an unprecedented insight into the organisation and development of football in Scotland during a crucial period which witnessed the end of the traditional era of football and the beginning of the modern age.

Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful to my supervisors, Professor Richard Haynes and Dr Jacqueline Jenkinson, not only with respect to their considerable support and guidance over the past four years but also in terms of their patience and kindness.

Although the initial idea behind the thesis can be traced back to 2021 and the author's participation at the annual conference of the British Society of Sports Historians at St Mary's University in Twickenham, the beginning of my interest in the subject stretches back a further two decades. In 1999, when joining the Scottish Football Museum, two of my earliest tasks were to research the origins of football in Scotland and provide a general analysis of the evolution of team formations, player positions and playing styles in association football. I am very grateful to colleagues past and present who encouraged and even supported my interest in these areas. It is fair to say that the wholehearted support of the Chair of trustees and the museum board was vital for me to contemplate taking on this thesis four years ago, and I am therefore greatly indebted to them and to Neal Ross the museum's CEO.

Whilst I have been fortunate to have received so much support over the years, I would particularly like to thank Roy Hay and Neil Tranter for their encouragement and advice during the crucial early months of working on the thesis. Also, Gary James and Wray Vamplew, who introduced me to the fantastic International Football History Conference which has provided an important platform for developing research ideas for this thesis. I am very grateful for the support of sports historian Andy Mitchell, whose sound advice and expertise helped me to navigate the very challenging area of researching hundreds of early football club members for the chapter on social class composition. I am fortunate to have been able to rely upon the wise counsel of Ken Gibb with respect to the subject of regimental history and the military volunteer movement during the nineteenth century. I must also thank Richard Young for sharing his immense knowledge with respect to the close links between football and cricket in the west of Scotland region.

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Contents

Title page	1
Declaration	2
Abstract	3
Acknowledgements	4
Table of contents	5
List of Figures	6
Glossary of Terms	8
Introduction	9
Chapter 1	
Growth or Decline? An analysis of organised football activity: 1824-1859	39
Chapter 2	
Towards a uniform game. The establishment of the dominant codes: 1860–1873	78
Chapter 3	
Early football club memberships. The composition of social class: 1868–1873	130
Chapter 4	
Continuity and Reinvention. Glasgow and the rise of the modern association game: 1873-1875	163
Conclusion	201
Primary resources	206
Bibliography	210
Appendices	226

List of Figures

Figure 0.1. Biographical details of Alexander Glen, Renton FC.	12
Figure 0.2. Transcript from British League of Juvenile Abstainers, 1852.	13
Figure 1.1. Examples of decline in football activity, 1791-1867.	42
Figure 1.2. Carse, Alexander (1818), <i>The Village Ba' Game</i> .	46
Figure 1.3. Foot-Ball Club (1824–1831) Expenses of the Foot-Ball Club.	48
Figure 1.4. Breakdown of football team activity in Scotland based on Harvey's methodology, 1830–1859.	56
Figure 1.5. General grouping of football teams (including football clubs) listed by Type, 1830-1859.	58
Figure 1.6. Individual breakdown of football teams (including football clubs) listed by Type, 1830-1859.	58
Figure 1.7. Regularity of football activity (including football clubs), 1830-1859.	59
Figure 1.8. Football Medallion, 1851.	63
Figure 1.9. Springkell House, Dumfriesshire.	68
Figure 2.1. General grouping of football teams (excluding football clubs) listed by Type, 1860-1873.	88
Figure 2.2. Individual breakdown of football teams (excluding football clubs) listed by Type, 1860-1873.	91
Figure 2.3. Regularity of football activity 1860-1873 (excluding football clubs).	93
Figure 2.4a. Geographical locations of clubs linked to rugby football in Scotland, 1860-1873.	96
Figure 2.4b. Geographical locations of clubs linked to association football in Scotland, 1860-1873.	96
Figure 2.5. Ordnance Survey map of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links.	99
Figure 2.6. Cricket's close links with the association and rugby variations of football.	107
Figure 2.7. Map depicting Glasgow University's college green (surveyed 1856-57).	118

Figure 3.1. Glasgow's Tradeston district from an ordinance survey map published in 1897.	133
Figure 3.2a. Class composition of club members (association football).	135
Figure 3.2b. Class composition of club members (rugby football).	135
Figure 3.2c. Class composition of club members (playing to both codes).	136
Figure 3.3. Comparison of servants to households.	138
Figure 3.4. Migration of club members linked to the 1871 census.	140
Figure 3.5a. Birthplace of parents compared with location of association club members in 1871 census.	141
Figure 3.5b. Birthplace of parents compared with location of rugby club members in 1871 census.	142
Figure 3.5c. Birthplace of parents compared with location of club members playing to both codes in 1871 census.	142
Figure 3.6. Ordinance Survey Map detailing the village of Renton in Dunbartonshire (from a survey taken in 1914 and published in 1923).	148
Figure 3.7. An image of the original Deaf and Dumb Institution building at Mount Florida.	150
Figure 3.8. A view of Edinburgh's affluent Stockbridge and New Town districts from an 1894 survey.	152
Figure 3.9. Association football clubs in the Vale of Leven district by 1873.	157
Figure 3.10. Social class composition of football club members from the Vale of Leven district.	158
Figure 3.11. Geographical proximity of members to their clubs.	159
Figure 4.1. Sheffield football map detailing outlying areas.	169
Figure 4.2. Glasgow football map detailing outlying areas.	170
Figure 4.3. Tally of clubs recorded in and around Glasgow (irrespective of playing code), compared with tally of clubs recorded in and around Sheffield, 1867–1875.	173
Figure 4.4. Tally of clubs recorded in and around Glasgow (linked to association football), compared with tally of clubs recorded in and around Sheffield, 1867–1875.	174
Figure 4.5. Comparison of new association football clubs formed in Glasgow and surrounding area with that of new football clubs in Sheffield and surrounding area, 1873–1875.	174
Figure 4.6. Airey's Railway Map of Scotland, 1875. Featuring Glasgow and the west of Scotland region.	184
Figure 4.7. Ordinance Survey Map detailing the Woodlands district of Glasgow from a survey taken in 1858.	188
Figure 4.8. Detail of Glasgow Green, showing Flesher's Haugh and King's Park, from the Ordinance Survey map of 1858.	193

Glossary of Terms

In order to put forward a clear and consistent argument with respect to the development of organised football in Scotland, some key terms that appear in this thesis as well as in wider studies relating to the origins of football in the nineteenth century need to be explained. A short list of definitions for key terms are provided below, followed by some brief explanations, to ensure that the meaning behind each term is clearly understood within the context of the arguments being made by the author within the thesis.

Modern Football (Modern Game)

The late nineteenth century establishment of dominant football cultures characterised by universally applied playing rules and standardised playing methods.

Traditional Football (Traditional Game)

Structured forms of football activity which either predate, or are not connected to, the dominant football cultures.

Mob or Folk Football (Mob or Folk Game)

Looser forms of football activity, often unruly in nature and lacking in structure, regulation and strategy.

Football Team

A group of players who join together to play football against an opposing group of players.

Football Club

An organisation established for the purpose of arranging football games.

With respect to the study of football teams and football clubs, a basic framework of criteria has been established which is set out on p. 55 of the thesis. The criteria list individual examples of evidence that distinguish organised football activity from the mass participation 'mob' football contests. The mob contests are judged to involve more than 70 players on either side (see p. 60).

Introduction

Then let the pretty passing game
Aye lustre shed on Scotia's name,
And bring her still a wider fame,
And brighter glory;
That brither Scots, whaur'e'r their hame,
May tell her story.¹

The poem titled 'Passing Game' first appeared in print in the 1889-90 edition of the *Scottish Football Annual*. The final stanza (reproduced above) conveys a message of pride in a playing style which had been instrumental in transforming the association game.

However, whilst the poem in its entirety presents a fairly upbeat message, it is also one of defiance as it was written during a period of uncertainty within the Scottish association game. Much of this insecurity was centred on developments over the border.

Professionalism had been legalised in England a few years earlier and this was followed by the creation of the world's first football league in 1888. The amateur game in Scotland was greatly affected by these developments. By 1889, Scottish players, many of whom could be considered to be fine exponents of the passing game, were heading across the border in a steady flow. The poem, therefore, speaks of "Saxon freens" providing temptation "wi' their glittering gold". The reaction to this development by the Scottish Football Association was a ban on Anglo Scots playing for the national team. This, at a stroke, removed many of the finest Scottish players of the era. The national team, which had lost only twice in the previous 16 matches against England (and which had handed out some heavy defeats along the way) would experience a rapid change in fortune; the reverberations surrounding England's comprehensive 5-0 victory in Glasgow in 1888 were echoed in many of the Scottish newspapers.²

This short but evocative statement was quoted by the author for a book which accompanied the football exhibition, *More than a game: how Scotland shaped world football*, which opened at Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in 2013.³ It can be said that this thesis has its roots in research conducted by the author both for the exhibition and in the years beforehand. However, the timeframe for the 2013 museum exhibition was much longer. The exhibition, for example, brought together a preserved football from Stirling

¹ Forward (1889) The passing game. In: McDowell, J. K. ed. *Scottish football annual*, 1889-90. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co., p. 26.

² The *Glasgow Evening Post*, for example, lamented that, "In Scotland the defeat is one unequalled in the annals of the International contest. It is a very Flodden of football" (see, Anonymous (1888) *Glasgow Evening Post*, 19 March, p. 4),

³ See, McBrearty, R. (2013) *More than a game: how Scotland shaped world football*. Glasgow: Glasgow Museums, p. 22.

Castle (dating from c.1540) and a silver football medallion won by the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders in 1851 as well as exploring the early development of the association game in Scotland and the role of the Scottish diaspora in helping to influence the game in different parts of the world. More recently, in 2022, the author was responsible for securing funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Museums Galleries Scotland for a multi-strand project titled *Football for All! Celebrating 600 years of football in Scotland*. This project provided a platform from which to highlight the origins of football in Scotland. It also involved collaboration with governing bodies and historic clubs from both the association and rugby game in Scotland. This culminated in the creation of a web-based 'origins of football' timeline which highlights significant milestones, from the earliest recorded evidence from 1424 up to the events of 1873 when the national governing bodies for the two dominant codes were instituted.⁴ The specific areas of research which supported the physical exhibition of 2013 and the virtual timeline of 2022 was drawn from a much larger database resource which has been compiled by the author. As will be explained in the section on methodology, the wealth of primary source information contained within the *Origins of Football in Scotland* database has been forensically analysed and interpreted. This process has been crucial for setting out the methodological framework for the thesis and helping to identify the key arguments which underpin the main thesis objectives.

The Principal Arguments

This thesis undertakes a comprehensive analysis of organised football with six key areas being identified which highlight major developments across the period. First, the thesis adds new evidence to challenge the longstanding hypothesis that an eradication of organised football activity occurred during the early decades of the nineteenth century. Whilst some efforts have been made with respect to challenging this viewpoint in England, this thesis marks the first time that a detailed study has been conducted on the subject in Scotland. The findings confirm that the notion of a major decline in football activity in Scotland during the early decades of the nineteenth century has been considerably exaggerated. Second, the thesis challenges the generalised view that football games associated with annual customs and festivals such as Shrove Tuesday, Handsel Monday and New Year's Day, were exclusively 'mob' or 'folk' games (unruly, even violent contests, lacking in structure).

Whilst there is certainly ample evidence of mob games in Scotland being linked to annual customs, a targeted study of small sided and structured activity within this thesis has thrown up numerous examples of more structured and tactical games being connected to annual customs. Third, the thesis presents new data alongside existing published evidence⁵ to

⁴ See, Scottish Football Museum (2024) *Scotland's Football Origins, 1424-1873*. Available at: <https://www.scottishfootballmuseum.org.uk/football-for-all/scotlands-football-origins/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

⁵ Tranter's 1993 journal article on John Hope's Foot-Ball Club was followed up by Hutchinson and Mitchell with their more substantial work in 2018, while Harvey found evidence of organised games being

emphasize the early development of organised football in Edinburgh from the mid-1820s through to the mid-1850s (this was prior to the arrival of the rugby code at Edinburgh Academy). This material highlights the continuation of traditional forms of organised football activity in the city (separate from the rugby game) up to the arrival of the association code in December 1873. Fourth, the thesis argues that the association game in Scotland had a notable working class presence from the very beginning. This conclusion has been reached as a result of prosopographical studies involving hundreds of early association football club members. Fifth, the research demonstrates the existence of a formal association football subculture in Glasgow by 1873 which facilitates the subsequent surge in the number of clubs. In order to make this case, definitions for informal and formal subcultures have been established for the first time. Finally, a detailed study of playing styles in the early association game concludes that Queen's Park FC played a crucial role in transforming the way that association football was played.

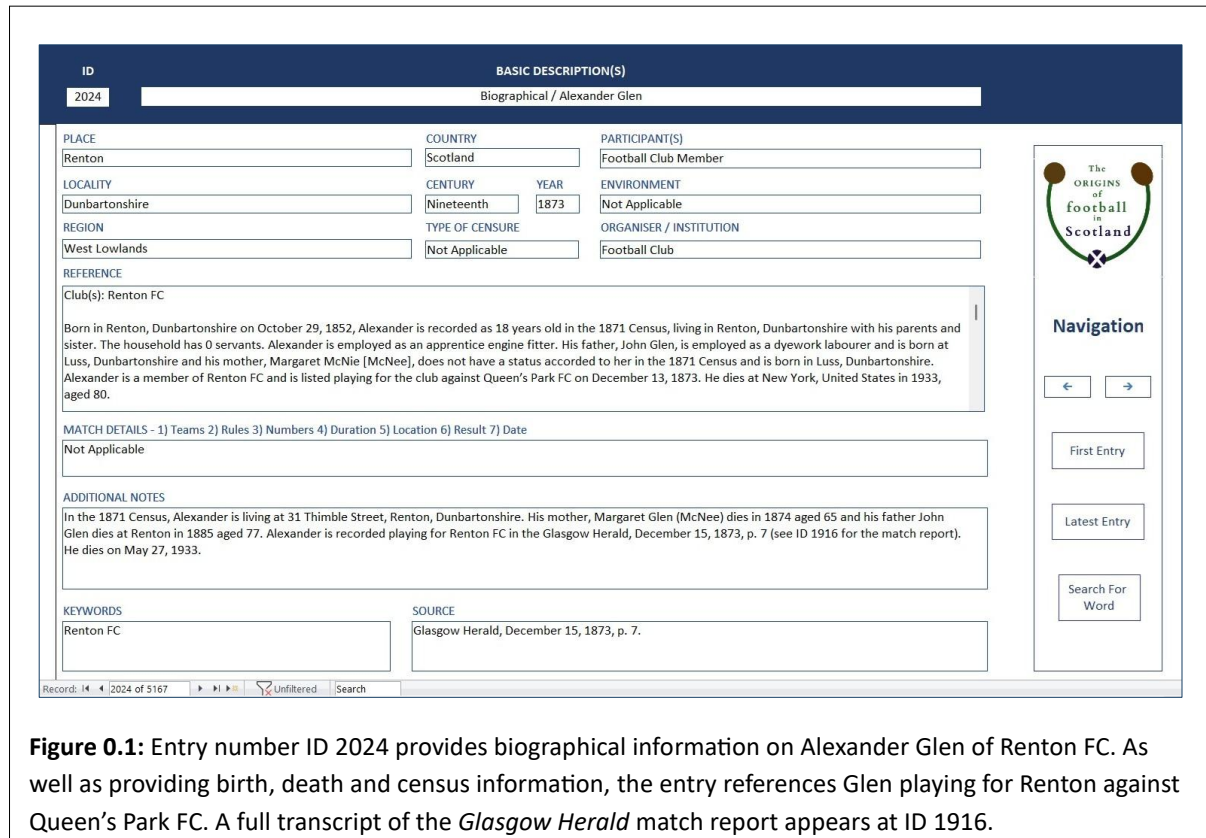
Sources and Methods

Although the thesis has developed over the past four years, much of the primary source research has been gathered over a much longer period of time. In 2000, the author started work on a project to document football related references in Scotland from the earliest known recorded examples in the fifteenth century up to 1873. In 2026, with over 5,000 entries, the *Origins of Football in Scotland* database is extensive, providing unparalleled access to targeted data taken from a wide range of sources. The assortment of archives and rare published material that appear as transcripts within the database have been taken from the collections of football clubs, national governing bodies, university special collections, private schools, and libraries, museums and archive services (at local and national level). The digital holdings of the British Newspaper Archive have also been extensively consulted. The thesis also draws on findings from multiple archives and libraries in Glasgow and Edinburgh, as well as repositories in Dunbartonshire, Kilmarnock, Stirling, Stranraer and London.

This body of work has adopted a mixed methods approach including close reading of sources, discourse analysis in particular of newspaper content; and prosopography, through the creation of hundreds of biographies of individuals linked to football activity. This last method involved extracting linked information on individual players from their census returns, as well as birth and death certificates, newspaper reports and football club minute books. An example of this can be found in Figure 0.1, which provides a screenshot of entry

played in Edinburgh in 1841 by teams formed around occupation. See, Tranter, N. L. (1993) 'The first football club?', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 10(1), pp. 104–107. Hutchinson, J. and Mitchell, A. (2018) *1824: the world's first football club: John Hope and the Edinburgh footballers; a story of sport, education and philanthropy*. Dunblane: Andy Mitchell Media. Harvey, A. (2005) *Football: the first hundred years: the untold story*. London: Routledge, pp. 60-61.

number ID 2024, containing biographical details of Alexander Glen of Renton FC including reference to a match report. These in-depth case studies of footballers and football clubs are analysed in Chapter 3 to explore the significance of social class in early Scottish football



development. Record linkage has been used to supplement individual examples of football activity with relevant information from other sources. This can be seen, for example, with Figure 0.2 which shows a screenshot of entry number ID 743 (the information within ID 743 forms one of the entries in Appendix 1). This entry provides a transcript of a section of the programme of events for the excursion of the British League of Juvenile Abstainers to Hopetoun House in 1852. As can be seen in the 'additional notes' section of this entry, supplementary information taken from a newspaper source has been reproduced within the database and is connected to the excursion.

The hundreds of individual examples of organised football activity (linked to teams and clubs) which can be found in Appendix 1 through to Appendix 7 have all been extracted from the author's *Origins of Football in Scotland* database. The scope of the

ID 743 **BASIC DESCRIPTION(S)** Football Games / Programme of Events / Temperance Movement / British League of Juvenile Abstainers / Annual Excursion

PLACE Hopetoun House (near South Queensferry)	COUNTRY Scotland	PARTICIPANT(S) Young People / British League of Juvenile Abstainers
LOCALITY West Lothian	CENTURY Nineteenth	YEAR 1852
REGION East Lowlands	TYPE OF CENSURE Not Applicable	ENVIRONMENT Estate Grounds
		ORGANISER / INSTITUTION Juvenile Abstainers

REFERENCE
Programme of Events with instructions for the Hopetoun House pleasure excursion - "20. When the refreshment is over, the bugle will sound, and you will all resume your places at the poles, with your Superintendents, who will then proceed with you to the grounds for the games. 21. The Games for the females will consist of Hoops, Skipping-ropes, Balls &c., &c.; and the Games for the males will consist of Foot-ball, Cricket, Hand-ball, Leap-frog, Cross-tig, Races, Kites &c., &c... It is also hoped a small Balloon may ascend each day. 22. The Boys are particularly reminded that the space for each game of Foot-ball will be indicated by poles – that they of each game must endeavour to confine the ball within that space – that the ball must be driven between the poles – that it is "poor play" to kick the ball out of bounds, but that when that occurs, it must be picked up and carried within bounds again. 23. Mr Hope requests that no physical force be employed, but that the law of kindness be used, and none other, in keeping order."

MATCH DETAILS - 1) Teams 2) Rules 3) Numbers 4) Duration 5) Location 6) Result 7) Date
Not Applicable

ADDITIONAL NOTES
From the Programme of Events, British League of Juvenile Abstainers (formed by John Hope in 1847). Special Papers of the British League of Abstainers - 31st July for the females. 3rd August for the males. The excursions were organised by John Hope and hosted by the 6th Earl of Hopetoun at Hopetoun House. An article in the Christian News, July 29, 1852, p. 1. (see ID 4347), states that "...Mr John Hope is to have meetings with the juveniles in different parts of the town, to arrange as to the games, and to form the lads into football parties..."

KEYWORDS
Poles, playing rules, British League of Juvenile Abstainers, patronage, Earl of Hopetoun, John Hope

SOURCE
British League of Juvenile Abstainers (1848–1866) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. John Hope Archive, GD253/181/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

The ORIGINS of football in Scotland

Navigation

← →

First Entry

Latest Entry

Search For Word

Record: 14 743 of 5167 Unfiltered Search

Figure 0.2: Entry number ID 743 in the *Origins of Football in Scotland* database is a transcript of a section of the British League of Juvenile Abstainers' programme of events from their excursion to Hopetoun House in 1852. This section highlights the meticulous planning with respect to the organisation of the games.

database is broad. It incorporates a wide variety of references to football, ranging from numerous types of legislation (aimed at curbing activity) and extracts of poetry and literature, to details of club committee meetings and football match reports. The database has enabled an analysis of patterns of organised football activity. For instance, this rich evidence base formed the basis of research for a chapter by the author on the origins of women's and girl's football which appeared in Skillen et al. (2025).⁶ The principal arguments that are presented within this thesis contribute to the wider academic debate on the subject of organised football development during the nineteenth century. A detailed review of literature is provided which sets out the main discussion points within the academic debate. This section also examines the most recent historiography relating to the origins of football in Scotland.

⁶ See, McBrearty, R. (2025) 'Setting the scene: the origins story of women's football in Scotland', In: Skillen, F., Byrne, H., and James, G. eds. *Histories of women's football in Britain and Ireland*. Oxford: Peter Lang, pp. 1-24.

Review of literature pertaining to organised football in nineteenth century Scotland

Overview and Approach

The historiography of the development of football as an organised activity from the early nineteenth century up to the mid-1870s has to date largely been viewed from an Anglo-centric perspective. Over the last quarter of a century an energised, if at times fractious, debate on the subject has produced a long running series of articles which occasionally have touched upon evidence relating to activity in Scotland. Whilst specific content relating to Scotland does exist, with the exception of works by Taylor and Swain,⁷ it has been largely limited to a handful of dedicated articles and occasional references in other papers and books (Goulstone, 2000, Harvey, 2001, 2005, Kitching, 2011, 2015, Swain, 2014a, 2014b, 2015a, 2016). The subject of football in Glasgow has merited inclusion as a chapter in three publications (Sanders, 2010, T. Collins, 2019 and Curry, 2020) and most recently is included by the Sheffield Home of Football organisation as part of their analysis of football passing in Britain in the nineteenth century (J. P. Wilson et al., 2025).

Within the modern era of academic debate, the earliest contributions relating to Scotland are from Tranter who provided important early studies into organised sport, including football, across Scotland incorporating specific case studies for central Scotland (Tranter 1987, 1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1998). Tranter also wrote the first academic article on the Football Club of 1824 which was founded by John Hope (Tranter, 1993). More recently, valuable contributions have been made on early football activity in Edinburgh (Hutchinson, 2007, 2008), the west of Scotland (McDowell, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014b) and specifically on Hope's Football Club (Hutchinson and Mitchell, 2018), adding new information to the original article by Tranter. It is noteworthy, however, that within the general UK debate, references to Hope's Football Club are limited. Mention of this organisation, which is the earliest documented football club in the world, is acknowledged by only a handful of academics and writers (Harvey 2005, 2016, G. Hughes, 2009, Sanders, 2010, Curry, 2011, T. Collins, 2019).

A plausible reason for this neglect is the fact that much of the twenty-first century academic debate on the early history of football has been internalised within England and based around opposing hypotheses which were categorised by Taylor as being orthodox and revisionist (Taylor, 2008). There have been a number of exceptions; several articles and some

⁷ See, Taylor, M. (2008) *The association game: A history of British football*. Abingdon: Routledge, and, Swain, P. (2020) *The emergence of football: sport, culture and society in the nineteenth century*. London: Routledge.

books have sought to introduce international perspectives to the origins of football debate (Goldblatt 2008, Hay, 2010, 2014, 2018, Syson, 2018, Hay, Harvey and Smith, 2015, T. Collins, 2019). However, the framing of the debate for the first two decades of the twenty-first century, is perhaps best encapsulated in the following view expressed by Curry,

It is generally accepted that the initial development of the modern game of football took place in England in the early and middle years of the nineteenth century (Curry, 2004: p. 30).

Within this context, a challenge posed for a review of literature pertaining to the study of organised football activity in Scotland has been to find sufficient academic work on this topic. An inevitable outcome of this position is that much of the critique within this review is based on the historiographical debate surrounding the game in England.

The origins of football debate has thrown up several interesting theories which merit examination within the context of a study of football activity in Scotland. In particular, the notion of older forms of football being connected to the modern codes through a process of 'continuity'. This idea was first mooted by Holt⁸ and is echoed by Swain in much of his analysis. The arguments linking public school influence to the emerging code of association football are well documented. However, as Swain asks, does the swift uptake of association football by youths within the wider population demonstrate a continuation of football activity? (Swain, 2015b, p. 632). This thesis will explore that argument in reference to the football 'surge' experienced in Glasgow and the west of Scotland in the aftermath of the first official international match under association rules in 1872. This argument has already been touched upon in the author's 2021 paper (McBrearty, 2021).

Furthermore, wider theories from academics who have sought to distance themselves from the schismatic nature of much of the debate also need to be considered. This includes the argument made by Tony Collins that the development of association football, rather than evolving from earlier traditional games was in effect 'reinvented' in the last third of the nineteenth century (T. Collins, 2019: pp. 14-15). In addition, Kitching argues that greater emphasis should be placed on football play and playing styles when analysing organised football activity as well as acknowledging the already well-developed study into football rules and codification (Kitching, 2011). As previously explained, a secondary point for this chapter will be to briefly analyse key aspects of the wider academic debate on the development of organised football, including material which does not focus specifically on Scottish activity, because these arguments can be considered at a later point within this study with respect to a parallel analysis of developments within Scotland.

⁸ See, Holt, R. (1986) 'Working-class football and the city: the problem of continuity', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 3(1), pp. 5-17, and, Holt, R. (1998) Football and the urban way of life in nineteenth-century Britain. In: Mangan, J. A. ed. *Pleasure, Profit and Proselytism*. London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, pp. 67-85.

The historiography of Scotland's football origins

The starting point for this chapter is to identify and explore key existing publications relating to the subject of organised football development in Scotland between 1824 and 1875. This timeframe has been selected as it spans a crucial era in the development of organised football in Scotland, commencing with the establishment of the first documented football club and concluding with the emergence of the two dominant football codes. The following works have been included because their content falls within the timeframe of the thesis and they, in the main, provide general insight into areas which will be examined in some detail by this body of work.

An important article which relates to the historiography of football in Scotland is McDowell's paper from 2014 (McDowell, 2014a). Coming in the wake of an article by Harvey which examined the historiographical debate relating to the emergence of football in nineteenth century England (Harvey, 2013), a key point made by McDowell when examining the range and extent of publications relating to the pre-1914 period was that "the historiography of the pre-Great War Scottish game still suffers in comparison with its counterparts in other areas of the British Isles" (McDowell, 2014a: p. 2122). For example, McDowell notes that prior to the 1970s, pre-War US scholar Francis P. Magoun was the only academic to significantly analyse the origins of football in Scotland (McDowell, 2014a: p. 2123) with his paper on 'Scottish Popular Football' which featured in the *American Historical Review* and his chapter on 'Popular Football in Scotland' which formed part of his wider study into the history of football up to 1871 (Magoun, 1931, 1938). The limited academic scrutiny that exists, with respect to the subject of Scotland's football origins, presents an ideal opportunity for this thesis to uncover new evidence and make a valuable contribution to the origins debate.

There have been some notable contributions which predate McDowell's article on the historiography of football in Scotland and which merit some consideration. For example, Vamplew's study of professional sport in Britain (Vamplew, 2010) although primarily focused on the period from 1875 to 1914, devotes significant time to earlier periods for the development of sport as an organised activity.⁹ Building in part on the work of Tranter, Vamplew's focus on economic as well as social influences allows for a broader investigation of the evolution of sport into the highly regulated and commercialised 'industry' of the last two decades of the nineteenth century. His examination of the period running from 1830 to 1875 acknowledges the role of the temperance movement and its use of 'rational recreation' as "a counterattraction to rougher, less respectable activities" (Vamplew, 2010: p. 46). This subject is one that the thesis will address in some detail. In the same year Sanders,

⁹ See, Vamplew, W. (2010) *Pay up and play the game: professional sport in Britain, 1875-1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. In particular, Chapter Four: Sporting activities and economic change, 1750-1830, pp. 33-43, and Chapter Five: The precursors of commercialised sport, 1830-1875, pp. 44-50.

a writer and film maker, produced *Beastly Fury: The Strange Birth of British Football* (Sanders, 2010). Sanders' approach is somewhat different from most of the previous authors in that he looks at the subject thematically and includes a chapter on women's football, up to that point a subject otherwise neglected in books which examined the general history of football.¹⁰ He was also the first in the post millennial period to devote a chapter in his book to the city of Glasgow.¹¹ A notable contribution made by Sanders within his publication is to firmly acknowledge Glasgow's pioneering role in the development of the association game during the 1870s, particularly with respect to Queen's Park's innovative approach to playing the game. Indeed, the chapter which examines the contribution of the Scottish city is titled, 'How Glasgow Invented the Beautiful Game' (Sanders, 2010: pp. 61-84). Looking more closely within this chapter, a notable contribution from Sanders, which this thesis builds upon, is to recognise the significance of the change to the Football Association's rule for offside in 1866 (which helped to open up forward passing) and connect it to the subsequent development of the passing game by Queen's Park FC (Sanders, 2010: p. 68).

Prior to his article on the historiography of football in Scotland, McDowell also published an article on 'Football, Migration and Industrial Patronage in the West of Scotland' (McDowell, 2012), followed by a major study into the early history of association football in the west of Scotland in 2013. (McDowell, 2013). The latter publication provides a detailed post-1865 account of the early proliferation of the association game in what is considered to be Scotland's traditional heartland region. The article from 2012 is of particular interest as McDowell, in examining the working-class credentials of the Airdrie Football Club of 1870, recognises the club's existence to be a "demonstration of the familiarity among the industrial working class with the no-hands code, and an argument against the middle-class 'diffusion' of the game" (McDowell, 2012: p. 408). This notion is examined in considerable detail in Chapter 3 of the thesis.

In 2015 Curry and Dunning collaborated on *Association Football: A Study in Figurational Sociology* (Curry and Dunning, 2015). An important addition to previous work, the book is firmly based on the 'figural approach' of Norbert Elias and reasserts the 'status rivalry' hypothesis. In many respects it shapes and is shaped by the origins of football debate of the era. Whilst Dunning and Curry provide much detail in the arguments surrounding the role of the public schools and English universities, particularly Eton College and Cambridge University, they also acknowledge the important place of Sheffield as the setting for an early football subculture. A chapter is devoted to the origins of football debate. As a study of association football in Britain, however, it does not provide much detail outside of England.

More recently, Swain's publication from 2020, titled *The emergence of football: sport, culture and society in the nineteenth century*, provides a fair amount of content with respect

¹⁰ See, Sanders, R. (2010) *Beastly fury: the strange birth of British football*. London: Bantam Press. Chapter 10: A most unfeminine exhibition, pp. 197-214.

¹¹ Sanders, R. (2010) *Beastly fury: the strange birth of British football*. London: Bantam Press, pp. 61-84.

to early examples of football activity in Scotland (Swain, 2020). This in part is down to Swain's discovery of *Football in Perthshire*, Baxter's impressive early study into the origins of football across the sprawling Scottish county (Baxter, 1898). Although Baxter's book is essentially a regionalised account of football, it provides numerous case studies of local football activity based to a significant degree on the first-hand testimonies of elderly residents. It provides an overarching study of football activity from the pre-codified period of the earlier part of the nineteenth century to the subsequent emergence of the association and rugby games during the last couple of decades. Swain's inclusion of a selection of examples from Baxter's book has therefore contributed fresh Scottish content within the contemporary UK debate.

As introduced earlier, Glasgow has been part of a focus of two recent publications which provide a general analysis of the causes behind the development of football into the modern regulated game. Tony Collins looks more broadly at several football codes including a chapter on women's football, while Curry looks specifically at the development of association football (T. Collins, 2019, Curry, 2020). Both books include a chapter devoted to the rise of association football in Glasgow. Whilst Collins' chapter, titled 'Glasgow: Football Capital of the Nineteenth Century', largely concentrates on the experience of the city in the years leading on from 1873 there are other important points raised such as the impact of the first official association international match in acting as a 'catalyst' for the subsequent surge in popularity (T. Collins, 2019: p. 48). Curry delves more deeply into the third quarter of the nineteenth century for his chapter, 'Glasgow: From Whimper to Crescendo' (Curry, 2020: pp. 120-142). His core argument differs from Tony Collins in that he contends that there was limited organised football activity in Glasgow prior to 1874. Curry's hypothesis is based on a comparative study of newspapers in Glasgow, Sheffield and London.

Key themes within the 'origins debate'

Several of the themes that have been identified by the author as being key areas within this thesis, form part of the wider origins of football debate and are examined here in some detail. Two important areas to consider are 1) discussions surrounding the perceived decline in football activity in the first half of the nineteenth century and 2) attempts to define the various forms of football activity prior to the emergence of the dominant codes. With respect to the subject of decline, Swain's detailed analysis of football activity between 1818 and 1859, published in a series of four journal articles, provides a wealth of new examples of football activity outside of the public schools (Swain, 2014a, 2014b, 2015a, 2015b). A key argument put forward by Swain is to address "the alleged disappearance of football in the wider community in mid-century... not least because of the rapid expansion in the game amongst the lower and middle class from the 1870s onwards" (Swain, 2014b: p. 2212). Curry and Dunning accept that Swain's unearthing of many examples of football activity proves that "the game was thriving more than conventional football histories would have us

believe". However, they argue that the new discoveries of football activity are little more than "kick-about" played by "participants of minimal influence" (Curry and Dunning, 2016: p. 240). To Curry and Dunning, the role of the leading public schools and Cambridge University in the codification of rules remains centrally important with respect to the development of modern football.

In recent decades, historians have sought to distinguish between different types of football activity dating back to the early decades of the nineteenth century. For example, writing as early as 2000, Goulstone classifies all forms of traditional football activity outside of the public schools and universities as "folk games". However, within that general term he distinguishes between violent contests such as the "communal struggles of the Shrovetide football kind" and non-violent contests which he refers to as "normal football" (Goulstone, 2000: p. 136). Swain, when examining football activity in England in the 1810s and 1820s, emphasises a gradual transformation in the way that "mass folk football" is played due to the impact of preventative legislation which threatened to eradicate the games. According to Swain, this evolution resulted in "an organised winter game held in fields with a limited and agreed number of players together with a defined pitch" (Swain, 2014a: p. 524).

Hutchinson, when examining Glasgow, argues for "two traditions... happily coexisting side by side". He contextualises these as "the ancient and unruly game more akin to village folk football and the more refined, rational one with more rules and regulations..." (Hutchinson, 2008: p. 550). Writing in 2015, Hay, Harvey and Smith, whilst acknowledging a "long running dissenting strand of argument" with respect to the existence of "small sided, predominantly kicking games", nevertheless argue that there is still "a strong belief that most of the extant evidence points towards the role of some of the English public schools on preserving forms of football... while folk football died out under pressure from puritanism, industrialization, and urbanisation (Hay, Harvey and Smith, 2015: p. 156).

Another prominent area of debate is the subject of the social class composition of people involved in organising football activity from the early nineteenth century through to the 1870s. Goulstone, who was an early proponent of the importance of the role of the working class in the origins of modern football, states that "football itself came manifestly closer to the concept of a modern 'organized' sport within its popular working-class or 'folk' milieu than within that of the public schools and universities" (Goulstone, 2000: p. 135). Curry and Dunning, however, are robust in their view that the professional classes are dominant. For example, their examination of football in Nottinghamshire concludes by stating that "there is no dispute... about the existence of football in working class culture, but there needs to be an acceptance that former public schoolboys exerted more power and were more prominent in the game's development" (Curry and Dunning, 2017: p. 876). With respect to the football scene north of the border, McDowell's study of early association football clubs in Ayrshire, Lanarkshire and Glasgow, whilst acknowledging working class involvement, provides

evidence of significant levels of primarily middle class participation (McDowell, 2012: pp. 407-408).

The development of organised football in Edinburgh in the first half of the nineteenth century has also received some attention. For example, Hutchinson provides detail of the development of organised football activity in the city and connects this to progressive principles aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of sections of the populace. He goes as far as to claim that “the city saw some of the first practical examples in the world of the implementation, through football, of the ideals of the need for a balance between work and leisure, for both the elite of the private schools and for some of its poorer citizens” (Hutchinson, 2008: p. 563). The Foot-Ball Club of 1824 is forensically analysed by Hutchinson and Mitchell in their 2018 publication (Hutchinson and Mitchell, 2018), while Harvey notes the existence of occupation based football teams in 1841 as well as recording football games a decade later which involve the Edinburgh University Football Club, the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders and the Veterinary Football Club (Harvey, 2016, p. 275).

Many of the articles which examine the origins of football in the nineteenth century refer to the establishment of football ‘cultures’. This terminology is widely used when describing football as a local, regional and even national activity across much of the nineteenth century. Harvey, for example, refers to Sheffield possessing “the most important football culture that existed in the world during the 1850s and 1860s” (Harvey, 2005: p. 93). Swain speaks more generally of a “surprisingly widespread and robust footballing culture in mid-century Britain” (Swain, 2015b, p. 632), while Curry and Dunning attributes a game involving teams from Willoughby and Ancaster in Lincolnshire in 1862 as being an example “of a relatively organized footballing subculture outside the public school setting” (Curry and Dunning, 2017: p. 869). The author’s own unpublished paper on early football in Glasgow examines “the role of migration and immigration in the development of football cultures in the city prior to 1873” (McBrearty, 2021).

Tony Collins, when addressing the question of ‘continuity’ between older forms of organised football and the modern game of the 1890s, questions the loose application of ‘football culture’ as a definition,

...without a very precise and objective definition of ‘football culture’ the term is meaningless as a tool of historical analysis. Its use is highly misleading because it implies a seamless continuity between the wide variety of football games in the 1840s and commercial association football in the 1890s (T. Collins, 2015: p. 1135).

As mentioned earlier, an important objective within this thesis will be to provide a definition for the term ‘football subculture’ when analysing the development of organised football activity in Glasgow during the early 1870s.

Whilst much of the academic debate relating to the origins of organised football in the nineteenth century has focused on the codification of football, there have been some

studies which have focused on developments in playing styles and on-field tactics. Some literature, such as the aforementioned publication by Sanders, emphasises the role of Queen's Park with respect to the development of more advanced strategies during the early 1870s (Sanders, 2010: pp. 68-69). Kitching goes further with respect to connecting the progression of football tactics and strategies with wider developments. In particular, he argues that the beginning of local and national cup competitions in England and Scotland in the 1870s, as well as increasing the popularity of the association game, "were also powerful influences in the standardizing of code and play" (Kitching, 2015: p. 143). In tandem with this is the development of Scottish players around "Glasgow and Western Scotland" by the mid-1870s who used a combination of dribbling and passing to "compensate for their lack of height and weight by speed of movement – of both players and ball" (Kitching, 2015: p. 144). Jonathan Wilson acknowledges the "all-encompassing role" of Queen's Park FC in devising the short passing game "characterised by strings of short passes zig-zagging between the forward and half lines" (J. Wilson, 2009: p. 18). An alternative view to this is presented by J. P. Wilson et al. (2025: p. 265) who suggest that the development of passing and combination play in association football should be attributed to "the Sheffield game of football in 1865 and possibly as early as 1861". The contested debate around playing styles and team strategies is examined in this thesis.

Summary

This consideration of the historiography of Scotland's football origins has indicated that overall, the elements which claim to have a UK-wide focus, struggle to emerge from the prism of an Anglo-centric perspective. There are of course exceptions to the rule. For example, *The Association Game*, written by Taylor, attempts to analyse the development of football in each of the home nations, "emphasising the cultural peculiarities and diversity of the sport's history in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales", as well as from an overarching British perspective (Taylor, 2008: p. 12). Holt, in *Sport and the British*, acknowledges the traditional Anglo-centric coupling of 'Englishness' and 'Britishness' (Holt, 1990: p. 262). In fairness, amongst the academics involved in the origins of football debate it can be seen from the discussion of the works by Goulstone, Harvey, Kitching, Swain and Tony Collins, that these academics include examples of organised football activity relating to Scotland.

These works aside, Scotland is often overlooked. Partly this is because of the limited contributions of Scottish writers and others interested in the story of football in Scotland. As a subject, the origins and early development of association football and rugby football in Scotland does not yet have an equivalent to Mason's *Association Football and English Society* or Russell's *Football and the English*. (Mason, 1980, Russell, 1997). It could be argued that the scarcity of scholarly works relating to the development of organised football in Scotland from the 1820s to the 1870s has resulted in a limited recognition of Scotland's contribution within wider studies of British football. However, as alluded to earlier, this

limitation presents an opportunity for the findings promulgated in this thesis to break new ground and contribute to the wider debate.

A study of broader economic and social factors in Scotland, which will be addressed in this thesis, including the interlinked topics of demography, migration, urbanisation and industrialisation, seeks to identify paradigms and provide explanations for contrasting levels of organised football activity. Certainly, as will be seen, there are contemporary observations from the period under investigation that point to a decline of football in some areas of Scotland but there are also examples in other parts of the country which portray football as a popular activity. A geographical study of these areas linked to local economic and social factors aims to shed some light on these variations.

The economic and social context

In many respects the half century period under examination sits within a much broader economic and demographic timeframe in which Scotland transitioned from being primarily a rural and agrarian based society into a significantly urban and highly industrialised one. Scotland's population between 1801 and 1921 almost trebled in size, rising from 1,625,002 to 4,882,497. Within these figures, the relevant demographic statistics around the 52 year period show a remarkable increase of 60 percent from a starting point of 2,099,945 in 1821 to an end point of 3,360,018 in 1871 (Flinn, 1977: p. 302). If Scotland's population overall was experiencing significant growth, the movement of people into, around and out of the country makes the study a rather nuanced one. As will be demonstrated, the rise in population was far from evenly spread.

Overall, the central belt was the region which accounted for the largest areas of growth. According to M. Anderson, this area covered just 14 percent of Scotland's land surface, but had 37 percent of the country's population in 1755.¹² That figure rose to 47 percent by 1821 and 68 percent by 1911 (M. Anderson, 1992: p. 2). At the other end of the scale, the Highland region experienced the greatest loss of population, a phenomenon described by Devine as being a "sustained haemorrhage of people from 1755 to 1851" (Devine, 1988: p. 3). Whilst the central belt as a whole benefited, within this region the biggest benefactor of population growth appears to have been in the industrialising west of Scotland. Slaven, for example, points out that in "each decade from 1801 to 1871 the population in the west outpaced the growth of the other Scottish regions" (Slaven, 1975: p. 135).

While Scotland's population overall was increasing, demographic decline was clearly a major challenge for some regions. Temporary and permanent reductions in population levels

¹² M. Anderson defines the 'central belt' as incorporating the counties of Ayrshire, Dunbartonshire, Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Clackmannanshire, Stirlingshire, Fife and the Lothians as well as the city of Dundee. See, Anderson, M. (1992), the social implications of demographic change. In: Thompson, F. M. L. ed. *The Cambridge social history of Britain, 1750-1950*. Vol 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 2.

within these regions was clearly to the benefit of other parts of the country. This phenomenon may partly account for some of the contemporary observations, which will be examined later in this thesis, which refer to the decline of football as a recreational activity in specific areas of Scotland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In an era of profound economic and social change, local communities experiencing population decline inevitably would have lost a degree of their connection to older customs and traditions. A decline of sporting activities and cultural celebrations would inescapably erode the intangible sense of continuity within local life. However, a question which will be addressed in this thesis is whether migration acted as a tributary, directing a flow of cultural and sporting traditions into the rapidly expanding communities of urban and industrial Scotland.

Migration

A sizeable proportion of Scotland's population over the course of the nineteenth century was on the move. Devine points to the high levels of mobility in mid-nineteenth century Scotland; a study of the 1851 census shows that one third of the Scottish population had moved to another county from their place of birth (Devine, 1992: p. 7). The vast highland region was particularly impacted by migration although distinctions have been made between the southern and eastern areas where the economy was largely based on farming and the north and western crofting areas where the population was more closely connected to landholding. Building upon the work of Gray and Devine, Withers provides the following analysis:

The southern and eastern Highlands formed "a distinct demographic zone" able always to channel Highlanders to the industrial Lowlands whereas the north and west, a different zone, relieved population pressure through temporary migration and emigration (Withers, 1985: p. 412).

Withers indeed claimed that his own study of Highland migration to Dundee, Perth and Stirling substantiated existing studies for the West of Scotland region which argued that localised urban centres in the main, attracted Highland populations from connected Highland parishes.¹³ Devine's view is that certainly in 1851 and 1861 the "vast majority" of the Highland migration to Glasgow, Greenock, Paisley, Dundee, Perth and Stirling came from the "farming region" (Devine, 1988; p. 197).

When it comes to the study of Highland migration into the urban settlements of the central Lowlands it appears therefore that the majority came from neighbouring highland territories and territories within the farming region of the eastern Highlands. With respect to the development of football as an organised activity in Glasgow, the potential connections are notable. For example, three of the four founding members of Rangers Football Club

¹³ In particular, see, Lobban, R. D. (1971) 'The Irish community in Greenock in the nineteenth century', *Irish Geography*, 6(3), pp. 270-281.

originated from the Gareloch in Argyll,¹⁴ while a number of migrant football teams in Glasgow had links with communities situated close to the highland boundary line in Stirlingshire.¹⁵ Given these significant population movements, this thesis explores the contribution that migrants made to organised football development within the urbanised areas of lowland Scotland.

Irish migration to Scotland, although its history stretches back centuries, was a major phenomenon of the nineteenth century. Whilst the Great Famine (1845-1852) would understandably swell the numbers over the course of the late 1840s and early 1850s there was a longer-term pattern of Irish people moving to Scotland both on a permanent and a transitory basis along well-established routes (MacRaild, 2011: p. 54). Brenda Collins suggests that there were already 126,000 Irish born people living in Scotland in 1841 (B. Collins, 1991: p. 8) accounting for 4.8 percent of Scotland's population.¹⁶ The Great Famine led to particularly high levels of migration to Scotland. Brenda Collins has estimated that the number of Irish born people rose to 207,000 between 1851 and 1871 (B. Collins, 1991: p. 11). The impact of Irish migration to Scotland was significant even when looked at from the British experience as a whole; in 1871 "seven of the ten towns with the largest Irish communities in percentage terms were in Scotland" (Pooley, 1989: p. 63).

Throughout the period, there is widespread evidence of anger and resentment being levelled against Irish migrants, but this was particularly evident in the aftermath of the Great Famine. On arrival, the vast majority were forced into the squalor and overcrowded conditions of the poorest districts within Scotland's towns and cities. Tom Gallagher talks of the "yawning cultural gulf" between the Irish Catholic migrants and the native population (T. Gallagher, 1991: p. 21). Walker argues that Irish Catholic migrants formed a "community within a community" which in effect cut themselves off from "the mainstream of working-class aspiration" (Walker, 1972: p. 651). While this may have been true with respect to the relative lack of involvement in political radicalism within the labour movement, as a general notion, this can be challenged when exploring wider relationships between Irish migrant groups and Scottish society. What is noteworthy and will form part of the study of this thesis is that Irish migrants interacted with wider society when it came to organising and playing football games. This can be seen in New Monklands in Lanarkshire where Airdrie Football Club was formed primarily by local Irish Catholics in 1868. This team was prepared to

¹⁴ For an informative account of the early founders of Rangers FC, see, Ralston, G. (2009) *Rangers 1872: the gallant pioneers*. Derby: Breedon.

¹⁵ In one game, the members of the 9th Company of the 105th Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers (Glasgow Highlanders) are described as the 'Drymen Football Company' (See, Anonymous (1870). *Falkirk Herald*, 13 April, p. 3), while 'Callander Football Club' are named as Rangers' first opponents in 1872 (See, True Blue (1881) *The Rangers FC*. In: Livingstone, R. ed. *Scottish football annual*. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 69).

¹⁶ Scotland's population in 1841 was 2,620,184. See, Flinn, M. W. (1977) *Scottish population history: from the 17th century to the 1930s*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 302.

compromise with other clubs over playing rules in order to arrange games. For example, in 1870 Airdrie agreed to play Queen's Park Football Club under "London Association Rules".¹⁷

Of the major cities in Scotland, Glasgow is best known as being a conduit for Irish migration.¹⁸ In part this is because of its closer proximity to Ulster than the other major cities and because of the economic pull that the city and its surrounding hinterland presented through unprecedented levels of industrialisation. However, while Glasgow is most closely linked to Irish migration, Dundee had a proportionately higher percentage of Irish born people living there than any other city in the UK apart from Liverpool. Here the linen industry lured in many migrants. Dundee increased in size by 25 percent to 80,000 people between 1841 and 1851 and approximately 20 percent of the population in the 1851 Census was Irish-born (MacRaild, 2011: p. 55), with half the workforce in the linen industry having been born in Ireland (B. Collins, 1991: p. 9). However, while it is inevitable that Glasgow and Dundee, Scotland's largest industrial centres, feature prominently within studies relating to Irish migration in Scotland, it is noteworthy that neither produced the first association football club connected to Irish migrants (Airdrie FC) or the first outwardly Irish association football club (Hibernian FC from Edinburgh). Certainly, the overall proportionate size of the migrant community, when it comes to the organisation of football, does not appear to be a major factor in club formation as can be seen with Edinburgh.¹⁹

The institution of football clubs in Scotland which directly identified with, and outwardly symbolised local Irish migrant communities largely falls outside of the period under consideration. However, within the timeframe there is already evidence of Irish migrant groups playing organised football games in Scotland and interacting with the wider population. As will be highlighted later in this thesis, examples include regular organised football activity by Irishmen in Perth in 1851,²⁰ and, as alluded to previously, the formation of Airdrie Football Club in Lanarkshire in 1868,²¹ and the institution of Hibernian Football Club in Edinburgh in 1875.²²

Following on from the latter named club was the development of symbolic Irish clubs which would provide a distinctive and high-profile representation of Irish migrant identity in Scotland. Hibernian FC were followed by high profile Irish migrant clubs in Harp FC of

¹⁷ The match report can be found in Anonymous (1870) *North British Daily Mail*, 27 June, p. 6.

¹⁸ The city as early as 1831 already had an Irish born population of around 35,000, representing approximately 17 percent of the total population (see, MacRaild, D. M. (2011) *The Irish Diaspora in Britain, 1750-1939*. 2nd ed. Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan, p. 44) .

¹⁹ As late as 1871, the population of the Irish born community in Edinburgh was just 8,031 (see, Aspinwall, B. and McCaffrey, J. F. (1985) A comparative view of the Irish in Edinburgh in the nineteenth century. In: Swift, R. and Gilley, S. eds. *The Irish in the Victorian city*. London: Croom Helm, pp. 131-132).

²⁰ See, Baxter, P. (1898) *Football in Perthshire: past and present*, Perth: T. Hunter, p. 27.

²¹ See, Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 36, and, Anonymous (1945) *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 13 October, p. 11.

²² See, Tirconnell (1887) The Hibernian Football Club. In: McDowall, J. K. ed. *Scottish football annual, 1887-88*. Glasgow: Hay, Nisbet & Co, p. 63.

Dundee in 1879 and Celtic FC of Glasgow in 1887.²³ Tom Gallagher suggests that as well as symbolizing Irish Catholic identity, the institution of these clubs and dozens of others like them across Scotland, provided Irish Catholic communities with a sporting platform from which to interact with wider Scottish society (T. Gallagher, 1991: p. 26).

If organised sport was a mechanism within society that facilitated the social interaction of migrant and native born alike then the subject of education is an important theme to explore as it provided children and youths with an early opportunity to enjoy football as a structured recreational activity.

Education

Although Scottish education was faced with challenges at the beginning of the nineteenth century,²⁴ most historians share a degree of optimism with respect to the relative strengths of the sector during this period. Withrington, for example, argues that by 1830 “there can be little doubt that the machinery for producing a highly literate population in Scotland was well in place, and indeed had been so for some time” (Withrington, 1988: pp. 184-185). This position is largely backed up by Smout who was of the opinion that in the early part of the nineteenth century, “the Scots were extremely proud of their universities and schools, and not without certain reason” (Smout, 1997: p. 209). If this analysis can be accepted as the starting point for the period under examination, then the passing of the Education (Scotland) Act in 1872 was arguably its notable conclusion. Whilst the Act certainly had its shortcomings,²⁵ this important piece of legislation nevertheless nudged a diverse patchwork of educational provision towards a national system. The Act made schooling compulsory (R. D. Anderson, 1997: p. 20) and began the transition away from Protestant denominational church control, bringing “at least a dozen different types of school” under State control (Corr, 1988: p. 291).

One of the main challenges for education in the 50 years leading up to the passing of the 1872 Education Act was simply to keep pace with an ever-expanding and ever-mobile population. This was a challenge which inevitably was going to be more difficult to achieve in some parts of Scotland than in others. For example, providing schooling in the western highlands and islands with scattered populations stretching out over a vast area was a major

²³ While Celtic FC date their year of formation from their first football game in 1888, the club was reported to have been formed as early as November 1887. See, Anonymous (1887) *Scottish Umpire*, 29 November, p. 11.

²⁴ James Scotland, for example, cites the reliance of child labour in a variety of occupations and the lack of financial support from the state “to build and maintain adequate schoolhouses”. See, Scotland, J. (1970) *The history of Scottish education. Vol. 1, from the beginning to 1872*. London: University of London Press, p. 186.

²⁵ R. D. Anderson points to the lack of assistance for secondary schools which did not have access to the same grant support. See, Anderson, R. D. (1997) ‘Scottish education since the Reformation’, *Studies in Scottish Economic and Social History*, No. 5. Dundee: The Economic and Social History Society of Scotland, pp. 366-367.

issue. This is highlighted in the second report of the Argyll Commission in 1867 which estimated that 35 percent of children aged between 4 and 15 in the Hebrides were not on a school roll (Scotland, 1970: p. 182).

The expanding urban centres would also be an issue. In Glasgow, even by 1867, just over two-fifths of children aged between 3 and 15 attended any school (Scotland, 1970: p. 184). The diverse nature of educational outlets, ranging from Catholic and ragged schools to charitable, endowment and adventure schools, presented its own challenges; a fact that has led R. D. Anderson to claim that "...the educational ecology of the cities was very complex" (R. D. Anderson, 1997: p. 22). The Scottish educational landscape therefore was multifaceted with a significant number of religious organisations, voluntary bodies and philanthropic individuals involved to a greater or lesser degree. With a rising population, an unprecedented growth in urbanisation and limited state intervention, this development was perhaps inevitable, but it would be unjust to suggest that there was no state support at all. R. D. Anderson, for example, points to the introduction of state subsidies from the 1830s, providing modest capital investment, and the provision of annual grants from 1846, for schools with appropriate curriculums and state certified teachers (R. D. Anderson, 1997: p. 20).

In the first half of the nineteenth century religious organisations took on an increasingly important role in the funding and provision of schools. This development may have come about due to increased levels of evangelical energy within the Scottish Churches but was grounded on long held beliefs and traditions dating back to the Reformation. Religious organisations already existed such as the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, a voluntary organisation run by Christian groups (Corr, 1988: p. 292). There were powerful church leaders too such as the theologian and future moderator of the Free Church of Scotland, Rev. Dr. Thomas Chalmers. In 1816, as minister of the Tron Church in Glasgow, Chalmers opened the first of his evening sabbath schools as a means of reaching the poorer sections of society within his parish (Checkland, 1980: p. 47).

The middle-class was increasingly well catered for, not only from a growing number of newly built schools but, controversially, through the apparent acquisition of existing burgh schools and endowment schools. R. D. Anderson argues that the old burgh schools were increasingly becoming exclusive to middle-class families "from the professional families at the top to small shop keepers and clerks at the bottom" due to the cost of fees and the lack of bursaries which pushed out the working-class (R. D. Anderson, 1997: pp. 43-44). Endowment schools, originally established to serve underprivileged children were being diverted to serve the educational needs of a growing middle-class (R. D. Anderson, 1997: p. 35).

A range of elite schools were therefore established to meet middle-class educational aspirations, some emerging from existing establishments like the endowment schools, whilst others were set up from scratch. At the higher end, wealthy families sought out the most exclusive schools such as Edinburgh Academy and Trinity College (Glenalmond) in Perthshire.

The former had been established in 1824 to compete with leading public schools in England, the latter was instituted in 1847 initially to educate young men destined for the ministry of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. Both were influenced by English public schools, an influence which extended beyond the classroom. As referenced earlier, Edinburgh Academy was the first educational institution in Scotland to adopt rugby football while Trinity College, uniquely in Scotland, initially adopted Winchester rules²⁶ for its pupils (St Quintin, 1956: p. 24), but had switched to the rugby code by 1870.²⁷ During the 1860s organised sport, including cricket and rugby, was being promoted at Loretto School in Musselburgh (Tristram, 1911: pp. 86-87) and at the Royal High School in Edinburgh (Trotter, 1911: pp. 95-96).

Scotland by the beginning of the nineteenth century had five long established universities; St Andrews (1413), Glasgow (1451), King's College (Aberdeen) (1495),²⁸ Edinburgh (1583) and Marischal College (Aberdeen) (1593). With the foundation of the University College of London in 1828, England had three. According to Aldrich, England's two ancient universities, Oxford and Cambridge, "were as socially exclusive as at any other time in their long history" (Aldrich, 1982: p. 147). This is a notable contrast to the experience in Scotland where the "...student body was a diverse one, and the universities were not hedged off by the kind of social barriers which made Oxford and Cambridge places of privilege" (R. D. Anderson, 1983: p. 4).

While talented students from a working-class background could find a way of reaching university, Smout tempers this fact by denoting the students of the most "humble origin" as being the "sons of traditional craftsmen" (Smout, 1997: p. 217). R. D. Anderson agrees with this view, stating that "one cannot assume that lads of parts came from really poor families; the Scottish professions drew on a popular base, but one which seldom fell below the level of tenant farmers, merchants and shopkeepers, or skilled artisans" (R. D. Anderson, 1997: p. 19). Nevertheless, Smout's analysis that 23 percent of the intake of Arts Faculty students at Scottish universities in the early 1860s were the children of 'manual workers', even if that does translate to 'skilled craftsmen', suggests a more egalitarian system when compared, in particular, with the experience at Oxford and Cambridge.²⁹

Participation in sport was commonplace within Scotland's universities even if, as R. D. Anderson suggests, it was largely unorganised in the early part of the nineteenth century.

²⁶ Winchester Rules was the prevailing football code for the prestigious Winchester College in Hampshire.

²⁷ Trinity College Football Club (Glenalmond) is listed as playing under rugby rules in Alcock, C. W. ed. (1871) *Football annual*, London: Virtue, p. 74.

²⁸ Kings College merged with Marischal College in 1860 to become the University of Aberdeen.

²⁹ There are notable exceptions to this rule such as David Livingstone (1813–1873) whose education catapulted him from humble beginnings as a cotton mill 'piecer' to that of a physician, missionary and explorer. For more information on Livingstone's life see, Roberts, A. (2008) *Livingstone, David (1813-1873), explorer and missionary*. In: *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available at: <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-16803> [Accessed: 24 August, 2026].

His theory as to why sport was so informal relates to the relatively young age of the students which Anderson claims could be as low as 14 (R. D. Anderson, 1987: p. 177). However, he does suggest that football was becoming more organised at Glasgow by the 1860s, with the students playing to fixed teams and using equipment such as goalposts (R. D. Anderson, 1987: p. 178). By the end of that decade the rugby code emerged as the clear winner being adopted by the leading secondary schools and the universities (R. D. Anderson, 1987: p. 179).

Evidence of organised sport within the private schools and universities is well recorded due to the wide range of published materials available such as school and university journals, official histories, memoirs and primary source information held within the archives of the institutions. As a result, knowledge of the sporting connections and contributions of the more affluent members of society are well established. However, the working-class also had ample access to organised sport due in part to the diverse education system. The broad access to Scottish education in the early to mid-nineteenth century benefitted organised sport. This thesis will present evidence that, below the level of clubs, this circumstance facilitated a much broader engagement in organised football.

Almost all aspects of Scottish life were affected by the unparalleled levels of industrialisation which, in turn, facilitated the significant growth of Scotland's major towns and cities. A general understanding of this phenomenon is required to properly address the development of football as a regulated activity over the 52 year period.

Industrialisation and urbanisation

Scotland's industrial sector was experiencing a process of transition for much of the period under review. At the outset, textile spinning and weaving was a major part of the Scottish economy. Slaven observed that in the west of Scotland even as late as 1870 the textile industries employed more people than the coal, iron and ship industries combined (Slaven, 1975: p. 10). With the train network at an early stage of development during the 1820s, canals and roads were vital in the transportation of materials.³⁰ Hume argues that the expense of moving "heavy or bulky raw materials" meant that these largely had to be sourced locally although canal and early railway development was already reaching out into the coalfields of Monklands and Lothian, while on the east coast the major centres of Aberdeen and Dundee received coal shipments from the sea (Hume, 1983: pp. 198-199).

The improvements in transport networks enabled Scotland's other cities and towns to specialise in their industrial activity. Treble, for example, points to the 'virtual monopoly' of Dundee in the jute industry by the 1860s (Treble, 2018: p. 13). Morris provides additional

³⁰ Slaven argues that the initial development of the railways centred on the mineral lines between 1825 and 1835. See, Slaven, A. (1975) *The development of the west of Scotland, 1750–1960*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 41.

examples of specialism, citing Dunfermline (fine table linen), Kirkcaldy (floor covering), Kilmarnock (carpets) and Alloa (woollen yarn) (Morris, 1990a: p. 80).

Amongst historians there are some differing viewpoints as to the respective positions of the networks comprising Scotland's main industrial regions. For example, Briggs, quoting Geddes,³¹ views Glasgow and Edinburgh as two distinctive regional hubs "far remoter in type and spirit than the small railway distance between them". To Briggs and Geddes, the respective cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh are "regional capitals of East and West Scotland" (Briggs, 1968: p. 35). Morris, however, whilst acknowledging that Scotland overall has been viewed as "four regional urban networks" argues for a national network certainly by 1850. In part he cites improved transportation links, increased specialisation between urban centres and "increased efficiency of the cash economy". Morris also argues that the four main urban regions were "bound together by the influence and authority of Edinburgh, notably in banking, legal and church affairs" (Morris, 1990a: p. 80).

These developments are of interest to the development and spread of football as an organised activity. On the one hand Glasgow and Edinburgh, in particular, appear to be distinct regional sporting hubs. Glasgow clubs visiting Edinburgh are often viewed upon and referred to as 'western' teams and vice versa.³² On the other hand, the impressive spread of rugby football clubs across much of lowland Scotland by 1873 suggests that there was already a considerable degree of inter-connectivity and communication between a significant number of urban centres.³³

Improvements in transportation were at the heart of Scotland's transformation into a highly industrialised and urbanised society. Slaven's assessment of an initial three step development of the railway infrastructure, running from 1825 into the 1850s (Slaven, 1975: p. 41) is largely accepted by Durie who argues that the system started initially through coal industry demands, mainly around Glasgow and Edinburgh in the 1830s. The network experienced a major expansion in the 1840s "which saw the regional become linked to the national" and continued into the 1850s, with Inverness being "reached indirectly by Aberdeen" (Durie, 2010: p. 150).

One potential issue with respect to the creation of a national railway system was the fact that the development was undertaken by private companies which were often in competition with each other and even built competing lines in the same area. Important developments raised by Hume such as the standardisation of gauges used by the railway

³¹ Briggs quotes from Geddes, P. (1949) *Cities in evolution*. London: Williams & Norgate Ltd, p. 18.

³² An example of this can be found with the Glasgow Academical Football Club who are referred to as the "western club" in their match against Edinburgh Royal High School FP FC. See, Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 4 December, 1872, p. 7.

³³ Beyond the many examples of rugby football clubs to be found in the central belt and east coast of Scotland by 1873, they could also be found in locations as far apart as the Black Isle in Ross and Cromarty (Anonymous (1873) *Inverness Advertiser*, 11 January, p. 2), and Langholm in Dumfriesshire (Anonymous (1873) *Carlisle Patriot*, 18 April, p. 6).

companies enabled the possibility of ‘through working’ and accelerated the move towards a national network (Hume, 1983: p. 199). The improved transport links that the large urban centres developed with surrounding areas, as a result of the developing rail network, certainly, as Hume argues, encouraged “industrial specialisation” (Hume, 1983: p. 201). A purpose of this thesis is to explore the ways in which these developments benefited organised football activity, enabling clubs and teams to travel to other regions in order to participate in games.

Two crucially important demographics within the early development of association football in Scotland are the lower middle-class and the skilled working-class.³⁴ While the involvement of the upper-class and middle-class are widely acknowledged within the early development of association football across the UK, the working-class contribution, as outlined earlier, remains a heated source of debate. An important contribution that this thesis makes to the wider debate is in demonstrating the existence of a sizeable number of association football club members from working-class backgrounds in urban and industrial areas of the west of Scotland by 1873. Whilst the lower middle-class was also involved in the emerging rugby football game in Scotland, they were part of a broader middle-class social grouping which included wealthier members of society. An important aspect of this thesis compares and contrasts the social groupings for both codes. Of particular interest are the social circumstances within Glasgow, which uniquely amongst Scotland’s main cities during the early 1870s, maintained a significant rugby football culture whilst also being at the forefront of the development of the association game.

The interrelationships through sporting activity of the skilled working-class and lower middle-class in urbanised and industrialised settings reflects wider debates on class. Joan Smith, for example, argues that by the 1870s “...Glasgow clerks were not considered better than skilled craftsmen” (J. Smith, 1986: p. 187). Morris and Rodger highlight the existence of a “labour aristocracy” which has provoked debate amongst urban historians when attempting to explain the “relative social calm of the 1850s and 1860s” (Morris and Rodger, 1993: pp. 29-30). This chimes to a degree with the observations made by Gray through his in-depth study of the labour aristocracy in Edinburgh. Gray suggests that the labour aristocracy “helped to stabilize the class structure of capitalist society” (Gray, 1976: p. 4). Whilst this viewpoint certainly has its detractors,³⁵ it naturally leads on to a question with regard to the development of organised football: Did the involvement of football club members from skilled working-class backgrounds and their coexistence with middle-class

³⁴ In terms of middle-class contribution, McDowell suggests that the first formal footballing institutions in Ayrshire and Lanarkshire were “created by middle-class men and boys”. See, McDowell, M. L. (2012) ‘Football, migration and industrial patronage in the west of Scotland, c.1870–1900’, *Sport in History*, 32(3), p. 407.

³⁵ Morris, for example, suggests that “the organised activities of this social group provide unlikely evidence for any social ‘collaboration’ or ‘manipulation’”. See, Morris, R. J. (1990) Clubs, societies and associations. In: Thompson, F. M. L. ed. *The Cambridge social history of Britain*. Vol. 3. Social agencies and institutions. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 417.

members, either as members of the same team or at the very least as opponents on the same playing field, contribute even in a minor way towards a stabilisation of the class structure?

An area of disagreement amongst historians relates to the degree of separation between the middle-class and working-class communities within Glasgow. Certainly, Cage points to the 'westward expansion' of the commercial and cultural elite from 1850 due to the significant population growth experienced in the centre of Glasgow (Cage, 1987: p. 6). It is the developments south of the river, however, which hold a degree of contrasting views. Districts of particular interest are Tradeston, Laurieston and the Gorbals. Reed suggests that these new estates remained appealing "for a while" until the increasing numbers of migrant families heralded their place "among the worst of Glasgow slums" (Reed, 1993: p. 59). Worsdall points to the movement of wealthier residents to "newer schemes further from the city centre". This development allowed for the subdivision of the larger flats that they left behind into one and two room apartments for working-class families (Worsdall, 1989: p. 91). He points to Tradeston, which "quickly lost its village atmosphere" as "domestic architecture" gave way to "industrial" (Worsdall, 1989: p. 77). Kellet argues that South Laurieston and Tradeston "fell a victim to encroachments by industrial users", particularly the Caledonian, and the Glasgow and South Western railway companies. He claims that Laurieston in particular "rapidly deteriorated between 1840 and 1900 into a slum annexe to the Gorbals" (Kellet, 1993: p. 187).

However, citing the Gorbals as one of his examples, Morris argues that although "...many areas of Scottish cities began to get increasingly specific social identities during the second half of the century, the separation of middle-class and working-class people, of skilled and unskilled wage earners, must not be exaggerated" (Morris, 1990a: p. 97). Robb largely agrees with this assessment of the Gorbals, adding, that with no evidence of an "evacuation" of middle-class residents, "continuity of character with peripheral change was the overriding theme" (Robb, 1983: p. 163). As the southside of Glasgow is closely connected to the rise of association football within the city, a comparison of social status amongst club members emanating from these areas of the city is here considered. Furthermore, a study of early rugby football club members is also undertaken to establish geographical location and social status within the city.

John Butt has singled out the relatively high number of lodgers living in Glasgow; in the 1871 census 23 percent of all families in Glasgow are recorded as having a lodger (Butt, 1971: p. 64). This urban development has relevance to the study as there are examples of football club members who are listed as being lodgers in the 1871 census. Football club membership may have presented an opportunity for young men and youths living in large urban centres, isolated from family networks, to cement friendships and gain introductions into wider social circles.

Leisure

In order to make the case for the broad appeal of football as an organised activity, it is important first of all to understand the opportunities that people from different social standings had to access leisure. It is also important to understand the wider significance of leisure within communities. Cunningham, for example, argues that “leisure activities did not float freely in a stratosphere above the world of work and daily life; on the contrary, they were intimately related to and derived from that world” (Cunningham, 1990: p. 290). Fraser provides a neat summary of some of the gains made for the working-class by the end of the period under study and in doing so highlights some of the factors necessary for the broadening of access to leisure. In particular he names the rise in real incomes “especially from the 1870s”, and a shortening of the working day through “a spread of the Saturday half-day holiday”, initially to the skilled working-class (Fraser, 1990: p. 251). But how does this compare with the experiences of the early part of the 52 year timeframe? For example, could long working hours have prevented people in certain types of employment from enjoying outdoor leisure activities including football? Griffiths certainly provides some evidence of this for ‘tradesmen’ by highlighting a contemporary observation from Kelso,³⁶ which appeared in the *New Statistical Account* (Griffiths, 2010: p. 172). A similar view is held by Cunningham who suggests that “...hours of work... tended to increase” for the period “up to and including the 1830s” (Cunningham, 1990: p. 282). This assessment is somewhat challenged by Tranter, however, who argues that, with the exception of factory workers, “it was not a period when the amount of time available for leisure was substantially eroded by an increase in working hours” (Tranter, 1987: p. 36).

Whether or not the changes to working life led to an increase in working hours, Bailey asserts that, post 1850, the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation meant that “leisure took on a fundamentally new form and meaning in this era” (Bailey, 1978: p. 4). He bases this on the “demands of mechanised factory production and the accelerated growth of big cities” arguing that they “led to a radical restructuring of the temporal and spatial patterns of economic and social life” (Bailey, 1978: p. 4). This view is largely accepted by Tranter who affirms that “Beginning around the middle years of the century levels of participation in outdoor, physical recreation increased” (Tranter, 1990a: p. 1). This is further clarified by his assessment that important developments like the “codification of rules”, the broadening of the “socio-occupational composition of those who played and watched sports” and “increased commercialism” were factors. Above all, however, “...casual, ad hoc arrangements for the conduct of sporting activity gave way to formally constituted and relatively permanent club and competitive structures” (Tranter, 1990a: p. 1).

³⁶ Griffiths paraphrases a passage written by the Rev. J. M. MacCulloch – see, MacCulloch, J. M. (1845) Parish of Kelso, County of Roxburghshire. In: *New statistical account of Scotland*. Vol. 3. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, p. 325.

Whilst the argument for a mid-nineteenth century ‘transformation’ appears convincing, the view of Holt places less of an emphasis on revolutionary change. Rather, he points to “the half-hidden continuities between generations” which he views as being just as significant (Holt, 1986: p. 3). In doing so, Holt is arguing for an evolutionary process which, at least in part, attempts to link ‘traditional’ with ‘modern’. Certainly, as Fraser outlines earlier, any mid-century extension of opportunity for the working-class to enjoy leisure was partly down to legislation aimed at lowering working hours and improving conditions for workers. An end product of the Ten Hours Act of 1847³⁷ and the Factory Act of 1850³⁸ was the provision of additional leisure time for factory workers. The broadening of opportunities is also reflected in changes as to ‘when’ and ‘where’ outdoor recreation could be enjoyed. With respect to the ‘when’, Griffiths argues that leisure activity in the early part of the nineteenth century was often enjoyed at the beginning of the week. This appears to have changed by mid-century when “determined efforts [were made] to confine organised leisure opportunities to a fixed and predictable part of the week” (Griffiths, 2010: p. 185). The regulation of leisure through the fixing of days and times had a significant bearing on the transformation of sport from the traditional to the modern. This straightforward yet crucially important development should be considered alongside the codification of rules when identifying key factors that led to the transformation of sport.

Added to this, attacks on traditional sports and leisure customs may also provide an explanation for the mid-century ‘transformation’. Griffin, for example, strongly advocates for the consideration of the concerted attempts by those in power to assert control over space which was traditionally, if unofficially, used for recreational purposes (Griffin, 2016). This was particularly true in urbanised areas where “recreations were forced onto spaces that existed for other purposes”. Citing the large numbers which were often attracted to Shrove Tuesday events, she argues that the functional use of the market square as a place for trade was ‘eclipsed’ by the festival. This was more of an issue in larger urban centres where it could be seen as an “implicit challenge to the normal order of things” (Griffin, 2016: p. 37).

Urban centres therefore increasingly required dedicated, even purpose built, spaces for leisure. This particular argument, however, has wider implications for the general debate on working-class involvement in football during the period. The large festival games, increasingly under attack and experiencing suppression are well represented within primary source material (burgh records, church reports etc) and regularly appear within publications relating to the history of sport. By contrast the implication made by Griffin is that smaller events taking place in less built up areas and causing minimal disruption, would attract less attention and, as a result, tend to pass unnoticed. Whilst such events by and large may have

³⁷ The Ten Hours Act or Factories Act of 1847, which became law on 8 June, 1847, reduced the working day for women and young people in textile mills to ten hours per day. For more information see, Cooke-Taylor, R. W. (1894) *The factory system and the factory acts*. London: Methuen & Co, p. 88.

³⁸ The Factory Act of 1850 terminated work on a Saturday at 2pm, providing workers with a half day. See, Cooke-Taylor, R. W. (1894) *The factory system and the factory acts*. London: Methuen & Co, p. 89.

gone unnoticed, occasional examples are recorded ‘tangentially’. This is an argument made by Swain (Swain, 2015b: p. 632). Such tangential examples may be indicative of a much broader pattern of activity.

The prevailing interpretation of the orthodox view of the development of organised football, if left unchecked, presents a somewhat narrow and skewed version of events. There are certainly examples where sweeping assertions are made. Thompson, for example, whilst openly acknowledging that his study of respectable society in Victorian Britain is “definitely Anglo-centric” (Thompson, 1988: p. 10) can describe the prehistory of “soccer” as “partly an inchoate rural rough-house between rival villages and partly as a game played by aristocrats and middle-class boys at school” (Thompson, 1988: p. 296). This thesis challenges aspects of this line of argument by providing evidence of organised football activity in Scotland undertaken by a broader demographic.

The issue of gender needs to be addressed because football as an activity over the course of the nineteenth century was generally viewed upon as being a ‘manly game’.³⁹ Women and girls were, in the main, excluded from such activities although there is widespread evidence to suggest that they were regularly involved as spectators. As Cunningham suggests, this had a significant bearing on wider attitudes for the period:

Boundaries of class, of gender, of age and of geography were... likely to be reproduced in leisure; and leisure activities may themselves have reinforced or shifted those boundaries, and not merely passively reflected them (Cunningham, 1990: p. 290).

By the start of the timeframe ‘rational recreation’ was already a well-established concept and by the end, the philosophy of ‘Muscular Christianity’ had become a significant social influence, particularly when concerning the education of young middle-class males. As a result of these factors football as an activity was very much viewed upon as a game suitable only for boys and young men. That does not mean to say, however, that girls and young women were completely restricted from playing football during this period. The author’s work on the origins of women’s and girl’s football up to 1873 certainly provides evidence of football activity and argues that it was more widespread than the few examples suggest (McBrearty, 2025). The fact remains, however, that the first codified game involving women’s teams did not take place until 1881⁴⁰ and a detailed analysis of organised football for the period leading up to 1873 is at present lacking in terms of evidence.

An additional area of interest is the role of philanthropy which helped to foster a wide network of voluntary organisations. These organisations embraced leisure as a means to

³⁹ A typical reference to football being described as a ‘manly game’ can be found in Anonymous (1867) *Stirling Observer*, 26 December, p. 5 (when referring to the annual Handsel Monday game at Callander).

⁴⁰ The first recorded match in the world involving women’s teams under the association football code, took place at Edinburgh on 7 May, 1881. For more information see, Anonymous (1881) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 9 May, p. 3.

further their own aims and extend their own reach. Prochaska suggests that historians of Victorian Britain have interpreted charity “as a means by which the dominant professional and commercial classes confirmed their power and status (Prochaska, 1990: p. 359). However, Morris suggests that, certainly when it came to the temperance movement, the working-class themselves asserted a degree of control over charitable causes (Morris, 1990b: pp. 417-418). The temperance movement is of interest to this study as there are clear links between the movement and the provision of leisure, including organised football activity. Scotland had a significant involvement in the temperance movement. Fraser points to the notable work of John Dunlop who in 1829 “launched an anti-spirits movement” (Fraser, 1990: p. 241). According to Fraser the original intentions of the temperance movement changed from an emphasis on drinking in moderation to one of total abstinence or teetotalism. This development by the late 1830s “attracted support from many of the evangelical middle-class” (Fraser, 1990: p. 241). Checkland points to the impact that the movement had on the lives of “men, women and children in Victorian Scotland”. Indeed, she argues that there can be “...little doubt that the leisure pursuits it provided helped to popularise the movement and its objectives” (Checkland, 1980: p. 99).

A final area of interest with respect to philanthropy relates to the provision of public parks. Checkland notes the significance of the Public Parks Act in 1859 which enabled councils to take over and run pleasure grounds. This development came on top of the existing “ancient underdeveloped common lands available for various recreational purposes” such as Glasgow Green and Aberdeen’s Links (Checkland, 1980: p. 148). Atherton argues that new facilities in Glasgow “for recreational, educational and community needs of West End residents were largely provided at public expense”. This included the purchase of land by the City Corporation “to create the 51 acre Kelvingrove Park in the 1850s and 1860s in response to petitions from West End residents” (Atherton, 1991: p. 27). However, Tranter also notes the gifting and leasing of land by the upper-classes to create games parks for local populations (Tranter, 1989: p. 231). The importance of open spaces within urbanised areas for the development of organised sport was clearly very important, leading to local campaigns. Indeed, the Hamilton Gymnasium Club, an early football opponent of Queen’s Park FC, was instituted in 1866 as part of a campaign to bring a public park to the Lanarkshire town.⁴¹

Summary

The ongoing economic and social changes in Scotland help form the wider historical context against which the organisation and development of organised football activity discussed in this thesis is considered. The endpoint of the study witnessed the emergence of national governing bodies for the two leading codes. This development was shaped simultaneously

⁴¹ For information on the creation of Hamilton Gymnasium and its direct link to the campaign for a public park in Hamilton, see, “Proposed Gymnasium” in Anonymous (1866) *Hamilton Advertiser*, 5 May, p. 2.

by influences both internal and external to Scotland. Tranter provides a useful summary of the factors that helped to create the “new environment”. In particular he cites,

...higher per capita real incomes, improved standards of education, cheaper and more efficient methods of transport and communication, greater and more uniform amounts of leisure time, and the technology capable of producing the range of facilities and equipment required by an extensive commitment to sport (Tranter, 1989: p. 227).

As will be seen, this line of argument certainly chimes with the view of Tony Collins when it comes to the development of modern football (T. Collins, 2015). However, an equally important point is raised by Griffiths which aligns in part with the view of Holt when it comes to the notion of continuity. This relates to the evolution of work and leisure as ‘carriers of change’ over the course of the nineteenth century:

...they... continued to bear the imprint of older patterns of thought and behaviour, suggesting that rather than a clear and unambiguous transition to a more class-based society, early industrial Scotland was a society in which the ‘traditional’ and the ‘modern’ continued to co-exist (Griffiths, 2010: p. 190).

A major objective of this thesis is to consider whether Tranter’s observation relating to the transformation of sport over the period can be squared with Griffiths’ longer-term view of the coexistence between traditional and modern.

Structure

Across four chapters, this thesis will for the first time closely examine the development of organised football in Scotland from the mid-1820s through to the mid-1870s. The first chapter examines evidence which suggests a decline in football activity in Scotland across the first half of the nineteenth century. The impact of legislation is also considered. Following on from this, the chapter looks at examples of organised football activity at the very start of the timeframe (1824-1829) when the earliest documented football club was formed. This part of the chapter includes a new discovery relating to organised football in Edinburgh. The chapter also builds upon the methodology of Adrian Harvey who created a study of football teams between 1830 and 1859. The addition of new data (to the existing information gathered by Harvey) and a more nuanced analysis based on multiple categories, which has been introduced by the author, affords a better understanding of organised football activity based around teams for the period.

The second chapter examines the crucial period of development running from 1860 to 1873 when the dominant codes became embedded within Scotland, culminating in the formation of both the Scottish Football Association and Scottish Football Union (within just 10 days of each other) in March 1873. Data on football team activity has been analysed as an extension to the study provided in Chapter 1, but a separate investigation of football clubs has also been undertaken. This includes a mapping project for the association and rugby game in

Scotland which, for the first time, provides a statistical analysis of the increase in the number of clubs connected to each code and draws attention to their geographical spread. Finally, the chapter examines playing rules and playing styles, starting off with traditional forms of football before moving on to the two dominant codes.

The third chapter provides a ground-breaking analysis of social class composition for 246 football club members (linked to clubs between 1868 and 1873). It also looks at migration statistics among both the club members and their parents. This part of the thesis features football club members linked to either the association or rugby code whilst a smaller section focuses on individuals with links to both codes. This enables a better understanding as to the respective social standing of the football club members for the era. The chapter also delivers a series of case studies, both of individual club members and also of the clubs, exploring subjects such as socioeconomic class identity. The final part of the chapter presents a detailed study of clubs and club members from the Vale of Leven district. Building on the author's paper delivered at the International Football History Conference in 2024, this chapter contains a considerable amount of new information.

The final chapter explores the surge in football activity in Glasgow (particularly relating to the association game) with a comparative study between the Scottish city and the Yorkshire city of Sheffield. The latter city has been selected as it is widely acknowledged as having developed a significant football subculture based around clubs by the 1860s. The rapid growth in the number of clubs in Glasgow — particularly from 1873 onward — is compared directly with Sheffield's experience to highlight the high levels of sporting activity in both cities. The final part of the chapter provides a detailed investigation into the set of circumstances which combined to project Glasgow into a leading position across the United Kingdom with respect to the size and scope of its football activity by the end of 1875. This includes an examination of broader cultural associations, which supported the dramatic growth of association football.

In summary, this thesis delivers a thoroughly-researched analysis of the development of organised football in Scotland for the period in question. In doing so, it contributes significant new evidence to the broader study of football's evolution across the United Kingdom, highlighting the variety of traditional games that existed and analysing the arrival of the dominant codes in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It also provides a detailed history of football's 'place' within Scottish society, adding to our knowledge of cultural life in Scotland throughout the middle period of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 1

Growth or Decline?

An analysis of organised football activity: 1824-1859

Section 1 – Overview to the period: 1824–1859

Introduction

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, football was considered to be one of Scotland's national games, being placed alongside sports such as golf, shinty and curling.⁴² Whilst in its generic form it may have been a national game in terms of geographical spread (and it was not uncommon for matches to be arranged between neighbouring districts⁴³), the playing rules were far from uniform. In addition to this, as will be seen, there are indications that football may have been declining as an activity in some parts of Scotland. This situation was not unique to Scotland; in England, the early nineteenth century works of Strutt and Hone,⁴⁴ stressed a general decline in football activity whilst highlighting the unruly characteristics of the contemporary folk games. These early testimonies would, to a large degree, influence the views of football historians writing later in the century.⁴⁵ However, the prevailing hypothesis surrounding the general decline in football activity across the United Kingdom relied heavily on evidence from England. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a mainstream view emerged which largely presented football activity during the early part of the nineteenth century as an unruly folk game facing serious decline. Its subsequent adoption and regulation by the public schools were heralded as being crucial in the revival of football as a popular recreation. This simplistic interpretation continued to

⁴² Reverend Thomas Somerville, writing in 1814 on the subject of "National Amusements", refers to "handball, foot-ball, ninepins, golf, and curling" as being "national games" while an article in an Inverness newspaper from 1827 similarly references "camack [shinty] and football" as "national games". See, Somerville, T. (1861) *My own life and times, 1741-1814*. Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, pp. 345-346, and, Anonymous (1827) *Inverness Courier*, 24 January, p. 3.

⁴³ The Reverend Charles Rogers, reflecting on traditional forms of football, states that, "Nearly every district had its annual ba' playing'. The able-bodied men of one district challenged those of another, or two parties were chosen from the assemblage". See, Rogers, C. (1869) *Scotland: social and domestic*. London: Charles Griffin & Co, p. 187.

⁴⁴ In particular see, Strutt, J. (1801) *The sports and pastimes of the people of England*. London: Methuen & Company, and Hone, W. (1826) *The every-day book or everlasting calendar of popular amusements*. Vol. 1. London: Hunt and Clarke.

⁴⁵ Shearman and Vincent, for example, include Hone's misrepresentation of the late eighteenth century 'Ball of Scone' in their own publication in 1885 (Hone depicted the Scone ball game as an unruly form of shrove tide football when it was in fact a form of handball). Shearman and Vincent go as far as to claim it to be the "rough and rude instance of the original game in Scotland". See, Hone, W. (1826) *The every-day book or everlasting calendar of popular amusements*. Vol. 1. London: Hunt and Clarke, p. 259, and, Shearman, M. and Vincent, J. E. (1885) *Foot-ball: it's history for five centuries*. London: Field & Tuer. p. 26.

be the mainstream view throughout the twentieth century.⁴⁶ Whilst it is true that mob games existed and are well recorded, in part because of the concerted attempts to ban them, there are also examples of more structured forms of football activity, smaller in size, which did not present a challenge to the local authorities. Numerous examples of traditional football games, including some which are connected to annual festivals, throw up evidence of organised activity ranging from in-play tactics and the adoption of distinguishing colours (to differentiate teams), through to the use of equipment such as goalposts.

This chapter examines in some detail evidence of this type of activity and in doing so highlights some of the flawed assumptions underpinning the early histories. In many respects this was an era of firsts, not only with regard to Scotland, but within the general evolution of football across the United Kingdom. As will be seen, within the timeframe that is being studied, the first documented football club was formed (1824) and the earliest surviving example of a football 'prize' or 'trophy' (awarded in 1851) can also be found.⁴⁷ Although these developments can be viewed as being outliers to the established position of the dominant codes by the early 1870s, they demonstrate the existence of organised football games outside of the public schools from a much earlier time. An existing UK wide study for the period 1830-1859 which was undertaken by Adrian Harvey provides an appropriate platform for an examination of organised football in Scotland. One aspect of this chapter is to examine the methodology adopted by Harvey and to add to his findings by presenting new evidence relating to the existence of teams. The chapter also examines the nuanced nature of the identities of many of the teams for this period and highlights wider networks which supported organised football activity.

Evidence of decline and examples of legislative interventions

Attitudes to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century vary with respect to the subject of a decline in football activity in Scotland. Historians like Shearman and Vincent present Scotland and counties in the north of England as bucking the trend with respect to a general decline in activity (Shearman and Vincent, 1885: p. 41). Others such as Beveridge take a different viewpoint and argue that football had declined amongst the general populace sufficiently enough to have disappeared by 1820 (Beveridge, 1899: pp. 224-225).

⁴⁶ A notable example of this viewpoint can be found in Geoffrey Green's chapter titled 'The Dawn of Football'. Under the subheading 'Football Becomes Respectable', Green refers to the centuries old game of football being in a state of "dormancy" and suggests that the public schools "took it from the streets and the fields [and] civilised it...". See, Green, G. (1960) The dawn of football. In: Fabian, A. H. and Green, G. eds. *Association Football, Vol 1*. London: Caxton, p. 46.

⁴⁷ The Foot-Ball Club was founded by John Hope in 1824 and the silver football medallion was presented to the football team of the 93rd Highlanders for winning their match against the Edinburgh University Football Club in 1851.

Tranter, however, based on his analysis of the *Old and New Statistical Accounts*,⁴⁸ argues that any examples of decline should not be viewed in isolation to the period but should be understood within a much longer timeframe. In the words of Tranter,

To judge from the material contained in the Statistical Accounts, there is no reason to suppose that the environment of late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century Scotland was any more hostile to the survival of popular sports than that of earlier times... If the evidence of the Statistical Accounts is to be believed, there is nothing unusual in the fact that some sporting pastimes disappeared during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. What happened between the 1790s and 1830s/1840s was merely the continuance of a long-established trend (Tranter, 1987: pp. 28-29).

A study of various contemporary sources including the *Statistical Accounts* from the late eighteenth and nineteenth century uncover numerous examples of reported decline in football activity. Figure 1.1 provides examples of decline in activity as recorded from the 1790s to the 1860s. These examples can be subdivided into different categories.

The first category relates to physical changes to areas traditionally devoted to sport as well as the decline in traditional occupations. This can be seen, for example, at Benarty Hill in Fife⁴⁹ and Galashiels in the Scottish Borders.⁵⁰ In the former, annual games are described as being 'disused' due to a marked decline in shepherds as a result of an associated increase in the number of fences. In the latter, the loss of suitable ground at Hollybush Farm due to the tillage of the land leads to an end to the activity. At Forfar, the arrival of the Scotland Midland Junction Railway is attributed to a disruption in local sports, including football, on Market Muir. The account, from 1848, describes a significant change in the space of just one year, from a picture of "merry groups, in all buoyancy of youth, kicking the football and shouting for glee" to one of "the waggon loaded with coal or slates, etc, or the carriage filled with passengers... hissing, as it were, at all such amusements".⁵¹

The second category is the decline of customs with which football was traditionally associated. For instance, numerous examples for a decline in the customs relating to the

⁴⁸ The *Old and New Statistical Accounts* were a compilation of short reports at parish level which focused on different aspects of contemporary Scottish life as well as developments relating to local agriculture and industry. The reports were submitted by church ministers. The *Old Statistical Account* was published between 1791 and 1799 while the *New Statistical Account* was published between 1834 and 1845. For more information see, University of Edinburgh Library (2024) *The Statistical Accounts of Scotland, 1791-1845*. Available at: <https://stataccscot.ed.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/support/introduction> [Accessed, 4 February, 2026]

⁴⁹ Chalmers, R. (1842) *Popular rhymes, fireside stories and amusements of Scotland*. Edinburgh: William & Robert Chalmers, p. 16.

⁵⁰ Hall, R. (1898) *The history of Galashiels*. Galashiels: Alexander Walker & Son, p. 519.

⁵¹ Anonymous (1848) *Dundee Courier*, 9 August, p. 3.

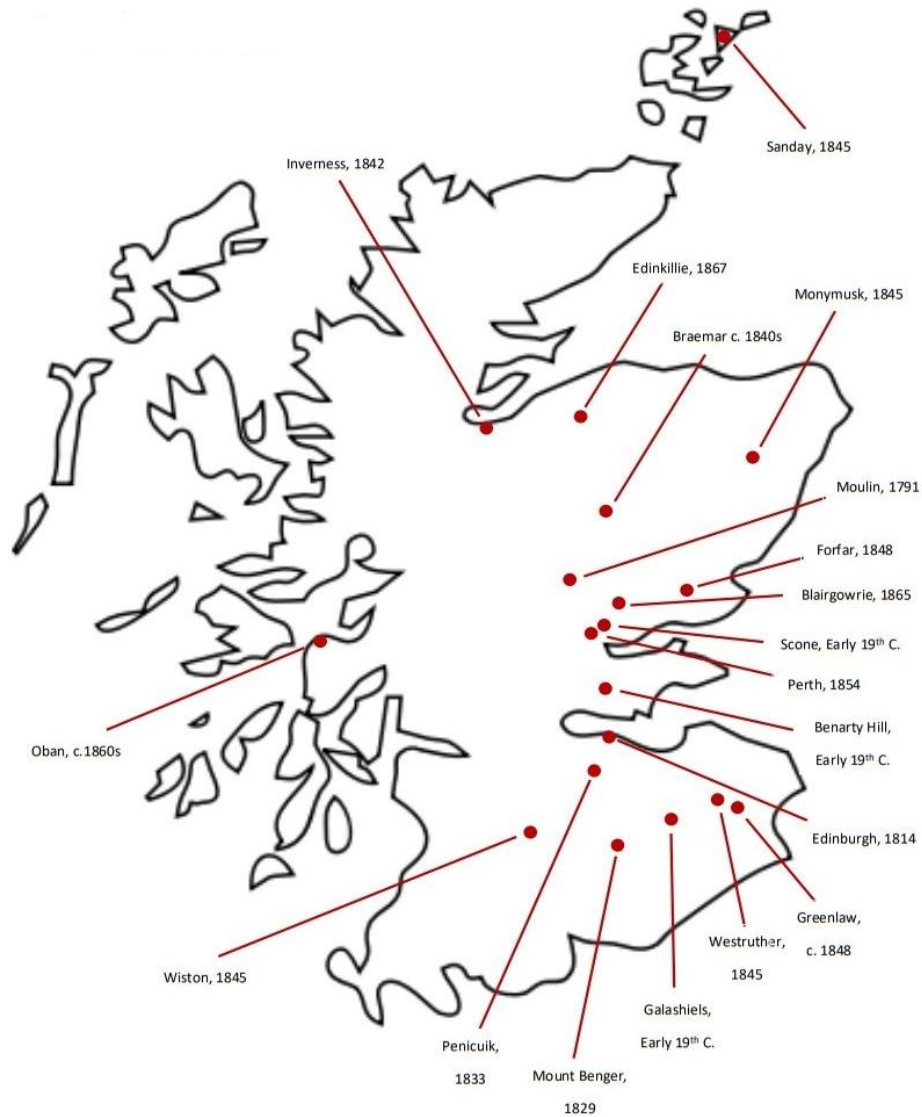


Figure 1.1: Examples of decline in football activity, 1791-1867

religious festival of Fastern's E'en can be found.⁵² However, in the case of Greenlaw in Berwickshire, the demise of football activity at Fastern's E'en appears to have been temporary and football and other aspects of the old tradition are reported to have been revived by 1868.⁵³ A third category covers the replacement of football by other recreational activities or interests. For example, at Edinkillie in Moray, in 1867, traditional football and

⁵² This decline is recorded at Braemar by the early 1840s, Penicuik in Midlothian by 1833, Westruther in Berwickshire by 1840 and Wiston in Lanarkshire by 1845: In retrospective order, see, Anonymous (1868) *Dundee Courier*, 28 February, p. 4, Jackson, J. (1833) *Essays on various agricultural subjects: and an account of the parish of Penicuik*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood, pp. 334-5, Jamieson, R. (1845) Parish of Westruther. In: Gordon, J. ed. *The new statistical account of Scotland, Vol 2*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, p. 75, and, Wood, C. (1845) United Parishes of Wiston and Robertson. In: Gordon, J. ed. *The new statistical account for Scotland, Vol VI*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, p. 95.

⁵³ See, Anonymous (1868) *Illustrated Berwick Journal*, 28 February, p. 4.

shinty games at Christmas and New Year are replaced by shooting contests.⁵⁴ At Perth by 1854, football and shinty matches are reported to have been replaced by cricket,⁵⁵ while at Mountbenger in the Scottish Borders, from 1829, football is replaced by handball as an activity at the St Ronan's Border Games.⁵⁶

In a number of the accounts presented in Figure 1.1, the games are not fully extinguished with the adults reported to have stopped playing but the children and youths continuing to enjoy the sport. This can be seen at Moulin in 1791⁵⁷ and at Inverness in 1842,⁵⁸ although a later revival was reported at the latter town in the 1850s and 1860s.⁵⁹ A similar report can be found for Monymusk in 1845.⁶⁰ The examples at Blairgowrie,⁶¹ Edinburgh,⁶² Sanday⁶³ and Oban⁶⁴ describe decline in general terms but none present a picture of complete demise. The Blairgowrie reference speaks of the activity falling into comparative disuse "except for a few districts". The Edinburgh observation speaks of games including football being generally less practised, "though not discontinued". In Sanday whilst the reference from 1845 states that the "common people used to be fond of dancing and football", examples of football activity can be found for the 1850s and 1860s.⁶⁵ The Oban reference cites a decline by 1862 but the game had undergone a revival by 1872.⁶⁶ Finally, the example of Scone in Perthshire relates to a 'revival' of the game in 1835, suggesting that there had been a decline.⁶⁷ This may be linked to the disappearance of the game of handball at Scone, an activity referred to in the original source by the generic title of 'Ball of Scone'. As touched upon earlier, by the mid-1830s the original game of the 1790s was being misrepresented as a form of football (even though kicking the ball was expressly forbidden in the rules).⁶⁸

⁵⁴ Anonymous (1867) *Elgin Courier*, 4 January, p. 8.

⁵⁵ Anonymous (1854) *Aberdeen Herald*, 15 July, p. 5.

⁵⁶ Anonymous (1829) *Caledonian Mercury*, 28 March, p. 3.

⁵⁷ Stewart, A. (1793) Parish Of Moulin. In Sinclair, J. ed. *The statistical account of Scotland, 1791-99, Vol 12, North & West Perthshire*. Edinburgh: William Creech, p. 770.

⁵⁸ See, *The topographical, statistical and historical gazetteer of Scotland, Vol 2* (1842) Glasgow: A. Fullarton & Co., p. 31.

⁵⁹ For the 1850s, football is one of the activities of the Inverness Athletic Club, formed in 1856 (see, Anonymous (1856) *Inverness Courier*, 5 June, p. 5) while for the 1860s there is an advert for football and shinty games at Christmas in 1864 (see, Anonymous (1864) *Inverness Courier*, 22 December, p. 1).

⁶⁰ Forbes, R. (1845) Parish of Monymusk. In: Gordon, J. ed. *The new statistical account of Scotland, Vol 12*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, pp. 465-466.

⁶¹ Ireland, W. P. (1865) *A hand-book to Blairgowrie, Rattray, and neighbourhood*. Blairgowrie: no publisher, pp.25-28.

⁶² Somerville, T (1861) *My own life and times, 1741-1814*. Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, pp. 345-346.

⁶³ Grant, W. (1845) United parishes of Cross and Burness. In: Gordon, J. ed. *The new statistical account of Scotland, Vol 15*. Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, p. 95.

⁶⁴ See, Anonymous (1872) *Oban Times*, 23 November, p. 2.

⁶⁵ See, Anonymous (1856) *Orcadian*, 29 March, p. 1, and, Anonymous (1866) *Orcadian*, 9 January, p. 3.

⁶⁶ Anonymous (1872) *Oban Times*, 23 November, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Anonymous (1835) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 3 December, p. 3.

⁶⁸ The original description of the ball game at Scone does not mention 'football' anywhere in the text. It instead refers to the "Ball of Scone" – a generic reference which can be applied to several types of ball game. It is later referred to as being football. For the original description, see, Thomas, R. (1799) Parish of Scone. In: Sinclair, J. ed. *The statistical account of Scotland*. Edinburgh: William Creech, p. 89. For the

On deeper analysis, the references do not present as much of a case for overall decline as might appear at first glance. As has been shown, a number are temporary lulls, while for many of the other locations the game does not stop altogether but is still played by children and youths. Many of the references are linked to annual games, whether they be annual sports or festival days such as Fastern's E'en, Christmas Day and New Years Day. However, they do not say anything in relation to examples of more regular activity. The declining importance of traditional festivals would naturally have an impact on football activity associated with them, particularly festivals such as Fastern's E'en where football was often linked to the cruel practise of cock fighting. In this circumstance, football as an activity is notably affected by its association with the more barbaric sport. These particular examples may to a degree support the notion of a 'civilising spurt' which is a central aspect of Dunning and Sheard's hypothesis for the perceived decline of football activity.⁶⁹ However, within this particular study, these examples account for a limited number of the overall examples of decline.

For a majority of the remaining examples, factors such as migration, urbanisation and industrialisation need to be acknowledged; a position which is more supportive of Swain's argument of "broader structural changes taking place in the nineteenth century".⁷⁰ Tranter is correct in his view that examples of decline and examples of censorship relating to football activity can be found prior to the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. Examples can be found in Banff (1549), Peebles (1570), Forres (1586), Kirkcudbright, (1597), Banff again (1682), Jedburgh (1704), Kelso (1716), Duns (1724), and Lanark (1758).⁷¹ These attempts by the burgh authorities to control and even ban football contests in certain locations carried on into the nineteenth century. These local statutes were not aimed solely at football; the recreational activity was included within a broader list of perceived public nuisances which the authorities wanted to clear from the streets.

The Edinburgh Police Act of 1812 provides an early example of intervention in the nineteenth century where football is specifically identified. In the *Edinburgh Advertiser* on 30

later classification of the game as being football, see, Penny, G. (1836) *Traditions of Perth*. Perth: J. Taylor, p. 115.

⁶⁹ Dunning E. and Sheard, K. (1979) *Barbarians, gentlemen and players: a sociological study of the development of rugby football*. New York: New York University Press, p. 40.

⁷⁰ See, Swain, P. (2014) 'The origins of football debate: the grander design and the involvement of the lower classes, 1818–1840', *Sport in History*, 34(4), pp. 519–543.

⁷¹ See, Crammond, W. (1891) *The annals of Banff, Vol 1*. Aberdeen: Milne & Hutchison, pp. 25–26. *Charters and documents relating to the burgh of Peebles, 1165–1710* (1872) Edinburgh: Scottish Burgh Records Society, p. 324. Douglas, R. (1934) *The annals of the royal burgh of Forres*. Forres: Elgin Courant, p. 246. Dickie, W. (1890) *Old Scottish burghal life. Illustrated from Kirkcudbright records*. Dumfries: Dumfries and Galloway Natural History & Antiquarian Society, p. 13. Crammond, W. (1891) *The annals of Banff, Vol 1*. Aberdeen: Milne & Hutchison, p. 161. Fittis, R. S. (1891) *Sports and pastimes of Scotland*. Paisley: Alexander Gardner, p. 166. Jeffrey, A. (1859) *The history and antiquities of Roxburghshire and adjacent districts, Vol 3*. Edinburgh: Thomas C. Jack, p. 32. Historical Manuscripts Commission (1909) *Report on manuscripts in various collections, Vol 5*. Hereford: Anthony Brothers Limited, pp. 43–44. Robertson, A. D. (1974) *Lanark: The burgh and its councils, 1469 to 1880*. Lanark: Lanark Town Council, p. 238.

October, 1812, the powers invested in the local police force were published within an article titled 'Regulations of Police'. The local Police Act of 1812 covered a wide range of areas relating to public safety and was aimed at preventing public nuisances. Powers included measures to stop dirty water from being thrown out of doors and windows, time limits for wheelbarrows being left out on the street, rules on ensuring that common stairs were kept clean and tidy and slides being outlawed on streets in the winter months. Within this context, rule 24 centred on football and a number of other activities,

XXIV — No Snow-Balls or Squibs shall be thrown, nor Foot-Ball, Shinty, or other game shall be played on any of the Streets, Squares, Lanes, or Passages, under the like Penalty, as aforesaid (J. Murray, 1812: p. 1).

Such measures were not restricted to Edinburgh. At Perth, regulations "For keeping Clean the Streets, Lanes, Foot-pavements, Markets, Areas and Passages" were published in 1819.⁷² Beyond policing, additional powers were granted for the management of turnpike roads. By 1828 legislation existed whereby fines could be issued should "any person... play at foot-ball, tennis, fives, cricket... upon such road, or on the side or sides thereof... to the annoyance of any passenger or passengers".⁷³ This was bolstered by the Turnpike Roads (Scotland) Act of 1831 which consolidated existing legislation and provided additional powers. Extracts of the regulations covered by the new Act were published in the *Aberdeen Journal* in 1832 by the Aberdeenshire Justices of the Peace and Road Trustees as a result of "ongoing transgressions". Section 96 of the Act provides specific reference to football,

By this Section persons are prohibited from riding on footpaths;... flying kites, baiting bulls, playing at football, cricket, or any other game, upon the roads, or sides thereof, or on any exposed situation near thereto, to the annoyance of passengers; ...' (T. Burnett and N. Burnett, 1832: p. 4).

Beyond Aberdeenshire, there are numerous examples of the regulations being published in local newspapers, including Fife (1842), Edinburgh (1858), Dundee (1863), Montrose (1863) and Dundee again (1868).⁷⁴ In 1854 alone, the towns of Brechin, Perth and Dundee all passed similar regulations.⁷⁵ Scottish painter Alexander Carse [c.1770–1843], who is best known for capturing scenes relating to Scottish life, has three paintings of football games

⁷² Anonymous (1819) *Perthshire Courier*, 26 August, p. 1.

⁷³ See, Tait, G. (1828) *A summary of the powers and duties of the justice of the peace in Scotland*, 4th edn. Edinburgh: Alex Smellie, p. 229.

⁷⁴ See, Anonymous (1842) *Fifeshire Journal*, 17 November, p. 3, Anonymous (1858) *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 16 November, p. 2, Anonymous (1863) *Dundee Advertiser*, 15 August, p. 1, Anonymous (1863) *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*, 28 August, p. 1, and, Anonymous (1863) *Dundee Advertiser*, 15 August, p. 1.

⁷⁵ See, Anonymous (1854) *Brechin Advertiser*, 14 March, p. 1 (Brechin), Anonymous (1854) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 25 May, p. 4 (Perth), and, Anonymous (1854) *Northern Warder and General Advertiser*, 2 March, p. 4 (Dundee).

attributed to him.⁷⁶ One of these paintings, *The Village Ba' Game* (Figure 1.2), depicts a rather chaotic football contest on a village street which is believed to be from the Scottish Borders region. This type of game, once commonly seen in different parts of Scotland during the early nineteenth century was increasingly targeted by legislation.



Figure 1.2: Carse, A. (1818) *The Village Ba' Game* [Oil on Canvas]. Dundee: The McManus: Dundee's Art Gallery and Museum. By permission of Dundee Art Galleries and Museums.

Regulations were enforced and examples do emerge of people being caught and charged for playing football in the streets. The case at East Linton in East Lothian in 1850 created local consternation as the local police officer targeted an annual football match which was traditionally played through the village on the festival day of Fastern's E'en.⁷⁷ Four participants were brought before the Justice of the Peace in Haddington as a result. At Greenock in 1860 around a dozen local boys appeared at the local Police Court and pled guilty to "football and handball playing in various parts of the town".⁷⁸ In Aberdeenshire, "George Minty, shoemaker, and William Dick, plasterer", were fined five shillings at the local Justice of the Peace Court for "playing at foot-ball on the turnpike road at Turriff" in 1861.⁷⁹ In Berwickshire in 1868, "David Martin and five other persons, all belonging to Earlstoun" appeared before the Justice of the Peace Court "charged with playing a foot-ball upon the

⁷⁶ As well as *The Village Ba' Game*, Carse painted, *The Doonies versus the Croonies on New Year's Day* (c.1810) Orkney: Robertson Collection, and, *The Foot-Ball Play*, (c.1830) London: Priory Collection.

⁷⁷ Anonymous (1850) *Scotsman*, 13 April, p. 3.

⁷⁸ Anonymous (1860) *Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette*, 27 March, p. 1.

⁷⁹ Anonymous (1861) *Aberdeen Journal*, 19 June, p. 5.

streets of Earlstoun”,⁸⁰ while at St Andrews in 1871, five youths were prosecuted for playing at football in Church Square “in contravention of the 251st section of the Police Improvement Act [of 1871] and 9th of the Burgh Bye-Laws”.⁸¹

In other cases, the arrival of the police was enough to break up football games. For example, in Kirkwall in 1859 the prospect of a football game on the streets on Christmas Day by local ‘juveniles’ was abruptly halted on the appearance of local police officers.⁸² However, a trawl of newspapers has shown that cases of prosecution are relatively few and the examples that do exist relate to football being played on the streets. There was no total ban on football playing. Indeed, for the case at Greenock in 1860 the Bailie, whilst admonishing the boys for damaging property, told them that they could take games like football and handball outside of the town.

Section 2 – Evidence of football teams: 1824–1829

Early organised activity: 1824–1829

Within Scotland, Edinburgh offers some notable examples of organised football activity between 1824 and 1829. The establishment of John Hope’s ‘Foot-Ball Club’ by the winter months of 1824 provides a significant starting point to the study and will merit additional scrutiny later on in this thesis. It is the earliest known documented organisation which refers to itself as being a football club. Of equal importance is the fact that, as an organisation, the club focused solely on football and did not include any other sporting activities.⁸³ Hope appears to have been heavily involved in the running of the club and the archive that he left behind confirms his dominant role with respect to matters of general administration. The money that he raised from membership subscriptions was put to good use with land being leased for the exclusive use of the club members for their games. The opening page for the accounts of 1824-25 (Figure 1.3) provides a breakdown of the regular financial outgoings that were required to facilitate regular activity. These include payments made for the rent of the park and the regular supply of bladders and leather casings as well as pipes (for inflating the balls). Payment is also regularly made to a ‘boy’. Most likely this would have been for the unpleasant task of inflating the bladders within the leather casings⁸⁴ in the process of making the footballs although there may have been other tasks required like setting up the playing field ahead of games.

⁸⁰ Anonymous (1868) *Kelso Chronicle*, 31 July, p. 3.

⁸¹ Anonymous (1871) *Dundee Advertiser*, 8 April, p. 2.

⁸² Anonymous (1859) *John O’Groat Journal*, 6 January, p. 2.

⁸³ For more information, see, Foot-Ball Club (1825–1831) Accounts and other papers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/5/2. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

⁸⁴ A detailed description of the unpleasant process of inflating a raw animal bladder can be found in Fergusson, A. (1887) *Chronicles of the Cumming club and memories of old academy days 1841-46*. Edinburgh: T & A Constable, pp. 54-55.

Expenses of the Foot-Ball Club		£ s d
1824-1825		
4 Bladders		2
Cover for the foot-ball		2 6
Leather and Pipes		1
Bladders 4/ Sticks 4/		2
To Boys		1
To Boys		1
Allowing the above		1 6
To Boys 1/ To Boys 1/6		2 6
To Bladders 3/ Two Covers 2/6		8
To Boys 1/ To Boys 1/		2
To Bladders 2/ Boy 1/		3
For the Park 10/6		10 6
To Boys 1/ (12) Boy 1/ -		2
Bladders 2/ - Boy 2/ - Boy 2/		4
To Boys 3/ Cases 2/		8
Bladders 2/ Boy 2/ - Boy 2/ =		6 6
		2 19 6

Figure 1.3: Foot-Ball Club (1824–1831) Expenses of the Foot-Ball Club. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

For the following season of 1825–26 the cost of renting Dalry Park was £1. 1. 0.⁸⁵ Other expenses incurred by Hope included the cost of producing circulars which were used to inform the membership of future games. The amount owed to printing firm Duncan Stevenson & Co. for printing 100 circulars in December 1827 was £0. 5. 6.⁸⁶ The club appears to have been in a healthy and stable condition under Hope's guidance; the football club's balance as recorded on 22 July, 1828 was £4. 11. 0. A brief list of 'Stock on hand' which was provided by Hope included "5 bladders, 2 excellent cases and one used".⁸⁷

While Hope's Foot-Ball Club clearly stands out as a pioneering influence at such an early stage in the evolution of football, the author has confirmed the existence of a second sporting fraternity in Edinburgh which played football during this period. An 'Edinburgh Foot-Ball Society' can be found in a newspaper report from 1828.⁸⁸ The article refers to an

⁸⁵ Foot-Ball Club (1825–1831) Accounts and other papers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/5/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

⁸⁶ Foot-Ball Club (1825–1831) Accounts and other papers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/5/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

⁸⁷ Foot-Ball Club (1825–1831) Accounts and other papers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/5/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

⁸⁸ I am grateful to Javier Terenti, a football historian with Seville FC, for informing me of the existence of the article in 2019.

annual dinner taking place at the New Slaughter's Tavern in Stockbridge.⁸⁹ The membership of the society appears to be healthy with approximately 60 members in attendance at the dinner. Whilst it was plausible that this organisation could in fact be John Hope's Foot-Ball Club, numerous conflicting evidence within the article point to the Foot-Ball Club and the Foot-Ball Society as being completely separate entities.

The first and obvious difference is in the two names, a variance which, if taken in isolation, could be put down to the artistic license of the journalist writing the article. This, however, leads on to additional conflicting details. Another discrepancy relates to the respective years of formation. The article states that the Foot-Ball Society had been established for the last two years, suggesting 1826 as the year of formation, while the Foot-Ball Club can be traced back to 1824. The article also points to the Society being a multi-sport organisation, stating that,

This Society has for its object the practice of those athletic exercises engaged in by the Six Feet, Border and Highland Clubs, &c., viz., throwing the hammer, putting the stone, quoits, running and leaping, with the addition of the highly spirited and national game of foot-ball.⁹⁰

In contrast, the detailed archive relating to the Foot-Ball Club, held at the National Records of Scotland, provides no evidence of any of these games being part of the activities of the Foot-Ball Club. Hope, in private financial correspondence, does note down separate transactions for renting Dalry Park between 1825 and 1827: one for the practise of archery over the summer months and the other for organising football games over the winter months but they are separate payments for separate activities covering separate times of the year.⁹¹ Importantly, the accounts book of the Foot-Ball Club provides no detail of expenditure for anything other than football. Numerous orders exist for football equipment such as bladders, leather cases and hail sticks (goalposts) but there is nothing in the accounts for equipment relating to other sports.

Additional evidence can be found in the separate meeting locations of the respective organisations: the article of 1828 states that the Foot-Ball Society organised its meetings on the Bruntsfield Links. This contrasts with the Foot-Ball Club which leased land at Dalry Park from 1824 to 1831.⁹² While the district of Dalry is reasonably close to Bruntsfield Links they are noticeably distinctive areas within the city being more than half a mile apart. Conclusive

⁸⁹ Anonymous (1828) *Caledonian Mercury*, 13 November, p. 3.

⁹⁰ Anonymous (1828) *Caledonian Mercury*, 13 November, p. 3.

⁹¹ The first financial note states that archery took place in the summer of 1825 while the football activity took place from 12 November, 1825 to 12 March, 1826. A second note from January 1827 refers to the separate activities taking place at different seasons over 1826 and 1827. See, Foot-Ball Club (1825–1831) Accounts and other papers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/5/2. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

⁹² George and Janet Spence rented Dalry Park to the Football Club between 1824 and 1831. See, Hutchinson, J. and Mitchell, A. (2018) *1824: the world's first football club: John Hope and the Edinburgh footballers; a story of sport, education and philanthropy*. Dunblane: Andy Mitchell Media, p. 188.

evidence of the separate existence of the two organisations was uncovered by the author in a *Caledonian Mercury* article from 1829. The article in question refers to the Foot-Ball Society changing its name to the 'Philathletic Club' and remarked that it was "...the only gymnastic association in Edinburgh where that highly-spirited and manly Scottish game [football] is regularly played".⁹³

That Edinburgh by the latter half of the 1820s could host two clubs of young men who enjoyed playing football should really come as no surprise. These clubs were merely an extension of the numerous sporting clubs and societies that already existed within the city. The aforementioned Six Feet Club was an athletic society which met up at Hunter's Tryst close to Colinton in the south-west of the city. The name of the club referred to the entry requirement for members; they had to be at least six feet in height, although celebrated author Sir Walter Scott was given honorary membership to the club despite being below the height threshold.⁹⁴ An older sporting organisation was the Gymnastic Club, which had been founded in 1786 by physician Dr Andrew Duncan.⁹⁵ This club enjoyed golf, bowls and swimming.⁹⁶ The city was home to some of the earliest golf clubs and societies. The Royal Burgess Golf Society was founded as early as 1735 on the Bruntsfield Links and is the oldest golfing organisation in the world.⁹⁷ Another fraternity, The Company of Gentlemen Golfers (later becoming The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers) was founded in 1744 while the Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society was established in 1761.⁹⁸ Finally, the Royal Company of Archers, which in 1822 became the King's ceremonial bodyguard in Scotland, can be traced back to 1676 when it was first established as a private club.⁹⁹

As well as being the preserve of two clubs, football was an organised activity within the Scottish regiments of the British Army. For at least three Saturdays in March 1828 the 92nd (Gordon) Highlanders staged their own gymnastic games on the Bruntsfield Links. An account of the games states that "A large oblong square being formed, leaping, running, football, not forgetting the dance, then took place free from all interruption to the high gratification of the spectators".¹⁰⁰ Organised football activities could be found elsewhere during the latter half of the 1820s. In 1825 the Border Games was established by James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, at Mount Benger near Yarrow in the Scottish Borders. After the

⁹³ Anonymous (1829) *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 November, p. 2.

⁹⁴ See, Grant, J. (1881) *Old and new Edinburgh. Its history its people and its places*, Vol 3. London: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co, pp. 125-126.

⁹⁵ See, Chalmers, J. (2010) *Andrew Duncan senior: physician of the enlightenment*. Edinburgh: National Museums Scotland, p. 128.

⁹⁶ Chalmers, J. (2010) *Andrew Duncan senior: physician of the enlightenment*. Edinburgh: National Museums Scotland, p. 128.

⁹⁷ Haynes, N. (2014) *Scotland's sporting buildings*. Edinburgh: Historic Scotland, p. 59.

⁹⁸ For the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, see, Mair, N. (1994) *Muirfield: home of the honourable company (1744–1994)*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, pp. 21-25. For the Bruntsfield Links Golfing Society, see, Campbell, M. (1999) *The Scottish golf book*. Edinburgh: Lomond Books, p. 150.

⁹⁹ Burnett, J. (2000) *Riot, revelry and rout: sport in lowland Scotland before 1860*. East Linton: Tuckwell Press, pp. 156-157.

¹⁰⁰ See, Anonymous (1828) *Scotsman*, 2 April, p. 6.

athletic sports had concluded, a football game was contested with 30 players on each side representing Ettrick and Yarrow.¹⁰¹ The Border Games of 1828, by now under the patronage of the St Ronan's Border Club, also featured football although handball was the preferred game the following year.¹⁰²

Another location for football activity was Glasgow University. Football at the old college on the High Street could be traced back to the eighteenth century¹⁰³ and the game, alongside other sports, was very popular by the early nineteenth century.¹⁰⁴ A more detailed study of the variety of football games that were played at Glasgow University will appear in the next section, but even by 1826 the popularity of the game can be found in contemporary correspondence. The correspondent was Erasmus Alvey Darwin, the brother of Charles Darwin. Writing to his brother, Erasmus refers to the students playing football within the precincts of the university.¹⁰⁵

Overview

The evidence which has been presented shows that whilst examples of decline can be found in different parts of Scotland, for the most part the examples did not represent a total eradication of football. In many cases football continued to be played within the areas concerned or were taken up again a few years later. Various reasons can be made for the temporary downturn in such activity ranging from the loss of designated land for football games to the impact of migration, particularly within smaller urban communities.

Furthermore, the legislation which sought to curb football activity during this period related in the main to urbanised areas and public streets. As will be seen, football continued to be played in sanctioned places, such as public parks, sports grounds, private fields and, through the active support of the landed gentry, on the lawns of stately homes. These games did not present a threat or challenge to authority and not only were they permitted, but judging by the significant degree of patronage involved, in many cases they were actively encouraged. For the social elite, sporting clubs and societies flourished, and it should therefore be less of a surprise that Edinburgh would become an early home to recreational organisations devoted to football.

¹⁰¹ Anonymous (1825) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 10 April, p. 7.

¹⁰² Anonymous (1828) *Scotsman*, 29 March, p. 7, and, Anonymous (1829) *Caledonian Mercury*, 28 March, p. 3.

¹⁰³ See, Murray, D. (1927) *Memories of the Old College of Glasgow*. Glasgow: Jackson, Wylie and Co., p. 442.

¹⁰⁴ An excellent article which details football activity, amongst other sports, at the university can be found in, *A Legend of Glasgow College* (1840) *The Glasgow University album*. Glasgow: Glasgow University, pp. 160-161.

¹⁰⁵ Darwin, E. A. (1826) Letter from Erasmus Alvey Darwin to his brother Charles, [9 March], *Charles Darwin Project Archive*, DCP-LETT-26. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

After looking at this early nineteenth century era, the following section identifies examples of football teams around Scotland for the period running from 1830-1859. In doing so it examines the methodology used by Adrian Harvey and builds on his work by providing evidence of additional teams.

Section 3 – An evaluation of Harvey’s methodology for the era 1830-1859

Introduction

The study of organised football teams for this period builds upon the work of Adrian Harvey. Writing in 2005, Harvey first compiled a list of 93 football teams from across Britain.¹⁰⁶ In 2016, he added to his earlier research by extending the number of football teams to 108.¹⁰⁷ The categories that Harvey settled on as part of his study were primarily shaped by the ongoing origins of football debate which had separated those involved into two camps; orthodox and revisionist. As an academic on the revisionist side of the debate, one aspect of his methodology was to compare public school activity with non-public school activity in order to highlight the higher prevalence of the latter group.

In Harvey’s 2016 article he created three categories to achieve this goal. Category 1 related to public schools which were extended out from major institutions like Eton, Harrow and Rugby to include less prestigious ones like Lancing College and Cheltenham College. Two football clubs were also included in this category as their memberships consisted solely of former pupils from public schools.¹⁰⁸ Category 2 related to formal non-public school teams; in Harvey’s own words, “those teams outside of the public schools which were active”. Harvey further explains the use of the term ‘formal’ as referring to teams which had played at least two games. Finally, Category 3 covered informal non-public school teams; what Harvey considered to be “those teams outside of the public schools who were less active”. Teams in this category were recorded as playing one game (Harvey, 2016: p. 273).

The first category unearthed a total of 18 teams, while the second category produced by far the largest number of teams, accounting for 80 out of the 108 that appeared in the study. The third category produced 10 teams. Looking specifically at the Scottish data, Harvey listed 11 teams. There are no references for teams in Category 1, but nine teams appear in Category 2 and two appear in Category 3. Harvey stresses the point that the categorisation of teams is subjective and that, “it is fully possible that the receipt of further information

¹⁰⁶ Harvey, A. (2005) *Football: the first hundred years: the untold story*. London: Routledge, pp. 59-61.

¹⁰⁷ Harvey, A. (2016) ‘The public schools and organized football in Britain: Fresh perspectives on old paradigms’, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 33(3), pp. 272–288.

¹⁰⁸ Harvey, A. (2016) ‘The public schools and organized football in Britain: Fresh perspectives on old paradigms’, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 33(3), p. 273 (Harvey includes Blackheath FC and Wanderers FC).

might lead to the transfer of teams between categories 2 and 3 of the divisions made in the study” (Harvey, 2016: p. 274).

His 2016 discovery of new teams has added greatly to the knowledge base of the development of organised football for this era. However, some aspects of his methodology and his limited knowledge of the Scottish content need to be addressed. In the study, John Hope’s Foot-Ball Club is wrongly listed under ‘Edinburgh University’. While Hope, the founder of the club, was a student at the university, the club itself had no affiliation to the university. Whilst this does not affect the placing of the club within Harvey’s own system, it does present a problem when attempting to place it within a more detailed classification framework. A second error relates to Harvey’s placing of Merchiston Castle School under Category 2 — formal non-public school teams. As this school was a private or independent establishment during the period in question, a fairer assessment would be to regard it as a Scottish counterpart of the English public-school model. It should therefore be placed in Category 1.

Harvey refers to the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders as the ‘Edinburgh 93rd Rifles’ implying that the regiment was an Edinburgh organisation. Whilst the regiment was based in Edinburgh at the time of the football activity which Harvey uncovered, it was in fact a Highland regiment. Harvey places the Deanston Cotton Mill workers and Blair Drummond Estate workers in Category 3. However, the newspaper passage relating to the game makes clear that the success of the former team over the latter was down to the fact that they practised more regularly. This provides evidence of more regular organised activity, making a case for the Deanston players to be placed in Category 2. Another adjustment to Harvey’s data relates to the Glasgow Celtic Society. In the game that is recorded involving society members, two distinctive teams are listed. For the purpose of the author’s own study, this has been acknowledged in the data. This approach differs from Harvey who cites the organisation as being the sole entry in his study.

A final point relates to the Edinburgh University Football Club of 1851 which organises matches against other clubs as well as playing at least one internal game with clearly defined teams.¹⁰⁹ All of these games are recorded within a few months of each other. In this particular circumstance the author has acted in accordance with Harvey’s own approach by singularly listing the club within his own survey. The difference between the university football club and the Glasgow Celtic Society is that with the former the arrangement of external matches against other teams was clearly an important objective. The club played as a singular team in such circumstances and are thus being assessed on that basis. The latter organisation appears only to have arranged internal matches for the exclusive recreation of

¹⁰⁹ In 1851 the football club hosted a match between ‘English members’ and ‘Scottish members’. See, One of England’s Rising Generation and an Admirer of Her Sports (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 9 March, p. 7.

its membership. The creation of two distinctive teams in order to facilitate these games is therefore reflected.

In accordance with Harvey's study, the author's own survey of activity primarily map out evidence of organised football activity based around the existence of teams. It is not intended to record every individual football game that was played over the period in question. This is an important point because within the origins of football debate, Harvey received criticism from Tony Collins (T. Collins, 2015: p. 1134) with respect to the relative lack of non-public school games that appear within his specified timeframe of 1830-1859 (Collins, quoting from Harvey's 2005 book, *Football: the first hundred years*, refers to the tally of 93 teams and 58 games over the 30 year period). On the other hand, Swain's attempt to increase the volume of non-public schools football activity, through the publication of four linked articles (Swain, 2014a, 2014b, 2015a, 2015b), drew criticism from Curry and Dunning for a "lack of qualitative data" (Curry and Dunning, 2016: p. 241). They go on to state that,

...in his pursuit of quantity rather than quality in terms of data and in his anxiety to disprove assertions about a lack of meaningful activity, Swain has revealed a lengthy list of games played as 'kickabouts' by participants of minimal influence (Curry and Dunning, 2016: p. 240).

The approach of this thesis is to attempt to strike a balance between the addition of new data, contributing further to the general academic debate, whilst ensuring that a qualitative approach is followed. While it can be argued that Swain's methodology adopted a scattergun approach, the author's own view of informal games, referenced by Curry and Dunning as being kickabouts, is that they form part of the history of organised football activity for the period if the evidence points to them being structured activities.

The updated position based on Harvey's methodology

Building on the work of Harvey, Table 1.1 (see, Appendix 1) provides an updated list which includes the author's own research into football teams (including clubs) between 1830 and 1859. This has increased the number of references in Scotland for this period from 11 to 69. Whilst there are many more examples of football teams appearing in Scotland between 1830 and 1859, the associated football activity does not provide adequate detail at present to merit serious consideration for a study of organised football. Looser or less defined games have traditionally been labelled as 'mob football'. However, even these chaotic and often violent contests retain the basic principle of teams competing against each other with the objective of driving the ball into, over or through designated goals.

Clearly the level of organisation will differ significantly when comparing unruly street football contests like that portrayed in Alexander Carse's *Village Ba' Game* (Figure 1.2) with the more structured games enjoyed by the members of John Hope's Foot-Ball Club. A line

needs to be drawn to separate organised football games from looser or less clear forms of activity. The inclusion of football teams for this study has therefore been selected using a set of criteria which individually provide evidence of more structured activity. The criteria used is as follows:

- Evidence of equal numbers.
- Evidence of equipment such as goalposts and / or designated team colours.
- Evidence of umpires and / or other officials.
- Evidence of regular practice / regular games.
- Evidence of patronage / support from institutions.
- Evidence of agreed rules.
- Evidence of team formations.
- Evidence of betting / wagers / prizes.

As touched upon earlier, another important point to make is that the 69 examples of football activity listed in Table 1.1 involve football teams, but they do not represent 69 individual teams. For a significant number of the entries, only the host organisation is listed (for example the school, regiment or club) where the evidence relates to well organised internal matches being played but where there is insufficient detail as to the actual teams. For example, the annual excursion of John Hope's British League of Juvenile Abstainers for the year 1859 had an estimated 1,600 boys in attendance¹¹⁰ and the organisation had the capacity to run six football games concurrently with supervisors, equipment and playing fields in place to meet the demand.¹¹¹

The exact number of teams is not known but the scale of operations suggests that many organised football games would have been arranged in tandem with other recreational activities over the course of the event. This was an annual occurrence and there is enough information on the British League excursion of 1852 to merit inclusion in Table 1.1. Indeed, one newspaper article states that Hope in 1852 was organising "meetings with the juveniles in different parts of the town, to arrange as to the games, and to form the lads into football parties..."¹¹²

In contrast to the multiple team activity of the British League excursions of 1852 and 1859, the challenge match between Methven and Pitcairngreen in 1856 provides a clear example of individual teams which are distinguishable from one another.¹¹³ Additionally, the two listings for the Edinburgh University Football Club are based on evidence which suggests that they are separate organisations playing different types of games; the first entry from 1851¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Anonymous (1859) *North Briton*, 20 July, p. 2.

¹¹¹ See, British League of Juvenile Abstainers (1848–1866) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/181/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

¹¹² Anonymous (1852) *Christian News*, 29 July, p. 1.

¹¹³ See, Anonymous (1856) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 5 June, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ A Spectator (1851) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 February, p. 6.

predates the introduction of rugby rules while the second reference relates to the beginning of the rugby football playing club in 1857.¹¹⁵ The above data has been fed into Harvey's own classification system (see Figure 1.4). In doing so some adjustments to Harvey's own data, as outlined earlier, has been undertaken. For instance the Academical Football Club was placed in category 1, as it is a club made up exclusively of former pupils of a private school.¹¹⁶ Finally, aligning with Harvey, Scottish university teams have been included within the second category. The comparison of percentages between the author's study and that of Harvey's study are appreciably different. For example, the results for Category 1, 'public [private] school teams', within the author's study, amounts to six percent compared with Harvey's tally of 17 percent. The author's findings for Category 2, 'formal non-public school teams who are active', at 32 percent, is considerably lower than Harvey's total of 74 percent. Finally, with Category 3, 'informal non-public school teams who are less active', the gulf between the figures is particularly pronounced; Harvey's own figure of nine percent compares with the author's total of 62 percent.

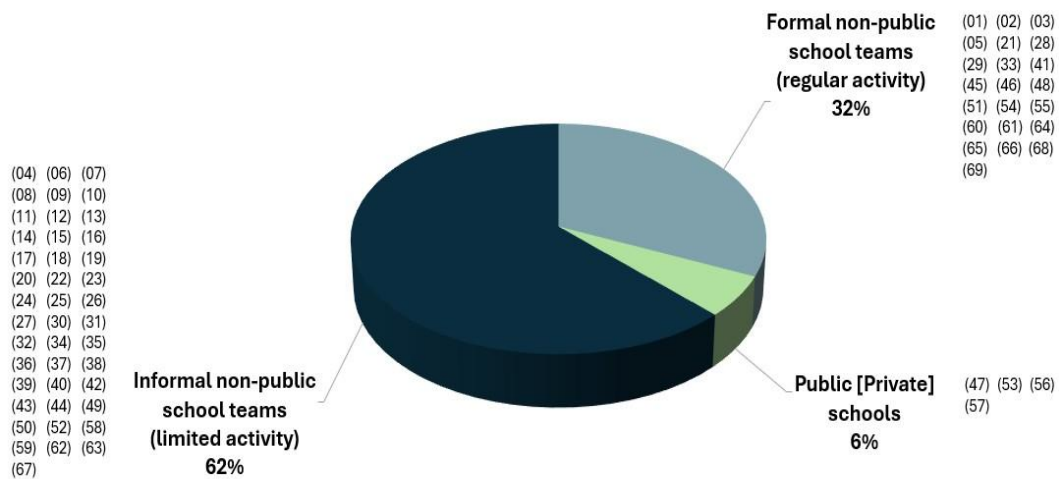


Figure 1.4: Breakdown of football team activity in Scotland based on Harvey's methodology, 1830–1859. The list of numbers identifying the team activity can be cross-referenced in Table 1.1 (See Appendix 1).

The significant percentage differences for Categories 2 and 3 can, in part, be attributed to the author's assessment on a case-by-case basis of where each data entry should be placed. Harvey, for example, suggests that the 'informal' category should be restricted to teams where just one game is recorded. However, whilst the football matches surrounding annual customs tend to be recurring, the fact that only one match is played per year suggests that they are infrequent and should not be placed in a category alongside examples of active teams where the football activity is much more regular. By applying this criterion, a significant number of the new examples discovered by the author have been placed in

¹¹⁵ Anonymous (1858) *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 19 January, p. 2.

¹¹⁶ As referenced earlier, Harvey placed the Blackheath and Forest football clubs under Category 1 as the membership of these clubs was made up solely of former pupils from public schools.

Category 3. This particular classification system, which is aimed primarily at highlighting the large number of non-public school football teams in Britain for the period concerned, is not nuanced enough to adequately map out the different types of football teams that existed during the period. Harvey, indeed, recognises this and devotes a section of his book to the “geographical, economic and social composition of football teams in Britain” between 1800 and 1859 (Harvey, 2005: pp. 55-75). Within this particular study, he undertakes a “detailed analysis of each particular sort of team” separating the teams into the following five main subsets; Local, Schools, Clubs, Military and Occupations (Harvey, 2005: pp. 71-75).

Building upon this methodology, the 69 examples of organised football activity in Scotland which form part of the author’s study can be divided up into at least 10 subsets. The categorisation system that the author has created takes account of the multiple identities of many of the football teams. For example, the Edinburgh University Football Club from 1851 can be regarded as being a football club but it is also linked to an educational institution. Likewise, the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders who played football games at their athletic sports meeting in Dundee in 1849 can be classified as a military team. However, they can also separately be classified under occupation (soldiers), are linked to a sports meeting and can be categorised as migrants within the locality where the football activity is recorded.

Section 4 – A new approach to analysing football teams (including clubs): 1830-1859

The diversity of football teams

As previously mentioned, the identities of the football teams are nuanced and this is visually articulated with Figure 1.5 and Figure 1.6. The first of the graphs provides a ‘general grouping’ of the 69 team examples where the 109 corresponding data points from the ‘football team by type’ found in Table 1.1 has been collated. The second of the graphs analyses the same data but provides an ‘individual breakdown’ to highlight the multifaceted identities that many of the football teams display. For instance, of the seven ‘Army / Military’ examples that can be found in Figure 1.5, it can be seen that in Figure 1.6, migration appears as a prominent characteristic due to the fact that the teams were recorded playing football in a different location from where the regiments and militia units had been raised. In addition to this, two of the examples are connected to athletic sports events (the 93rd Highlanders at Dundee in 1849 and the 27th Regiment at Stirling in 1850). With the 15 examples that come under ‘Education / Former Pupils’ in Figure 1.5, six teams were directly connected to schools or universities with no connection to the other categories while a further seven were recorded as being football clubs. In addition to this, one of the examples

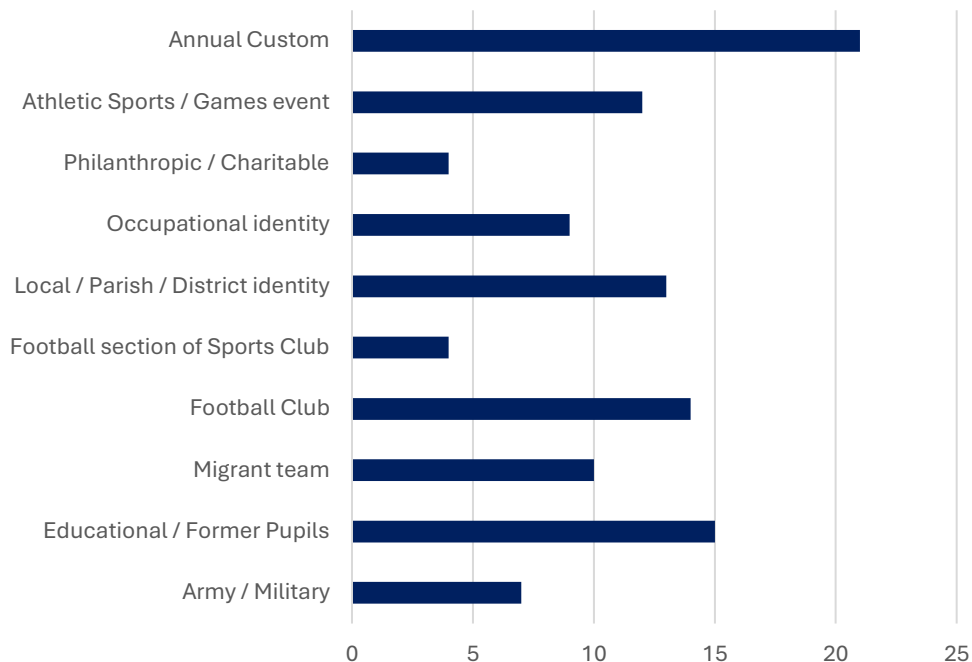


Figure 1.5: General grouping of football teams (including football clubs) listed by Type, 1830-1859. As compiled from the data listed in Table 1.1 (See Appendix 1).

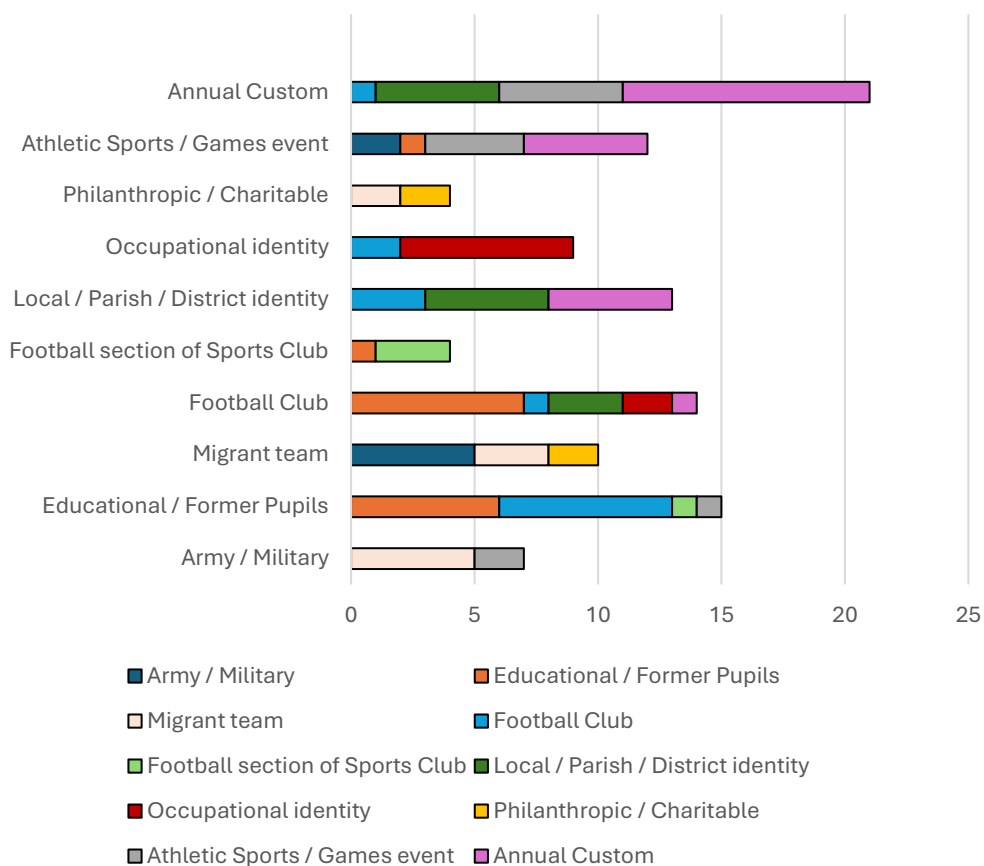


Figure 1.6: Individual breakdown of football teams (including football clubs) listed by Type, 1830-1859. As compiled from the data listed in Table 1.1 (See Appendix 1).

was linked to a sports club (Kings College Shinty Club) while another was linked to a sporting event (the 'Scottish Games' held at Montrose Academy in 1850).

An interesting development can be found with respect to the football activity linked to the traditional annual customs which form the largest category. These games were generally believed by the early football historians to be unruly, even violent in nature, but clearly a lot of the activity that has been recorded within this study does not concur with that description. These traditional customs were still deemed to form an important part of local identity within communities. However, the nature of these games evolved. While the 'annual custom' football games were traditional events which newspapers often referred to as having been played 'since time immemorial', it can be seen that modern formats (athletic sports meetings) were starting to appear, particularly at Christmas Day and New Year's Day. The respective categories for 'Annual Custom' and 'Athletic Sport / Games Event' illustrate the links. A close examination of the data shows that, overall, five of the 21 examples for annual customs (24 percent) were linked to athletic sports meetings. The overall image presented is a patchwork of diverse football activity which all appear to have one thing in common – in an era of significant societal change, each of the examples do not pose a threat to authority. The fact that many of the games recorded within this category received patronage, were allocated designated spaces and were limited in terms of numbers, meant that they presented no threat or challenge to civic control or public order.

The regularity of football activity

An important area to explore from the list of 69 examples is the regularity of football activity. Figure 1.7 provides a breakdown of the frequency in which these organised football games took place.

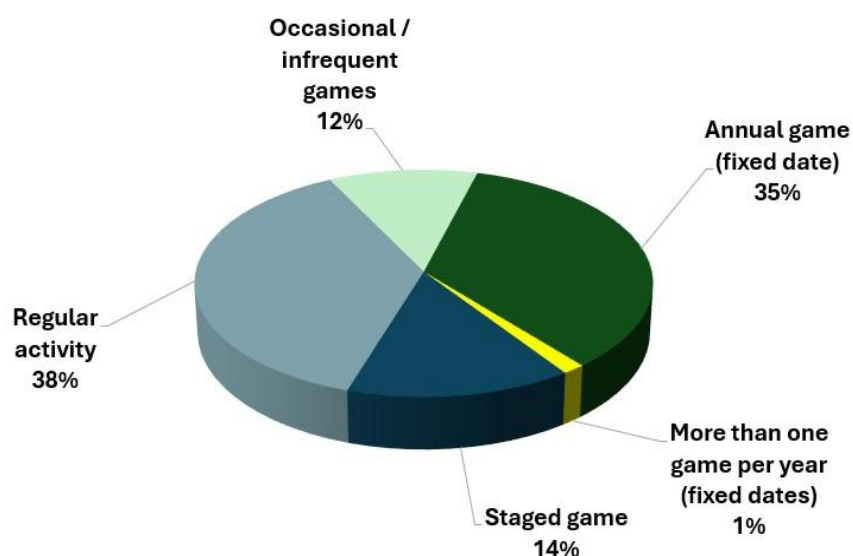


Figure 1.7: Regularity of football activity (including football clubs), 1830-1859. As compiled from the data listed in Table 1.1 (See Appendix 1).

As might be expected, with matches linked to the annual customs being the largest single category within Figure 1.5, the number of annual games is high with more than a third (35 percent) of all recorded games being played annually to a fixed date. The largest category overall, however, relates to regular activity. A sizeable percentage of 38 is recorded which is spread out across a number of the categories within Figure 1.5. This includes football clubs, teams linked to education, such as the school teams and university faculty teams, and teams connected to army regiments. The third largest category, staged games, at 14 percent may be inflated due to the lack of evidence at present relating to follow up games. This category could therefore reduce in size with the category for regular activity benefitting, should more information come to light.

Section 5 – Evidence of teams and organised activity: 1830-1859

Introduction

An initial assessment of Table 1.1 flags up significantly different reasons behind the staging of many of the team-based games, ranging from regular football club activity to annual football games linked to festivals and traditional customs. Although the inclusion of games where there is clear evidence of mass participation¹¹⁷ has been avoided there is a significant variance in the numbers involved between many of the games. At the lower end of the spectrum, the game at Redhall in 1851 was played at 10-a-side, while at the upper end, the games involving soldiers from the 27th Regiment in 1850 had between 60 and 70 on either side.¹¹⁸ There is also a diverse geographical spread of the teams, stretching from the Scottish Borders to Ross-shire.¹¹⁹ However, within this overall figure it can be seen that there is a concentration of organised football activity recorded in Edinburgh (15) and Perthshire (15) which, when taken together, account for 45 percent of all entries. The latter grouping can, to a degree, be explained by the in-depth study of football which was undertaken across the county by Baxter.¹²⁰ Many of the entries listed for Perthshire can be found in his book.

The Edinburgh examples highlight the early emergence of football clubs in the city, the support provided by educational institutions and the strategic importance of the city as a host for army garrisons. One particular area which provides evidence of organised activity is the description of material culture linked to football contests, in the form of football equipment and team uniforms. The following section will briefly examine this area.

¹¹⁷ For the context of the study, mass participation games have been judged by the author to amount to 70+ players on each side. This consideration therefore allows for the game involving the 27th Regiment at Stirling in 1850 which had between 60 and 70 participants on each side.

¹¹⁸ Anonymous (1850) *Stirling Observer*, 2 May, p. 4, and, Anonymous (1851) *Aberdeen Journal*, 15 January, p. 5.

¹¹⁹ See, Anonymous (1838) *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 August, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1859) *Inverness Courier*, 6 January, p. 6.

¹²⁰ See, Baxter, P. (1898) *Football in Perthshire: past and present*. Perth: T. Hunter.

Evidence of equipment

When viewed collectively, evidence of equipment such as footballs and goalposts can be found in the provision of a number of the football games. For example, this can be seen in the accounts of the Foot-Ball Club in Edinburgh which in 1831 records the payment of a shilling for ‘hail sticks’ (goalposts).¹²¹ The match at Dunning in 1832 between two teams drawn from a company of the 78th Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs) provides evidence of the use of posts for a football game. Baxter states that great preparations were made for the match and that a... “resident of Dunning yet alive remembers seeing the white poles at each end of the field” (Baxter, 1898: p. 41). The British League of Juvenile Abstiners provides additional examples from their annual excursion of 1852. Point 22 of the Programme of Events provides the following information,

22. The Boys are particularly reminded that the space for each game of Foot-ball will be indicated by poles – that they of each game must endeavour to confine the ball within that space – that the ball must be driven between the poles – that it is “poor play” to kick the ball out of bounds, but that when that occurs, it must be picked up and carried within bounds again.¹²²

The playground at Stockbridge which Hope opened in 1854 included a physical football field. As part of the general preparations to make the park suitable for a variety of sports, “posts were erected for the football goals”.¹²³ Finally, the rugby type games of the late 1850s afford evidence of equipment. For example, the match between the Edinburgh Academy and Merchiston Castle school teams in 1858 provides detail on the use of goalposts. The *Merchiston Chronicle* observes that the difference in the size of the goals used by the respective schools was noticeable, stating that... “the Academy goals were a good deal easier than ours, being both lower and broader”.¹²⁴

With respect to the sourcing of footballs, the records pertaining to Hope’s Foot-Ball Club provide some illumination. The club was in a position to procure footballs and as Hutchinson and Mitchell attest, employed the services of a man, James Stewart, who between 1827 and 1835, was paid one shilling per week (with an occasional bonus) to supply the footballs and, in general, oversee the supply of equipment (Hutchinson and Mitchell, 2018: p. 187). In general, for the period in question, it can be said that with different types of leather often

¹²¹ Rather than act as goalposts in a conventional sense (i.e. positioned a short distance apart from each other) the hail sticks may have marked out the width of the playing field at either end, creating a much wider target to drive the ball through, as Hope’s rules of 1833 refer to a goal being scored when the ball crosses an imaginary line. See, Foot-Ball Club (1825–1831) Accounts and other papers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/5/6. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

¹²² See, British League of Juvenile Abstiners (1848–1866) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstiners. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/181/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

¹²³ Jamie, D. (1900) *John Hope, philanthropist and reformer*. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, p. 302.

¹²⁴ *One hundred years at Raeburn Place, 1854-1954* (1954). Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Academical Football Club, pp. 36-37.

being used for the outer casings and different animal bladders being used to inflate the balls, traditional footballs were far from uniform in terms of size, weight and shape.¹²⁵

Technological advances in the manufacture of footballs start to appear in Scotland in the 1850s. As early as 1854, footballs made from vulcanised rubber were starting to be retailed in Edinburgh.¹²⁶ David Murray states that in his “younger days” [1850s / 1860s] the football was an “ox bladder enclosed in a leather casing, but latterly a bag of India-rubber similarly enclosed came into use” (D. Murray, 1927: p. 445). By the end of the decade the Royal Polytechnic warehouse in Glasgow was advertising “Large India Rubber Foot Balls” in local newspapers as far apart as Kilmarnock and Stirling.¹²⁷

Evidence of team colours and uniforms

Evidence of team colours can be found in a number of the games. The match near Dunning in Perthshire involving the weavers and the ploughmen around 1853 provides a notable example. Baxter describes the players as being clean and tidy at the outset of the game, wearing white moleskin trousers, “each side wearing a distinguishing scarf round the waist”.¹²⁸ Baxter’s description of the game is that of a rough and physical contest, but it was played with a defined set of numbers on each side. This could range from 15-a-side up to 30-a-side.¹²⁹ In the games at Cargill in Perthshire whilst team colours are not referenced, the players did consider what footwear to use for the games. Baxter states that, “Players wore as light boots as possible, and a pair of ordinary drawers did for pants” (Baxter, 1898: pp. 44-45).

A visual representation of teams wearing different uniforms can be found in the 1851 football medallion (Figure 1.8). The obverse side of the medallion has an engraving which depicts a scene from the game. The players from the highland regiment can be seen in military uniform with distinctive tartan kilts and Tam O’ Shanter caps while the students are wearing long trousers, tight jackets and caps. In the rules created by John Hope in 1854, for his playground at Stockbridge, the purchase of British League caps was encouraged to ‘distinguish sides’; the idea being that one of the teams would choose to wear the caps.

¹²⁵ A reminiscence of Yuletide football at Unst in the Shetland Isles (c.1830s) states that an ox or pig’s bladder “carefully salted” was used while a tanned hide cut into quarters and hand stitched served as the outer casing. The memoir of Dr Alexander Fraser states that at Lochgilphead in Argyll (January 1864), he was sent as a child to a local butcher’s shop to buy the animal bladder. He states that there were three types of animal bladder that could be used but that a pig’s bladder was preferred to the “inferior” sheep and cow. See, An Old Shetlander (1881) Yule-time in Shetland. In: Chambers, W. and Chambers, R. *Chambers’s journal of popular literature, science and art*. 4(18) (December 24), pp. 818-820. Also, Fraser, A. D. (1907) *Some reminiscences and the bagpipe*. Edinburgh: Wm. J. Hay, p. 73.

¹²⁶ Anonymous (1854) *Edinburgh News*, 4 March, p. 1.

¹²⁷ See, Anonymous (1860) *Kilmarnock Weekly Post*, 30 June, p. 1, and, Anonymous (1860) *Stirling Observer*, 20 December, p. 4.

¹²⁸ Baxter, P. (1898) *Football in Perthshire: past and present*. Perth: T. Hunter, p. 42.

¹²⁹ Baxter, P. (1898) *Football in Perthshire: past and present*. Perth: T. Hunter, p. 42.

Another way to distinguish teams was to use coloured badges. This can be seen in the game organised by the Glasgow Celtic Society at Elderslie House in Renfrew in 1859. A shinty match was initially played followed by a football game. The players were divided into two equal teams and wore red and blue badges to distinguish themselves from their opponents. The wearing of badges as a form of uniform can be traced back to an earlier period. In 1835 at the mass participation football game at Scone, red badges and white badges were used to differentiate between the 200 men on the married team and the 150 men on the unmarried team.¹³⁰ Earlier still, in 1816, blue and orange badges were adopted to differentiate the teams at an Old New Year's Day (12th January) meeting at Newton Stewart.¹³¹ This method would continue into the latter part of the 1860s; in 1868 the Queen's Park Club would present its players with badges which were to be worn on the right arm to distinguish sides



Figure 1.8: McKay, J. (1851) *Football Medallion* [Silver]. Stirling: The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum. The match between the 93rd Highlanders and Edinburgh University FC was played on a level area of Holyrood Park located behind the palace. The distinctive hills of the park can be seen in the distance on the engraving. By permission of The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum.

¹³⁰ See, Anonymous (1835) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 3 December, p. 3.

¹³¹ Anonymous (1816) *Caledonian Mercury*, 29 January, p. 4.

for internal matches.¹³² It is evident when looking at the above examples that some of the basic elements required for structured games were already in place. This suggests that football in Scotland as an organised activity may have evolved over a longer period of time.

Evidence of football clubs

An examination of football clubs operating in Scotland between 1830 and 1859 has uncovered 14 examples. They can be found in Table 1.2 (See Appendix 2). The Springkell Club throws up a significant challenge with respect to its inclusion as the proposed year of formation (c.1840) is referenced many years later in the *Football Annual* of 1870.¹³³ However, the answer provided in the club entry for the year of formation is, “Been in existence for 30 years”. The hands on role of Sir John Heron-Maxwell (the 62 year old 4th Baronet and proprietor of Springkell House) who is the club’s sole point of contact within the entry and is accorded the titles of ‘Patron and President’, conveys a personal and longstanding connection, linked to patronage, which is difficult to dismiss.

As will be seen, although the Springkell Club is listed as playing to the association code in the 1870 entry, this most likely was a recent development, taking place at some point after 1866 when John Douglas, the 9th Marquess of Queensberry, started to promote the association game in Dumfriesshire. However, there is evidence of traditional games being hosted annually on New Year’s Day at Springkell; this was already an established activity when it is recorded in the *Carlisle Patriot* in 1856 and was still being arranged in 1873.¹³⁴ The latter account suggests that the annual custom could be traced back into the 1840s. The subsequent chapter will highlight the existence of two football clubs which were established solely for the purpose of organising an annual game at New Year. It is therefore possible that a club at Springkell was originated for a similar reason. In any case, whatever the reason, it is important to note that the formation and purpose of the early football clubs could differ significantly. It would be wrong to assume that all of these clubs were established solely for playing games against other opponents on a regular basis.

Amongst the fourteen clubs in this era, the impressive level of organisation behind Hope’s Foot-Ball Club can be seen with his Schedule List.¹³⁵ Using the list, Hope divided up his members into categories. Schedule A contained the names of players who could turn out every Saturday. Schedule B and C covered those who could come out on alternate Saturdays. The list carries on through to Schedule D, E, and F; these split the last of the members up equally for those who could attend each third Saturday. The strategy behind this was to

¹³² Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen’s Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co Ltd, p. 25.

¹³³ See, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 61.

¹³⁴ See, Anonymous (1856) *Carlisle Patriot*, 5 January, p. 8, and, Anonymous (1873) *Annandale Observer and Advertiser*, 10 January, p. 3.

¹³⁵ See, Foot-Ball Club (1830s) Schedules, accounts and other papers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/183/7/13. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

ensure as equal a spread of members across each of the games as possible. It also provided Hope with advance knowledge of the players he should expect to see on any given week.

Information on a game involving the Legal Writers and the Tradesmen from Cupar in Fife also provides detail of organisation. The teams played to an agreed set of rules in a small sided game (12-a-side).¹³⁶ A match official (umpire) is referenced in one of the newspaper articles as he declares the winner of the match after an hour's play.¹³⁷ Finally, both groups are specifically labelled as football clubs in one of the local newspapers.¹³⁸ The Windsor and Brownfield football clubs of Glasgow are a new discovery and highlight the existence of football clubs within the city during the 1850s (over and above the club at Glasgow University). The game involving the clubs in August 1859 took place on an undeveloped area of land called M'Callum Green (at St Peter's Lane within the centre of the city). The brief match report which appears in the *Glasgow Herald*, uses cricket terminology when stating that after 75 minutes play, the Brownfield Club was victorious over Windsor by five 'innings' (goals).¹³⁹

Examples of teams who are clubs in all but name

There are additional examples of football activity where the organisations involved appear to act like football clubs even though they are not named as such. The point here is that the early football clubs did not necessarily play against other clubs during this period. The main priority for these clubs was to organise internal matches for their members. Hope's Foot-Ball Club, for example, does not appear to have played an external match against another club at any point between 1824 and 1841. The Deanston Cotton Mill workers, an occupation-based football team, who played the Blair Drummond Estate workers in 1835, appear to have been meeting regularly to participate in football activity. In referring to the match between both teams, Tranter, quoting from a contemporary source, picks up on the fact that the Deanston players practised regularly and "omit few opportunities of trying their agility in this manly game" (Tranter, 1998: p. 8).

In a similar fashion, from 1851 regular football games involving Irish migrants are recorded in Perth. These games which took place "Saturday after Saturday" and went on for "some five or six years" were organised in the main by "a few athletic Irishmen in the town". Baxter provides additional detail as to the level of planning behind the games in Perth as well as highlighting the inclusive nature of the contests. One of the players, a local brush maker named McDonald, "acted as goalkeeper, kept the ball, and collected subscriptions for a new sphere when that was necessary". The games could involve as many as 20 to 30 on each side

¹³⁶ Anonymous (1845) *Fife Herald*, 13 March, p. 3.

¹³⁷ Anonymous (1845) *Northern Warder and General Advertiser*, 13 March, p. 6.

¹³⁸ Anonymous (1845) *Fifeshire Journal*, 13 March, p. 2.

¹³⁹ Anonymous (1859) *Glasgow Herald*, 23 August, p. 3.

with the goals being marked out using jackets placed in heaps or using stones (Baxter, 1898: p. 27).

Activity relating to annual customs

Football matches were integral to the celebrations on important festival days. Pre-reformation festivals such as Fastern's E'en and Handsel Monday survived into the nineteenth century and were regarded as important community events. Christmas Day and New Year's Day were also associated with football activity. One of the most important points to emerge from the study of the early football teams relates to the existence of small sided organised games surrounding these occasions. As mentioned earlier, these football games have traditionally been labelled as being unruly even violent 'mob' or 'folk' contests which were censured by the authorities and largely disappeared as a result. On the contrary, many of these games were still accepted as forming an important part of local identity within communities. The participants received the patronage of local landowners who often hosted the games and since many of the contests were limited in terms of numbers, they presented no obvious threat or challenge. This contrasts significantly with the concerted efforts to suppress football activity on public roads and within urban spaces; as has been demonstrated, such activity increasingly experienced censorship on the grounds of public safety.

The match involving the Benedicts and Bachelors at Dunkeld in 1836, which took place on Handsel Monday, appears to have been a comparatively small sided game involving equal numbers.¹⁴⁰ We have some knowledge of the type of game played at Dunkeld from Baxter,

The Dunkeld game was "kick-ba", and nothing else than kicking the ball, although the players were allowed to push the ball forward with the hands. An old gentleman yet alive in the parish who in his youth often saw the game played, says that "the game as played then was not so different from the present (association) game, except as to charging, throw-ins, etc (Baxter 1898: p. 70).

This particular game also provides an example of 'continuity', as theorised by Holt.¹⁴¹ This theory will be covered in more detail in Chapter 2.

A good example of a structured game can be found with the Handsel Monday match at Cargill in Perthshire in 1838. Baxter's description of that game is very detailed, with clear evidence of playing rules as well as the use of umpires. The number of players was fixed and they lined up in formations playing in "three lines of attack and defence". This match was played between districts and betting on the result of the game was common (Baxter, 1898:

¹⁴⁰ The *Perthshire Courier* alludes to the proposed return match as being played at 20-a-side (see, Anonymous (1836) *Perthshire Courier*, 3 March, p. 3), while the *Perthshire Advertiser* states that an 'identical challenge' was made to that of the game which had taken place with 24 players on either side being quoted (see, Anonymous (1836) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 24 March, p. 3).

¹⁴¹ See, Holt, R. (1986) 'Working-class football and the city: the problem of continuity', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 3(1), p. 5.

p. 45). The game, however, did not use goalposts or require goalkeepers, while the method of scoring was to kick the ball over the hedge at either end of the field. Nevertheless, this activity suggests a well-defined game with a widely held knowledge of localised playing rules.¹⁴²

The patronage of local landowners in many of the examples appears to be significant. The report of the annual match at Kenmore in 1841 states that the game was played in a park provided by the Marquis of Breadalbane with equal numbers being adopted.¹⁴³ The match between Methven and Pitcairngreen in 1856 was played to stakes of “a pound a side and a new ball”.¹⁴⁴ Two committees organised proceedings and the game took place in a field which had been specially granted for the occasion. It was played at 20-a-side. Tactics are also referenced, the article stating that the Methven team remained on the defensive on purpose before launching a “coup-de-main”. The quick counter attack certainly worked with the team rushing forward to send the ball “hail, direct through the winning posts”. The money won by the Methven team was donated to the Perth Infirmary.¹⁴⁵ In a similar fashion, money was raised and donated to Perth infirmary in the match between Moneydie and Redgorton in 1850 and there are additional examples beyond this.¹⁴⁶

The New Year’s Day game at Springkell House in Dumfriesshire was an established annual event by 1856 (see Figure 1.9). The game took place under the patronage of Sir John Heron Maxwell. On the goals being fixed in place and the players lining up equidistant to each other, the contest was formally started with the ball being thrown into the air.¹⁴⁷ The Strathavon annual games at Tomintoul in Morayshire provide an example of an annual meeting which lasted for a number of years. Reporting in 1860 on the latest gathering, the *Banffshire Journal* could trace the event back to 7 January, 1842 (as part of the Old Christmas Day period).¹⁴⁸ The original game of football which formed part of the day involved captains who selected the teams. A description of the game from the following year includes a reference to a judge who ended that game with no goals having been scored by lifting the ball.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴² Even the early codified game of Queen’s Park FC had to deal with natural boundaries like hedges. For example, in their match with Hamilton Gymnasium in 1869, with the ball having gone over a hedge at the back of the goal, James Smith of the Queen’s Park Club ran through the hedge to gain a touchdown in a neighbouring field. See, Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen’s Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd, pp. 14-15.

¹⁴³ Anonymous (1841) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 21 January, p. 3.

¹⁴⁴ Anonymous (1841) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 5 June, p. 3.

¹⁴⁵ Anonymous (1841) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 5 June, p. 3.

¹⁴⁶ For the donation from the Redgorton and Moneydie match, see, Anonymous (1850) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 17 January, p. 3. For additional examples, see, Anonymous (1846) *Perthshire Courier*, 22 January, p. 2, Anonymous (1851) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 23 January, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1852) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 22 January, p. 3.

¹⁴⁷ See, Anonymous (1856) *Carlisle Patriot*, 5 January, p. 8.

¹⁴⁸ Anonymous (1860) *Banffshire Journal*, 4 September, p. 6.

¹⁴⁹ Anonymous (1860) *Banffshire Journal*, 4 September, p. 6.



Figure 1.9: Springkell House, Dumfriesshire. The lawns surrounding the house hosted organised football games annually on New Year's Day. A report in the *Carlisle Patriot* newspaper for the match in 1856 (see, Anonymous (1856) *Carlisle Patriot*, 5 January, p. 8) hints at the composition of the respective teams, "when... the fleet foot of the shepherd vies for conquest with the vigour of the ploughman".

Activity relating to annual sports events

Annual sports events are recorded in Scotland by the late 1820s.¹⁵⁰ These events stand out as they integrated traditional sports within a modern competitive structure. Traditional aspects of football can be found through the way in which teams were created; for example, the idea of separating the teams into married men and unmarried men was an old convention which was introduced into some of the annual sports. These competitive events were important within local communities and often received patronage from the landed gentry. This can be seen, for instance, at Prestonkirk in East Lothian in December 1848 where 'Bachelors' faced 'Benedicts' over three games of football. The meeting was organised by the Earl and Countess of Haddington with at least one of the football games being played with limited numbers – it is recorded that the second contest was played at "seventeen picked men on each side".¹⁵¹

The Lossiemouth Christmas sports of 1856 was organised by local businessmen who provided prizes for individual as well as team-based games. The individual contests took place on Stotfield Links while the team-based games were played on the sands east of Lossiemouth Harbour.¹⁵² A clear set of rules for each of the activities was printed in the local

¹⁵⁰ The St Ronan's Border Games can be dated back to 1827.

¹⁵¹ Anonymous (1848) *Nairnshire Mirror and General Advertiser*, 30 December, p. 3.

¹⁵² Anonymous (1856) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 4 January, p. 4.

newspaper and monetary prizes were advertised.¹⁵³ The rules also set out information as to the appointment of team captains and umpires, the marking out of the field and the setting up of "winning posts".¹⁵⁴ At the Border Games of 1838, which was organised by the St Ronan's Border Club at Traquair Castle in Innerleithen, the football teams consisted of "South of the Tweed against the North".¹⁵⁵ This football game was given prominence, being the last event of the day which brought the proceedings to an end. Finally, a game between Fordoun and Laurencekirk took place on Old Christmas Day¹⁵⁶ in 1851 as part of a wider sports day which a local newspaper referred to as the "Redhall Christmas Games". That contest took place on the lawn in front of Redhall House and was played at 10-a-side with a 'prize' being awarded to the winners.¹⁵⁷

Summary

When viewed as a whole, the different topics covered in Section 5 suggest that, alongside the unruly mass participation games, well organised football games involving smaller numbers were taking place which were well supported. Many could even claim to be competitive, offering financial and other incentives to the winning teams. Although football clubs were starting to emerge, they remained very much in a minority, surrounded as they were by teams who served a variety of purposes. Some were brought together according to tradition in order to take part in annual festival games while others like the military teams could play more regularly, either as part of internal organised activities or in challenge matches arranged against external opponents.

Football activity linked to traditional customs still thrived during this period but there is evidence of a gradual transition, through the emergence of the clubs and also through the move towards competitive sporting events that were organised as part of Christmas and New Year festivities.¹⁵⁸ Although the examples of football contests already covered within the study serve to highlight a rich diversity in the types of games that existed, they do not account for all the activity. There is also evidence of networks which were instrumental in arranging football events for the period. These networks are covered in Section 6.

¹⁵³ Anonymous (1856) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 4 January, p. 4 (the article states that the prize for the party [team] which "drove the ball over the ground allowed for the game in the shortest period of time" was £1. 0. 0.).

¹⁵⁴ Anonymous (1856) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 4 January, p. 4.

¹⁵⁵ Anonymous (1838) *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 August, p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ The observance of 'Old' Christmas Day centred on the date of December 25 within the older Julian calendar. By the nineteenth century this calendar had long been superseded by the Gregorian calendar but the older version was still used by some communities in Scotland when celebrating traditional festivals. Due to a difference in calculation of 12 days between both calendars, 25 December, 1850 in the Julian Calendar fell on 6 January, 1851 in the Gregorian Calendar.

¹⁵⁷ Anonymous (1851) *Aberdeen Journal*, 15 January, p. 5.

¹⁵⁸ Whilst the quoted examples mainly relate to Christmas, a sports event was organised at the New Year in 1859, at Dales Park in Avoch, Ross-shire. The 'games' consisted of a variety of athletics events, quoits and rifle shooting as well as football. See, Anonymous (1859) *Inverness Courier*, 6 January, p. 6.

Section 6 – The importance of networks: 1830-1859

Overview

As will be seen in Chapter 2, a number of networks played a very important role in promoting and sustaining football activity in Scotland for the 14 years running from 1860-1873. That situation, however, largely came about as a result of developments that could be traced back to this earlier period. Three networks in particular throw up some important examples of activity. These relate to activity based around the workplace, the military and education. Within these networks, the evidence points to an extended process of evolution. This ties in with Tranter's argument with respect to the evidence of decline being drawn out over a much longer period of time. The development and subsequent growth of football activity through networks also took place over a more prolonged timeframe than the 52-year range considered by this thesis. Certainly, the findings of this thesis could form part of a much larger study that would integrate individual developments as part of a broader thematic approach spanning a much longer timeframe. Such a long term approach is advocated by James when providing his own analysis of the origins of football debate. He points to the approach of French historian Fernand Braudel and suggests that academics should follow his approach and work towards "an all-encompassing history of the sport, by suggesting the adoption of a framework... where in depth analysis of individual events is combined with the identification of transformational cycles" (James, 2016: p. 1169).

Occupational teams

In addition to the example of the match between the Deanston Cotton Mill workers and the Blair Drummond Estate workers, there are other instances of football teams being concentrated around the occupation of the players. Harvey, for example, highlighted a game from 1841 involving the Gentlemen's Servants and Waiters in Edinburgh. The newspaper report stated that a return match had been arranged with stakes of £5-a-side.¹⁵⁹ A third football team based around the workplace, the Chairmen, are also referenced in this report with the Gentlemen's Servants alleged to have been looking to arrange a fixture against them.¹⁶⁰ Scottish military regiments had a particularly strong connection with organised football which continue into the association and rugby football codes from the 1870s on. During 1830-1859, the regiments were a notable presence in garrison towns including Perth, Inverness, Dundee, Stirling and Edinburgh. Their impact is analysed below.

¹⁵⁹ Anonymous (1841) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 25 April, p. 4.

¹⁶⁰ Anonymous (1841) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 11 April, p. 4.

The role of the military

As can be seen from the example of 1828, the 92nd (Gordon) Highlanders were already organising football games as an intra-regimental discipline. By 1844 the regiment was garrisoned in Perth and is reported to have come out regularly to play football at the North Inch. The inclusion of officers alongside the men in the games suggests an organised and disciplined activity.¹⁶¹ Likewise, the 27th Regiment from Inniskilling are reported to have organised regular meetings described as ‘military athletics’ when they were stationed at Stirling Castle in 1850. The football games involved 60 or 70 on each side but the mix of ‘officers’ and ‘men’ are again reported which suggests well managed and properly conducted games.¹⁶² In 1836, the 71st Highland Regiment of Light Infantry organised an internal match which involved two of its companies. An article from the *Inverness Courier* confirms that the match was played at 20-a-side and took place at Grange Loan in Edinburgh.¹⁶³ The teams were made up of the first and second companies with a wager of £5 per side placed on the outcome of three games. As with many of the other examples, officers and men contested the matches. It was the first company that came out on top, winning a close and exciting contest by two games to one.

In 1849 the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders enjoyed an athletic sports meeting at Dudhope Barracks in Dundee. The meeting which included a variety of running, jumping and throwing contests concluded with a game of football. The following year the regiment played an internal game in Edinburgh on Sparke’s Cricket Ground pitching 37 men chosen by Ensign Dalziel against 31 men selected by Lieutenant Macdonald.¹⁶⁴ In 1851 the 93rd Highlanders played a game at 20-a-side against the Edinburgh University Football Club. As well as the small sided nature of the game, two other observations are significant. The first relates to the way in which the soldiers lined up and played; the match report stating that, “The Highlanders, with Lieutenant and Adjutant M’Donald as their chief, took their places coolly but with resolute determination, arranging themselves in a manner which displayed excellent training”.¹⁶⁵ The second is that both sides agreed before the match that the losing team would present the winners afterwards with a medal. This in effect was a competitive match and the medallion (Figure 1.8) which was presented to the regiment after they won by three games [goals] to nil, resides in the collection of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Museum and can be considered to be the oldest known example of a football trophy in the world.

¹⁶¹ Anonymous (1844) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 14 March, p. 3.

¹⁶² Anonymous (1850) *Stirling Observer*, 2 May, p. 4.

¹⁶³ Anonymous (1836) *Inverness Courier*, 27 April, p. 2.

¹⁶⁴ Anonymous (1850) *Stirling Observer*, 26 December, p. 2.

¹⁶⁵ A Spectator (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 February, p. 6.

The significance of education

By the time of the period under investigation, football was a relatively common recreational activity enjoyed by school pupils across Scotland. References to football games linked to annual excursions and annual customs in particular tend to be reported in newspapers.¹⁶⁶ However, the nature of many of these games does not provide sufficient detail as to the level of organisation surrounding them. The examples provided in Table 1.1 therefore relate to evidence of activity with clear detail. As will be explained, in the case of Trinity College (Glenalmond) and Merchiston Castle School, claims of early organised football activity (1847 and 1850 respectively) have been discounted due to conflicting information.

The schools

Although a precise starting point to the introduction of rugby football at Edinburgh Academy cannot be given, the opening of playing fields at Raeburn Place in 1854 created an appropriate environment for that type of game to be adopted. Previously a crude form of game had been played in the Yards in front of the school.¹⁶⁷ The centenary history of Raeburn Place points to two brothers, Francis and Alexander Crombie, as being decisive figures in the introduction of the rugby code at Edinburgh Academy.¹⁶⁸ It is difficult to judge the level of organisation for football games at the school around this time although the creation of the former pupils' club by 1857 suggests that it may already have been at an advanced stage within the school. Close on the heels of the Academy was the Merchiston Castle School and the Royal High School who organised the first inter-school rugby football match in 1858 (the Academy do not appear to have played their first game against an opponent until the following year). Football was an important activity at Merchiston by the early 1850s and they are referenced as having a football club as early as 1850.¹⁶⁹

A note of caution is required, however, when considering that year for the introduction of organised football into the school. A description of the Merchiston game around the mid-1850s appears in an early account of the school by a former pupil.¹⁷⁰ The football activity related to the whole school rather than handpicked teams. Simple rules did exist in that the ball had to be kicked and could be caught out of the air with a 'free and clear kick' [fair catch] being awarded. The author's assessment that "it need hardly be said that football matches were unheard of" suggests that the existence of a football club at the school in

¹⁶⁶ Examples include the annual May excursion involving schools from the Gorbals district of Glasgow to Rutherglen (see, Anonymous (1855) *Glasgow Courier*, 17 May, p. 2), and the Christmas festivities in Tomintoul, *Morayshire* (see, Anonymous (1852) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 6 February, p. 3).

¹⁶⁷ For a detailed description see, MacDonald, J. H. A. (1915) *Life jottings of an old Edinburgh citizen*. Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, pp. 52-53.

¹⁶⁸ See, *One hundred years at Raeburn Place, 1854-1954* (1954). Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Academical Club, p. 35.

¹⁶⁹ Alcock, C. W. ed. (1873) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 94.

¹⁷⁰ Murray, D. (1915) *Merchiston castle school, 1855-58*. Glasgow: James Maclehose & Son, p. 14.

1850 is doubtful and the reference in the *Football Annual* is likely based upon the general popularity of football within school life at that time.

Trinity College in Glenalmond, Perthshire, appears to provide the earliest example of an attempt to introduce a codified game. The Warden of the School in 1847 was Dr. Charles Wordsworth who had previously taught at Winchester College. He certainly attempted to introduce his pupils to the Winchester rules, but the level of engagement appears to have been very limited due to the small number of pupils. The official history of Trinity College from 1956 quotes P. A. Wright Henderson, a pupil at the school between 1853 and 1858, who states that, "With such small numbers cricket and football could not be strictly organized, and the boys had hours of freedom to wander abroad" (St Quinton, 1956: p. 22).

For school pupils in the west of Scotland, there is evidence to suggest that unsupervised football games up to the mid-1860s were informal and rudimentary with limited rules. For example, J. W. Arthur, who attended Glasgow Academy and would later play for Glasgow Academicals and Scotland, provides an account of a basic game;

It was without laws, for we were mostly laws to ourselves; without goal-posts, for all we had to do was to kick the ball over an imaginary line, drawn from one pile of coats to another, at the end of the field of play. The pitch might be of any length, while its touch-line might be bounded by the nearest fence, or unbounded, according to fancy. We simply kicked the ball about in any way we liked, and the side which oftenest kicked it over what is now known as the goal line won the match, each such occasion being known as a "hail" (Arthur, 1900: p. 7).

For the elite schools, this situation would certainly change with the arrival of the rugby code. The significant uptake of codified games in schools and churches, according to Tony Collins, can be linked with the ideology of 'Muscular Christianity' (T. Collins, 2015, p. 1138). Within the education system, below the level of the elite schools, it is difficult to characterise with any degree of certainty, the nature of the football activity which took place across the west of Scotland but there is evidence to suggest that such recreational activities were not unknown to pupils attending these organisations. For example, the author's analysis of football activity in "sabbath schools, parish schools, industrial schools and religious societies" across Glasgow and in the surrounding towns (as far out as Airdrie and Hamilton) found that 49 educational organisations had links to football activity between 1850 and 1872 (McBrearty, 2021). The descriptions of the annual excursions for the schools which appear in the press, in particular, hint at a significant degree of planning and organisation surrounding the sporting activities, even within the organisations which catered for the poorest sections of society. The excursion of Glasgow's Barony Poorhouse in 1853, for example, points to a support network of "members of the committee, the officers, and attendants", who

“introduced” the 200 resident children to “various healthful exercises and games of football”.¹⁷¹

Direct support from teachers, understandably, was key to the planning and arrangement of organised games and over on the east of Scotland there are examples of disciplined games. The case of Montrose Academy, for instance, provides evidence of a more coordinated attempt to organise a football match even if it just appears to have been for a one off game. The school participated in ‘Scottish Games’ which were organised by local gentlemen on the occasion of the visit of the Royal Company of Archers in 1850.¹⁷² The boys of the academy were drilled at football by one of their teachers in preparation for a staged game which was played out on the second day of the gathering. In St Andrews, by the end of the decade, it can be seen that at least one school was prepared to travel the not inconsiderable distance between the Fife town and Edinburgh for the opportunity to play an external game.¹⁷³

The universities

Organised football was clearly connected to the three cities in Scotland which were home to universities as well as the historic Fife town of St Andrews. In Aberdeen there was a football club associated with Marischal College which in 1859 played shinty and football games against the King’s College Shinty Club (a year before the two universities merged).¹⁷⁴ The original club at St Andrew’s University was known as St Salvator Football Club (being named after the first college of the university). Although 1857 is presented as the year of formation for this club in the Football Annual of 1869,¹⁷⁵ the club itself recognises 1858 as its official starting point.¹⁷⁶ St Salvator, however, does not appear to have played many external games early in its history; R. W. Irvine, in an assessment of the rugby game in 1861 states that, “St Andrews, a club whose prowess was known far and wide, and which made up for the paucity of its matches by the fervour with which it entered into those it did play”.¹⁷⁷

Edinburgh University had a football club at least by 1851 when a series of well publicised games took place. The university club at Edinburgh played external matches against the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders¹⁷⁸ and the Veterinary College Football Club.¹⁷⁹ Additionally in the same year, the club arranged an internal match between its English and Scottish

¹⁷¹ Anonymous (1853) *Glasgow Courier*, 26 May, p. 2.

¹⁷² Anonymous (1850) *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*, 26 April, p. 4.

¹⁷³ Mr Hodge’s school from St Andrews travelled down to Edinburgh in November 1859 to play the Edinburgh Academy. See, Anonymous (1859) *Fifeshire Journal*, 24 November, p. 5.

¹⁷⁴ Anonymous (1859) *Aberdeen Herald and General Advertiser*, 22 January, p. 5.

¹⁷⁵ Alcock, C. W. ed. (1869) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 61.

¹⁷⁶ See, St Andrews University (2025) *University rugby homepage*. Available at: <https://rugby.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

¹⁷⁷ Irvine, W. R. (1881) The rugby game. In: *The Scottish football annual, 1881-82*. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 135.

¹⁷⁸ A Spectator (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 February, p. 6.

¹⁷⁹ L. O. P. (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 April, p. 6.

members.¹⁸⁰ Reference to the existence of a football club at Glasgow University can be traced to 1851¹⁸¹ and while examples of club activity at present remain scarce, two matches against a Lancashire Militia team are noted in March 1855. The first match, which was played at 30-a-side, ended in a draw with a second match being arranged at the end of the month, this time at 20-a-side.¹⁸² Both games took place on the College Green which was recognised as being a more amenable setting for hosting games compared with the situation at Edinburgh University.¹⁸³

The contrasting examples of football activity at Glasgow University in many ways mirror the broader coexistence of mob football and organised football across Scotland during the same period. As shown earlier, small sided organised games and looser ‘folk’ games were a feature of Scottish life. An interesting aspect of the football activity at Glasgow University is that both types of game were played on a regular basis. The analysis at Glasgow University undertaken by Curry highlights the looser, mass participation side of football (Curry, 2020: p. 121). Curry largely relies on the memoirs of David Murray who attended the institution between 1857 and 1865. Murray quotes from *The University Review* of 1884 which asserts that “It was a rough and tumble game in which the contending sides swept across the low green from Blackfriars Street to the New Vennel and back again like the hordes of Atilla” (D. Murray, 1927: p. 442). A similar description is made by Hely Hutchinson Almond, the illustrious headmaster of Loretto School. Reminiscing about his time as a student at Glasgow, Almond recalled that, “The ‘hails’ were about 400 yards apart. It was not a bad game we had there; the great beauty of it was that there were no rules” (Almond, 1892: p. 51). However, there were two types of football activity at the university; 1) daily activity of ‘open’ games involving large numbers of students who participated between lectures and 2) regular (if not daily) organised football games involving smaller numbers. Murray indeed refers to both in the following passage,

Regular games between two picked sides were played on the College green, but generally the ball was kept going from nine o’clock till about three on every suitable day by the students between classes. Some played for the whole hour they had free, others for only half or a quarter of an hour. While some fell out others joined in, taking either side as might be most convenient but a fair equality in numbers was maintained (D. Murray, 1927: p. 445).

¹⁸⁰ One of England’s Rising Generation and an Admirer of her Sports (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 9 March, p. 7.

¹⁸¹ L. O. P. (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 April, p. 6.

¹⁸² See, Anonymous (1855) *North British Daily Mail*, 15 March, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1855) *North British Daily Mail*, 30 March, p. 2.

¹⁸³ A letter titled “Student Life”, which was published in the *Dunfermline Press*, details the differences (see, Anonymous (1860) *Dunfermline Press*, 27 March, p. 4. The issue facing Edinburgh University FC with respect to finding a playing field can also be seen in a letter written to the town council which states that they had been “recalled” from playing on the Queen’s Park (Holyrood Park) and were unable to play on the Bruntsfield Links as the Edinburgh Burgess Golfing Society claimed “the exclusive right of playing on that ground” (see, Anonymous (1851) *Edinburgh Evening Post*, 26 March, p. 3).

Football at Glasgow University therefore appears to have been enjoyed as an inclusive recreation by a large number of students who played a looser style of game but one in which the students tried to keep equal numbers. With such a high interest in football at the university it should not be a surprise that a proportion of the students would enjoy more organised games. This can be seen with the reference to matches on Saturdays between teams representing the faculties of Arts and Medicine.¹⁸⁴

As mentioned earlier, a university football club existed as early as 1851 and appears to have still been functioning by the early 1860s when the Reverend James Barclay attended the college as a student; Barclay is referenced as being captain of the Glasgow University cricket and football clubs.¹⁸⁵ The university's rugby football club would not be formed until 1869¹⁸⁶ with its first recorded match taking place in January 1870.¹⁸⁷ The first reference to an association football club at Glasgow University can be found in 1875.¹⁸⁸ A final link to organised football activity at the university can be found through a number of the founders of the Paisley Football and Shinty Club in 1855. Of the small band of founding members of that club, at least three (Thomas MacRobert, Robert Loudon Henderson and James Hamilton Dunn) were law students at the university.¹⁸⁹

Evidence of sports clubs organising football games

As has been demonstrated, the existence of sports clubs where football was included as part of their recreational activities was already apparent by the start of the period. While there does not appear to be a huge contribution from similar clubs between 1830 and 1859, a couple of notable examples do exist. The first was the Gymnastic Club of St Andrews which included a 12-a-side football match at their first meeting in 1851.¹⁹⁰ This was advertised as part of their events which included throwing the stone, tossing the caber and numerous running and jumping contests. In 1856, an Athletic Games Club was established at Inverness. A newspaper report on a meeting of this club states that approximately 60 members turned out for a game of football and, "having formed sides, they played for about two hours".¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁴ Anonymous (1860) *Dunfermline Press*, 27 March, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ A short biography of James Barclay can be found in Sulte, B. (1906) *A history of Quebec, its resources and people, Vol II*. Montreal: The Canada History Company, p. 629.

¹⁸⁶ See, Glasgow University Sports Association (2026) *Rugby (Men's) homepage*. Available at: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/sport/whatson/club/rugbymen/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

¹⁸⁷ Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 11 January, p. 7

¹⁸⁸ Anonymous (1875) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 29 March, p. 3.

¹⁸⁹ The three members who are listed with Glasgow University, were present at the inaugural meeting of the club in 1855. See, Anonymous (1855) *Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser*, 24 November, p. 4.

¹⁹⁰ Anonymous (1851) *Fife Herald*, 21 August, p. 3.

¹⁹¹ Anonymous (1856) *Inverness Courier*, 5 June, p. 5.

Summary

By the end of the 1850s, a range of factors were firmly in place which facilitated the continued growth of organised football activity, culminating less than 15 years later in the establishment of the two dominant codes. As outlined above, existing networks linked to the workplace, the military and education were particularly significant in supporting this activity. The teams and clubs that have been uncovered from this period reveal a broad spectrum of activity, ranging from the traditional spectacle of the annual custom games to the modern development of matches played as part of athletic events which were often organised by clubs and committees. Indeed, a notable contribution of this thesis has been to build upon the methodology of Harvey in order to emphasise the nuanced nature of these teams.

Added to this, the longstanding popularity of football and its recognition as a healthy recreational activity was not lost on the schools and the temperance organisations who sought to benefit from it. By the late 1850s the concept of 'Muscular Christianity' had emerged as a philosophy and as the next chapter will explain, it would have a major influence over the adoption of the rugby game within the elite schools and universities.¹⁹² This general situation is far removed from the picture presented by many of the early historians of football. On the whole, they chose to portray football activity outside of the elite schools as being unruly affairs which were increasingly censured through the concerted efforts of the local authorities. A push for uniformity in playing rules, something which for both codes would be achieved in Scotland by the early 1870s would be an important accomplishment of the next stage in the development of organised football in Scotland. Chapter 2 will investigate that subject in some detail.

¹⁹² The concept of Muscular Christianity was promoted through the works of clergyman Charles Kingsley and lawyer Thomas Hughes. It is particularly associated with Hughes' novel *Tom Brown's Schooldays* which was first published in 1857. See, Hughes, T. (1857) *Tom Brown's school days*. Cambridge: MacMillan & Co.

Chapter 2

Towards a uniform game

The establishment of the dominant codes: 1860-1873

Section 1 – Overview of the period: 1860–1873

Introduction

The formation of the Scottish Football Union and Scottish Football Association in March 1873 firmly established the two dominant football codes north of the border. These organisations provided leadership and acted as a platform from which to grow the respective sports further. Three main factors can be attributed to the creation of these governing bodies. The first was an increase in the number of football clubs with affiliations to either code. Although the expansion of the association code had been a comparatively recent development and was largely centred around Glasgow and the west of Scotland, the growth of the game was significant and it would rapidly accelerate in the years leading on from 1873. As will be seen, the codified rugby game evolved over a longer period, and, from its initial base in Edinburgh, had expanded across large parts of Scotland by 1873.

The second factor was the need to establish universal rules for both codes. This had been an obvious issue with the rugby game where opposing clubs struggled to agree to play each other due to differences in rules.¹⁹³ The creation of the Green Book in 1868 heralded a move towards uniformity for rugby football clubs in Scotland¹⁹⁴ but by the early 1870s Scottish teams were already playing in England and Ireland as well as hosting teams from those nations.¹⁹⁵ The association game in Glasgow was effectively being led by Queen's Park FC; shortly after its formation in 1867, the club created a hybrid version of the FA's Laws of the Game which they named the Rules of the Field.¹⁹⁶ In the early years the club had to

¹⁹³ In 1869 the Edinburgh Academy Club was involved in a dispute with Craigmount when the latter club refused to accept the use of hacking. Both clubs refused to play against each other and would not meet for six years. See, *The Edinburgh Academical Football Club centenary history* (1958). Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Academical Football Club, p. 25.

¹⁹⁴ 'Green Book' was the colloquial name for the rules (see, Anonymous (1887) *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 6 October, p. 2). However, the formal title given to the rules in 1868 was "The Laws of Football as Played by the Principal Clubs in Scotland". This title bestowed a degree of authority upon the rules in the absence of a governing body. For more on the rules, see, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1869) *Football annual*, London: Sportsman, pp. 42-45.

¹⁹⁵ In 1870 the Glasgow Academical Club visited Manchester and Liverpool while the West of Scotland Club played in Belfast in 1871. See, Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 31 October, p. 7, and, Anonymous (1871) *Glasgow Herald*, 25 December, p. 3.

¹⁹⁶ Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd., pp. 72-73.

negotiate with their opponents over aspects of the playing rules.¹⁹⁷ The decision to become a member of the London based Football Association in October 1870 was done to promote uniformity within the game; Robinson quoting from the club minutes states that,

Mr. Gardner on 26th October 1870, moved: “That the present code of Association Rules in use by the club, not being in strict accordance with the rules as laid down by the Football Association, that our present code be discarded in favour of the Association Rules proper”, which was agreed to (Robinson, 1920: p. 77).¹⁹⁸

The third factor was the arrival of international competition in both codes. Team selection and other organisational matters was initially managed by committees representative of the leading clubs.¹⁹⁹ However, longer term these matters necessitated the establishment of governing bodies.²⁰⁰ The development of international football is covered in the author’s unpublished 2024 paper titled, *The start of something big: Scotland and the birth of international football*.²⁰¹

Parameters to the study

The opening part of the chapter will be split into two sections; the first is a study of football **teams**, excluding football clubs, while the second is a study of football **clubs**. The unprecedented growth in the number of football clubs between 1860 and 1873 necessitates a separate study — if the clubs were to be merged with the sample of non-club football teams, it would overwhelm the data and make a comparison with the previous era (1830–1859) impractical. This approach, however, creates two challenges. The first relates to the requirement for a methodology in distinguishing ‘football clubs’ from ‘non-club football

¹⁹⁷ When Queen’s Park met Drummond FC for the first time in 1870, the old Drummond player John B. Connell stated that both clubs had separate playing rules. See, Capel-Kirby, W. and Carter, F. W. (1933) *The mighty kick: the history, romance and humour of football*. London: Jarrolds, p. 195.

¹⁹⁸ Whilst Queen’s Park FC were keen to adopt a widely used set of playing rules, the rules of the Football Association were not universal during the early 1870s. When being referred to outside of the Metropolis, the FA’s playing rules were often given a London prefix, becoming the ‘London Association Rules’ or ‘London Rules’. Meanwhile in the north of England during the early 1870s, a large number of clubs played to a separate code, known as the ‘Sheffield Rules’ or ‘Sheffield Association Rules’. For some examples of these usages of terminology, see, Anonymous (1870) *North British Daily Mail*, 27 June, p. 6, and, Anonymous (1872) *Sheffield Independent*, 21 February, p. 4.

¹⁹⁹ In the case of association football, only one club, Queen’s Park FC, took charge of organisational matters for the first two internationals of 1872 and 1873, which included the selection of the team.

²⁰⁰ The byelaws approved at the first AGM of the Scottish Football Union (held on 9 October, 1873) included international team selection, as follows; “(3). The objects of the Union are:- (1) The encouragement of football in Scotland: (2) Co-operation with the Rugby Football Union: and (3) The selection of the international team”. See, Scottish Football Union (1873-1897) Minute Book No.1. *Scottish Rugby Archive*, uncatalogued. Edinburgh: Scottish Rugby.

²⁰¹ McBrearty, R. (2024a) ‘The start of something big: Scotland and the official birth of international football’. *Victorian Events Conference*. University of Stirling. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2024/10/05/the-start-of-something-big-scotland-and-the-official-birth-of-international-football/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

teams'. The second relates to the potential for confusion and inaccurate analysis when comparing the data for 1860-1873 with the corresponding data from Chapter 1 (1830-1859). These issues will be addressed in turn.

With respect to the first challenge, two basic but significant facts need to be acknowledged. Firstly, there is no contemporary model for this era for categorising football club structures. Secondly, it is reasonable to argue that while all football clubs have teams, not all football teams are connected to clubs. There is therefore a danger of the lines being blurred when trying to separate the football clubs from the non-club football teams. The lack of contemporary categorisations for football club structures necessitates a looser interpretation as to what constituted a football club during the period. As part of the methodological process, the author has been guided by references in contemporary newspaper articles when identifying football clubs. Some clubs, for example, were directly linked to schools, with pupils being the club members, or were linked to a school through the club members being former pupils; the Edinburgh Academy Football Club and Edinburgh Academical Football Club provide examples of this. Some military organisations, such as regiments and volunteer companies, formed football clubs. Most notably this can be seen through the formation of a club (Third Lanark) linked to the 3rd Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers in 1872. Other football clubs formed part of larger sporting organisations. The Alexandra Athletic and Hamilton Gymnasium clubs provide suitable examples. Cricket appears to have had a major influence on the growth of organised football and many of the new football clubs were directly or indirectly linked to older cricket organisations. In Glasgow, for example, the West of Scotland Football Club and Clydesdale Football Club were closely linked to established cricket clubs. There were clubs which appear to have been independently formed with no obvious connection to parent organisations. Queen's Park FC certainly falls under this category.

There is a difficulty in removing school football clubs from the study. Some of the school clubs are referenced playing against non-school clubs in challenge matches.²⁰² At least two of the football clubs which will form part of the study on Glasgow football in Chapter 4 are referenced as being formed by schoolboys.²⁰³ As a collective, the football clubs were clearly at varying stages in terms of organisation and development and this will be covered in some detail in Chapter 4. When deciding on what teams to include between 1860 and 1873 careful attention has been paid to the activity in schools. For this study, the author has decided only to include team based football activity within schools if the evidence clearly predates the arrival of football clubs at the same institution. This is because, alongside the significant increase in the number of clubs connected to schools after 1860, there is ample

²⁰² Examples include Montrose Academy playing the Montrose Asylum Club in 1869, Royal High School playing the Wanderers Club in 1870 and Gilbertfield Academy playing the Southern Club in 1873. See, Anonymous (1869) *Dundee Advertiser*, 12 January, p. 4, Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 5 December, p. 7, and, Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 20 October, p. 7.

²⁰³ See, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 22 March, p. 6.

evidence of internal games being played by teams within a school setting. For example, a match between picked teams at Wellfield Academy in Berwickshire in 1870 is included as a reference as there is no record of a football club at the school until 1872.²⁰⁴ On the other hand, an intra-school match involving the upper and lower schools at Abbey Park in St Andrews, which took place in 1867, has been omitted as a football club is referenced as existing at the school in that year.²⁰⁵ The argument here is that intra-school football teams and the school football club would be part of the same local network. As with the study of football teams in Chapter 1, the primary aim of the corresponding study in Chapter 2 is to find evidence of organised activity based around the existence of teams; it does not set out to document every individual record of football games being played between 1860 and 1873. However, an exception has been made with respect to Glasgow University. The evidence suggests that the faculty teams were independent from the university club; an article from 1865 highlights the fact that the club was a separately constituted organisation with office bearers and committee members.²⁰⁶ A final point to be made relates to the existence of football clubs which did not adhere to either of the two dominant football codes. These clubs would have played to their own internal rules. Although the numbers are relatively small when compared with the surge in clubs playing to the rugby or association code, they do exist and a section of the chapter will be devoted to this particular area.

The second challenge which needs to be addressed as a result of the creation of separate sections for football teams and football clubs, is the potential for confusion when comparing the data for 1860-1873 with the corresponding data from Chapter 1 (1830-1859). The existing data in Chapter 1 is based on Adrian Harvey's own methodology which analysed football teams and football clubs collectively. However, as the number of football clubs which existed between 1830 and 1859 is limited (with just 14 being recorded across Scotland in the author's own updated analysis), the removal of these clubs from the data creates a fairer analysis. This action lowers the overall number of team activity examples recorded in the previous chapter from 69 to 55, and lowers the corresponding data points (by 'Type') from 109 to 82. These figures can be compared more accurately with the 62 non-club football team examples for 1860-1873 and their corresponding 82 data points (by 'Type').

Factors relating to the increase in football clubs

Two factors which aided the proliferation of football clubs were the expansion of the railways into a national network and an increase in the number of public parks and other sanctioned spaces that served urban neighbourhoods. Football clubs, after all, needed a

²⁰⁴ The earliest reference to the Wellfield Academy Club can be seen in Anonymous (1872) *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 6 February, 1872, p. 4.

²⁰⁵ See, Anonymous (1867) *Fife Herald*, 14 February, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1867) *Fifeshire Journal*, 14 March, p. 6.

²⁰⁶ See, Anonymous (1865) *Glasgow Herald*, 2 December, p. 4.

suitable home for hosting games and, increasingly, they needed opponents to play against. Significant support came in the form of patronage from landowners and philanthropists who were willing to invest in the development of parks to support organised sporting activity.²⁰⁷ In contrast, burgh authorities were less likely to make such provisions. Numerous examples abound which suggest that they either resisted pressure to invest in the creation of public parks or refused to sanction football activity on existing ground that was otherwise accessible to the general public. However, there were also people connected to the burgh authorities who were willing to support outdoor recreation. A good example of this can be found at Stockbridge in Edinburgh in 1858 where a local councillor was instrumental in creating a park for the local community.²⁰⁸ Chapter 4 will examine the situation in Glasgow where investment in public spaces was undertaken to counter the worst excesses of urbanisation and industrialisation.

Much of this activity was done for the purpose of improving the conditions of the general populace, particularly in the crusade to limit or even abolish alcohol consumption and replace the vice of excessive drinking in public houses with activities that improved the body as well as the mind. As will be seen, the temperance movement was significantly involved in promoting sporting activity. These networks largely existed before 1860 but were sufficiently established across most of Scotland by the 1860s and early 1870s to promote the virtues of organised football as the clubs started to form in significant numbers.

The national picture prior to 1870 mostly resembled a patchwork of organised activity where local codified forms of football dominated.²⁰⁹ Much of this activity lacked uniformity in terms of playing rules or in terms of the agreed number of players involved, but the simplistic structure of many of the games were such that they could allow for a degree of compromise between teams within local areas. Admittedly, there was more of a challenge facing the emerging rugby game in Scotland where, in the early years, the added complexity of the rules and differences in interpretation could present problems.²¹⁰ Negotiation and concession were catalysts in the shift towards uniformity in the playing rules, leading initially

²⁰⁷ In 1859 the Earl of Mar gifted land in Alloa for a public park to support outdoor sport, including football. Three years later at Falkirk, a public park was opened for a similar purpose after land was donated by Lauchlan Aitken Esq. An article printed shortly after the opening of the park reported that “hundreds” had already benefited from playing football in the park. See, Anonymous (1859) *Stirling Observer*, 7 April, p. 3, Anonymous (1862) *Falkirk Herald*, 13 March, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1862) *Falkirk Herald*, 22 May, p. 2.

²⁰⁸ Anonymous (1858) *Inverness Courier*, 27 May, p. 3.

²⁰⁹ By using the term ‘local codified forms’, the implication here is that the early football teams and clubs often played to localised rules. For some of the more established clubs, these rules were written down but for the majority the rules appear to have been unwritten and simply formed a basic understanding or framework. Whilst examples exist of teams falling out over differences in rules, the fact remains that football teams were often prepared to negotiate and compromise.

²¹⁰ An article appearing in the *Merchiston Chronicle*, describing a match between Merchiston Castle and Edinburgh Academy in 1858, highlights the notable difference in interpretation of the rule which related to a player running into touch. See, *One hundred years at Raeburn Place, 1854-1954* (1954). Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Academical Football Club, pp. 36-37.

to the publication of the Green Book in 1868. By the early 1870s, the leading rugby clubs in Scotland had gone even further by adopting the Football Union's playing rules.²¹¹

These interactions enabled many of the early football clubs to transition from their own hybrid forms of rules to the ever-evolving forms of the association and rugby codes. At first glance this interpretation appears to contrast with the viewpoint of Tony Collins who argues that football had been reinvented by the latter decades of the nineteenth century.²¹² Collins makes a valid point with respect to his argument surrounding wider economic and social factors,

...the development of modern football was merely one consequence of radical changes to everyday life. Without an increase in working-class leisure time and disposable income from the 1870s, there would have been no audience for the game and no revenue for it to develop stadia and employ players. Without the development of the railways there would have [been] no possibility of national or regional tournaments. Without growing literacy and the emergence of a popular press there would have been little publicity for the sport and no national football culture. And without the imprimatur of Muscular Christianity, the sport would not have found a place in the schools or the churches (T. Collins, 2015: p. 1138).

It can be argued, however, that inventions, rather than being detached manifestations, on the contrary, tend to be influenced by preexisting knowledge. Moreover, the economic and social changes of the latter part of the nineteenth century were not sudden and did not all take place at the same time but in many cases played out over decades.²¹³

On the other hand, the sharp rise in the number of association clubs in and around Glasgow within a three year period leading on from the first official international match of November 1872 was a significant sporting phenomenon which cannot fully be explained by these broader developments. While a large number of association clubs were formed from scratch within a relatively short period of time, it is incomprehensible to assume that the members of these clubs were unaccustomed to playing football. As will be demonstrated, there were various networks supporting organised football activity across the west of Scotland region. The patchwork nature of traditional football activity inevitably meant differences in rules,

²¹¹ R. J. Phillips states that nearly all of the clubs represented in the Scotland rugby national team of 1871 "became members of the English Rugby Union on its formation in 1872" (see, Phillips, R. J. (1925) *Story of Scottish rugby*. Edinburgh: Foulis, p. 2).

²¹² Collins writes, "When football did emerge as a mass spectator sport in the last third of the nineteenth century it had been reinvented. Outward appearances can often lead to continuities being imagined where none exist". See, Collins, T. (2019) *How football began: a global history of how the world's football codes were born*. London: Routledge, pp. 14-15.

²¹³ This incremental expansion can be seen with the railway industry. Slaven, for example, states that between 1838 and 1842 passenger lines had connected Glasgow with Paisley, Greenock, Kilmarnock, Ayr and Edinburgh. This network was extended further to include Dumbarton and Helensburgh in the 1860s and the Clyde Valley in the 1870s. See, Slaven, A. (1975) *The development of the west of Scotland, 1750-1960*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 44-47.

but the fundamental basics of football play, as outlined by contemporary sources, and the relatively simplistic nature of playing rules (outside of the rugby game) were an advantage rather than a barrier to change. While the arrival of the association game may have heralded a significant step up in organisational standards for the early converts, there is evidence to suggest that for some, aspects of the new game mirrored that of the old. This suggests that continuity was a contributing factor in the early phase of the expansion and evolution of the association game in Scotland.

Section 2 — Evidence of football teams: 1860–1873

Research undertaken for this thesis found 62 football teams (excluding clubs) between 1860 and 1873. These are listed in Table 2.1 (see Appendix 3).

A brief analysis of the data

When looking at the games played by these teams, it can be seen that many of the different types of organised football contests highlighted in Chapter 1 continued in this later era. This activity, involving teams rather than more formalised clubs, includes games linked to annual festivals, matches played by military teams and some intra-school and university matches. A notable development, however, is the fact that the rugby and association rules were starting to appear within some of these games.

The data included in Table 2.1 suggests that football games connected to some of the annual customs were well structured and organised. This can be seen with the traditional game at Callander which had been played on Handsel Monday ‘since time immemorial’.²¹⁴ While an earlier account of the game presents a picture of a wild contest,²¹⁵ Tranter’s broader article on the game suggests that it was evolving.²¹⁶ Far from being a rough and violent activity, the contest had developed elements of tactics and strategy. For example, the 1862 game was described thus: “the players on both sides in the greatest humour and beautiful manner, taking advantage of all the modes of attack and defence which the rules of the game allow”.²¹⁷ In the game of 1865, Walter Buchanan, a legal writer, acted in an official capacity which included arranging the men on the field,²¹⁸ while Finlay Ferguson, a veteran of the game, “issued an official order by the public crier..., calling on all the players to muster in full force in the Roman Camp every evening of this week, for the purpose of putting themselves

²¹⁴ Anonymous (1862) *Stirling Journal*, 17 January, p. 5.

²¹⁵ John B. Connell’s recollection of the game in 1860 describes “...a rare old scramble... where the rules ...were flung to the wind”. See, Capel-Kirby W. and Carter F. W. (1933) *The mighty kick: the history, romance and humour of football*. London: Jarrolds, p. 194.

²¹⁶ Tranter, N. (2000) ‘Early football at Callander’, *The Forth Naturalist and Historian*, 23. Stirling: Forth Naturalist and Historian, pp. 143-148.

²¹⁷ Anonymous (1862) *Stirling Journal*, 17 January, p. 5.

²¹⁸ Anonymous (1865) *Stirling Observer*, 19 January, p. 5.

in preparation...”²¹⁹ Whilst the number of players is not known for each individual year, Tranter notes that the number of players recorded for the game in 1876 was about 50 players on each side.²²⁰ Anecdotal evidence relating to the attributes of football players from Callander comes from William McGregor, a future Chairman of Aston Villa FC and ‘Father of the Football League’. As a boy in 1852, McGregor encountered stone masons from Callander who were building a house on the Dunira estate, near Comrie in Perthshire. While they were waiting for building materials to arrive, McGregor observed the masons playing football and stated that they “...were fairly expert at the game, coming as they did from Callander, where the pastime had a hold”.²²¹

Among the football activity recorded in Table 2.1 were teams targeted towards youths and school pupils. Some of these were well supported by philanthropists and benefactors. This can be seen in Inverness where in 1870, Thomas. B. Snowie, a local philanthropist, presented a silver cup to promote a football contest between the Inverness Reformatory School and Tain Ragged School.²²² Snowie also paid the railway fares for 55 boys and 30 girls from Tain to visit Inverness for the event. On a grander scale, the British League of Juvenile Abstainers (the temperance society established by John Hope in 1847) continued to organise annual excursions to the country estates of the landed gentry. The meeting of 1860 which took place on the common green outside Dirleton Castle, the East Lothian seat of Robert C. Nisbet-Hamilton, had the capacity to host eight football games simultaneously. Superintendents were appointed to each game and they changed over on an hourly basis, moving to half hourly after two o’clock in the afternoon.²²³ For the events of 1862 and 1863, the demand appears to have increased; ten footballs were kept in play with supervisors on hand to ensure the orderly manner of each of the games. In some respects, this well organised annual activity can be viewed as being an early example of a multi-team festival football event although it existed within a wider programme of events.²²⁴

In the south of Scotland, examples can be found of organised football games involving youths from a variety of circumstances. For example, at Selkirk a match between boys from the Ettrick Mills in 1869 provides evidence of organised activity based around the workplace. The teams were led by captains and an umpire was appointed to officiate in the match.

²¹⁹ Anonymous (1865) *Stirling Journal*, 13 January, p. 5.

²²⁰ Tranter, N. (2000) ‘Early football at Callander’, *The Forth Naturalist and Historian*, 23. Stirling: Forth Naturalist and Historian, p. 145.

²²¹ William McGregor’s recollection was quoted in Catton, J. A. H. (1900) *The real football*. London: Sands & Co., p. 71.

²²² Anonymous (1870) *Dundee Courier*, 27 June, p. 3.

²²³ British League of Juvenile Abstainers (1850–1866) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/181/2. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

²²⁴ The Programme of Events for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers to Dirleton Castle in July 1860 states that “...the games for the males will consist of foot-ball, hand-ball, leap-frog, cross-tig, races, &c., &c”. See, British League of Juvenile Abstainers (1850–1866) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/181/2. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

There is even comment in the newspaper article of a follow up game being arranged.²²⁵ The game recorded at Wigtown in 1870 relates to the annual custom of New Year's Day. This match was played at 20-a-side by local youths who competed for a prize of one pound. The respective teams adopted blue or red colours to differentiate themselves.²²⁶

The influence of the modern codified games can also be found. The rugby game had already emerged in Scotland in the 1850s and evidence of games linked to rugby rules can be found in Chapter 1. However, the list of examples in Table 2.1 demonstrates a noted increase in teams playing rugby football around Scotland. In total, 15 examples of football teams can be verified as being linked to rugby football contests between 1860 and 1873, equating to almost a quarter (24 percent) of the 62 examples in this time period. This compares with just four of the 55 examples for 1830–1859 which works out at seven percent. Although there are fewer examples for the association game, there is nevertheless some proof that, below the recently formed clubs, these rules were starting to have an influence. The match between the Bonhill Tramps and the Alexandria Tramps in 1873 was played under association rules.²²⁷ It involved workers who commuted from one locality to the other (and vice versa). This activity can be linked to the recent establishment of football clubs in the Vale of Leven district which had adopted the association game.

An important objective of this thesis is to provide data relating to organised football in Scotland which adds to the wider debate surrounding the development of organised football across the UK and internationally. In many respects the examples of organised football activity found in Scotland mirror the examples to be found elsewhere in the UK. Certainly, the article produced by Dean Cooke and James on the early development of association football in the Potteries highlights similarities with the author's own research. For example, Dean Cooke and James found evidence of older forms of informal activity in the Potteries and argue that whilst... "these matches were arranged on an ad hoc basis, with no recognized clubs or known published rules, enough people were participating in football for some form of the game to be passed between generations to ensure its continuation" (Dean Cooke and James, 2018: p. 9). The findings of this thesis indicate that in Scotland informal games were governed by rules. These rules were not necessarily published but existed nevertheless in a verbal or unwritten format.

An issue with some of the much earlier football histories has been the stigmatisation of traditional forms of football activity outside of the public schools as being unruly mob games. Harvey makes a similar point when making a distinction between the types of games that historically were labelled as being folk or mob football. In doing so, he argues that "'folk-forms' are effectively irrelevant to any discussion of rule-based football" (Harvey,

²²⁵ The article stated that a game was being arranged against a Forest Mill team for New Year's Day. See, Anonymous (1869) *Southern Reporter*, 23 December, p. 2.

²²⁶ Anonymous (1870) *Galloway Advertiser and Wigtownshire Free Press*, 6 January, p. 4.

²²⁷ Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 12 May, p. 3.

2002: p. 197). In compiling a list of examples of organised football activity for this thesis, the author has added to wider academic work which seeks to distinguish between this type of organised activity and the 'free for all' versions of mob football.

Other thesis findings contribute to the wider academic debate surrounding the involvement of people whose status was below the level of the business and professional classes in the development of the association game. Swain, for example, in a series of articles highlights a lengthy list of football activity far removed from the public schools, which provides in his own words, "a much broader and more stable footballing culture across the country than hitherto thought, based on games played at church, work and school outings, rural fetes and galas, alongside those played at celebrations and as street football or casual games in meadows, fields or greens" (Swain, 2014b: p. 2212).

As alluded to in Chapter 1, Swain's inclusive approach has received criticism from Curry and Dunning who refer to the lengthy record of activity provided by Swain as a "long list of casual 'kickabouts'... [which] does not reflect a level of influence in the subsequent organization of the game when compared to events in the public schools and at Cambridge University" (Curry and Dunning, 2017: p. 868). Whilst the author does not fully agree with Swain's methodological approach, the findings of this thesis nevertheless make the case for a connection in Scotland between older informal games and the emerging association game of the early 1870s. This development was largely unconnected to the English public school system and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The diversity of football teams

Figure 2.1 provides an insight into the various backgrounds of the teams involved in football contests between 1860 and 1873. What needs to be kept in mind when analysing these figures and comparing them with the statistics from the previous chapter is the respective scale of the football club activity for each period which is being examined separately. Between 1830 and 1859, football clubs formed a relatively small grouping. However, as shown in this chapter, between 1860 and 1873 they were, by a clear margin, the largest group overall in terms of numbers. The figures of non-club team activity for 1860–1873 should therefore be considered as an underlying trend below club development. A comparison of the non-club team data between 1830–1859 and 1860–1873 throws up two immediate differences with respect to organised football activity; firstly, an increase in links with education, and secondly, a decrease in the number of connections with annual customs. With the former, the number increases significantly, rising from 10 percent to 24 percent, and with the latter the reduction is more gradual, falling from 24 percent to 20 percent. This points to a contrasting trend with respect to the decline of football activity

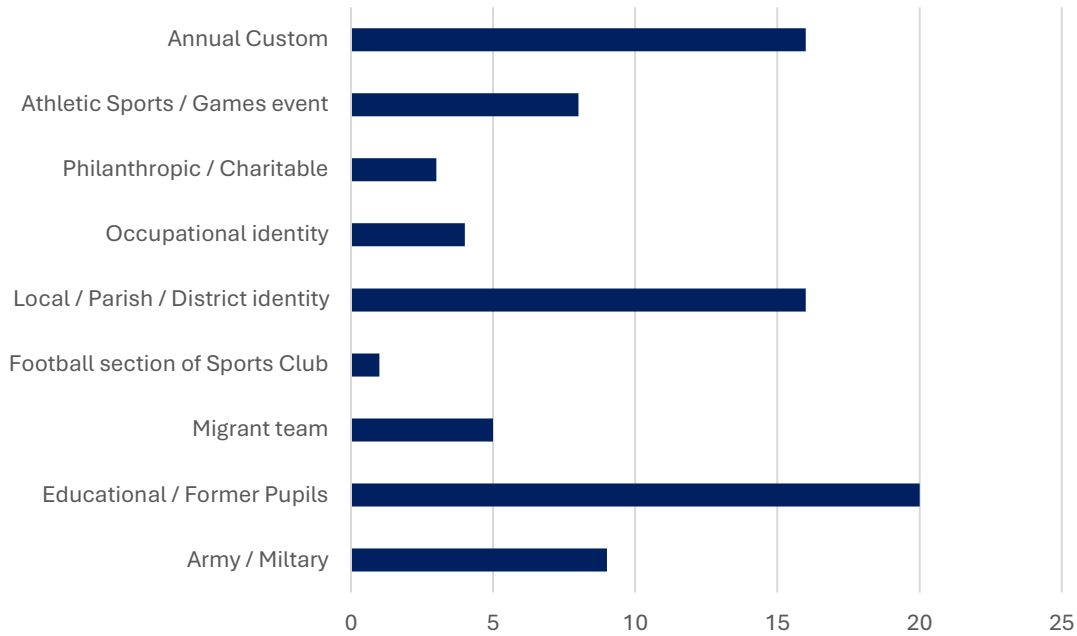


Figure 2.1: General grouping of football teams (excluding football clubs) listed by Type, 1860-1873. As compiled from the data listed in Table 2.1 (See Appendix 3).

surrounding traditional festival events and the increasing use of organised football within the education system. These statistics help to highlight a broader change to the way in which youths and young men interacted with football as a recreational activity. Once the significant growth in the number of football clubs and the impact of migration are factored in, the decline in the holding of team based games linked to annual customs can be better understood.

Certainly for the development of the association game in the west of Scotland, the earliest of these clubs (in the late 1860s and early 1870s) had their own internal playing rules. In the case of migrant teams, these would have been influenced by their traditional native games. Glasgow in particular benefited from migrant influences. John B. Connell provides a useful example of such influences, both providing information as a football player as well as a founder of some of the early non-rugby football clubs. Connell was a native of Kilmadock Parish in Perthshire. He had played at the annual Handsel Monday game at Callander.²²⁸ After moving to Glasgow, he continued to play football at Glasgow Green and during the late 1860s and early 1870s would go on to help establish, and play for, the Thistle, Drummond and Callander clubs as well as the 105th Lanark Rifle Volunteers team.²²⁹ The Drummond and Callander clubs and the military team were established by Connell and fellow migrants

²²⁸ See, Capel-Kirby W. and Carter F. W. (1933) *The mighty kick: the history, romance and humour of football*. London: Jarrolds, p. 194.

²²⁹ See, Capel-Kirby W. and Carter F. W. (1933) *The mighty kick: the history, romance and humour of football*. London: Jarrolds, p. 195, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 11 August, p. 5, and, Anonymous (1914) *Scottish Referee*, 29 June, p. 5.

coming to the city. Connell, indeed, goes as far as to say that the Drummond Club was “composed largely of Callander lads”.²³⁰

The anecdotal evidence of migrant experiences like that of Connell, alongside the results highlighted in the data, points to a process of transition which linked migration and notions of identity with the emergence of the early football clubs. The relationship between local identity and traditional forms of games, such as those linked to annual customs, were starting to diminish at a time when migrant football clubs were beginning to emerge. This transitional process chimes with Holt’s view of the role of organised football activity in sustaining migrant identity in industrial cities.²³¹ Chapter 3 will provide a detailed analysis of migration patterns by studying football club memberships for the late 1860s and early 1870s.

As touched upon earlier, the early playing rules of migrant clubs quite naturally would have been influenced by aspects of the traditional games native to their home land but this would start to transition towards unified rules as clubs came into contact with each other and, as a result, more formalised networks developed. Indeed, with respect to the Drummond Club’s match with Queen’s Park FC in 1870, Connell makes the following observation,

They not only had their individual balls, but their own rules, the interpretation of which differed materially from one another. Drummond did not mind tripping, but made a speciality of it on every conceivable occasion. Queen's Park, however, banned this form of play as very dangerous and tactically bad.²³²

In Glasgow, the emerging ‘proto-soccer’ clubs, coalescing around Queen’s Park FC would formally achieve uniformity in playing rules in 1873 with the establishment of the Scottish Football Association. As the next chapter will show, the vast majority of these individuals were from lower middle-class and skilled working-class backgrounds. Those from privately educated backgrounds whilst not completely absent, were in a small minority and while some held office or had a role at committee level within the Scottish Football Association, they were not a dominant group when it came to the general running of the game.²³³ This level of involvement in the running of clubs by the working and lower middle-class in Scotland contrasts with the views of Curry and Dunning who asserted that,

A good number of thought-provoking studies have continued to prove beyond doubt that football was taking place outside the public schools, but these studies fail to

²³⁰ Anonymous (1933) *Daily Record*, 21 February, p. 25.

²³¹ Holt states that “Old territorial rivalries and customs could be adapted to modern forms of regulation, and there must have been plenty of sides who carried on old parish battles under new colours”. See, Holt, R. (1986) ‘Working-class football and the city: the problem of continuity’, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 3(1), p. 5.

²³² Capel-Kirby W. and Carter F. W. (1933) *The mighty kick: the history, romance and humour of football*. London: Jarrolds, p. 195.

²³³ A study into eight of the 13 original committee members which appears in Chapter 3 found that seven were drawn from the lower middle-class with the eighth coming from the merchant / professional class.

convince that the people who occupied this layer of society had more than a minimal effect on the development of the modern game (Curry and Dunning, 2017: p. 866).

The growth of the modern game (rugby or association) goes far beyond the development of published playing rules, although rules clearly form an important part of structured football contests. The way in which games are played are also very important. As this chapter will go on to explain, the non-elitist association clubs that formed in and around Glasgow played a major role in the progression of the game. Indeed, it could be argued that when it came to the clubs, notions of class identity were not considered to be important within the association game in Scotland.²³⁴ In some respects, the experience of Glasgow is not unique. The study of football in Manchester by James and Day uncovers similar working and lower middle-class involvement, although the period covered by their research runs from 1840-1884. One of the main points made by James and Day is that,

In contrast to the idea that certain class groups were more influential than others... football's emergence during the Victorian period depended significantly on key individuals from varying backgrounds who provided the energy and enthusiasm for the game, rather than on specific class interests (James and Day, 2014: p. 49).

Beyond class backgrounds, the growth of football clubs and the decline of traditional team-based games (as referenced earlier) can be attributed to wider factors. Tony Collins, for example, makes a valid point when he argues that football was shaped by “the tremendous social changes that were taking place in British society in the last third of the century” (T. Collins, 2015: p. 1138). These changes aided the transformation of association football from the amateur sport of the early 1870s into the professional industry of the 1890s. However, the process was not smooth, nor was it constant. Kitching argues that the development of modern football was “an incremental but discontinuous process” (Kitching, 2015: p. 129).

The rise of the association game in Scotland was not due to a singular moment which signified the birth of the game. Instead, two parallel but concurring arguments need to be factored in. The first is the unarguable point for the association game, that the 20-year period running from the early 1870s through to the early 1890s was defined by significant change. This, on the one hand, can be seen to connect with Tony Collins’ argument of a reinvention of football (T. Collins, 2019: pp. 14-15). On the other hand, this process also connects with the view proposed by Griffiths (when addressing the broader subjects of work and leisure in the nineteenth century) when he advocates for the existence of “continuity and change” (Griffiths, 2010: p. 189). That argument supports the idea of a process of evolution and this can be argued through a prosopographical study of the people who were

²³⁴ This can be seen, for example, with the Clydesdale Club, where J. J. Lang (a Roman Catholic who was the son of Irish migrants and worked as a boilermaker) could claim to have Frederick Anderson (a Presbyterian and son of a local cloth merchant who worked as a commercial clerk and was educated at Glasgow Academy) as a team mate.

involved in playing and running the game. This will be covered in detail in the next chapter. As alluded to in the literature review, an important objective of this thesis is to square the viewpoint of academics like Tranter with respect to the importance of the “forces of modern economic activity” in “the transformation... of sporting activity” (Tranter, 1989: p. 227), with the view expressed by Griffiths relating to “the coexistence between traditional and modern” (Griffiths, 2010: p. 175).

This thesis argues that, rather than be in direct conflict with each other, the dual agents of continuity and change co-existed within the emerging Scottish association game of the early 1870s. These instruments, however, should be viewed as a correlation in which the emergence and growth of the modern association game necessitated a decline in traditional organised games. Whilst a similar argument can be made with respect to the development of the rugby game, the alternative case — that the game was imported into Scotland during the mid-1850s and flourished primarily through its uptake by the elite schools and universities — holds stronger weight. Evidence of this can be found in Figure 2.2 where, as alluded to earlier, education emerges as the single largest category for the period running from 1860-1873, accounting for almost a quarter of the total figure (compared with 10 percent for 1830–1859).

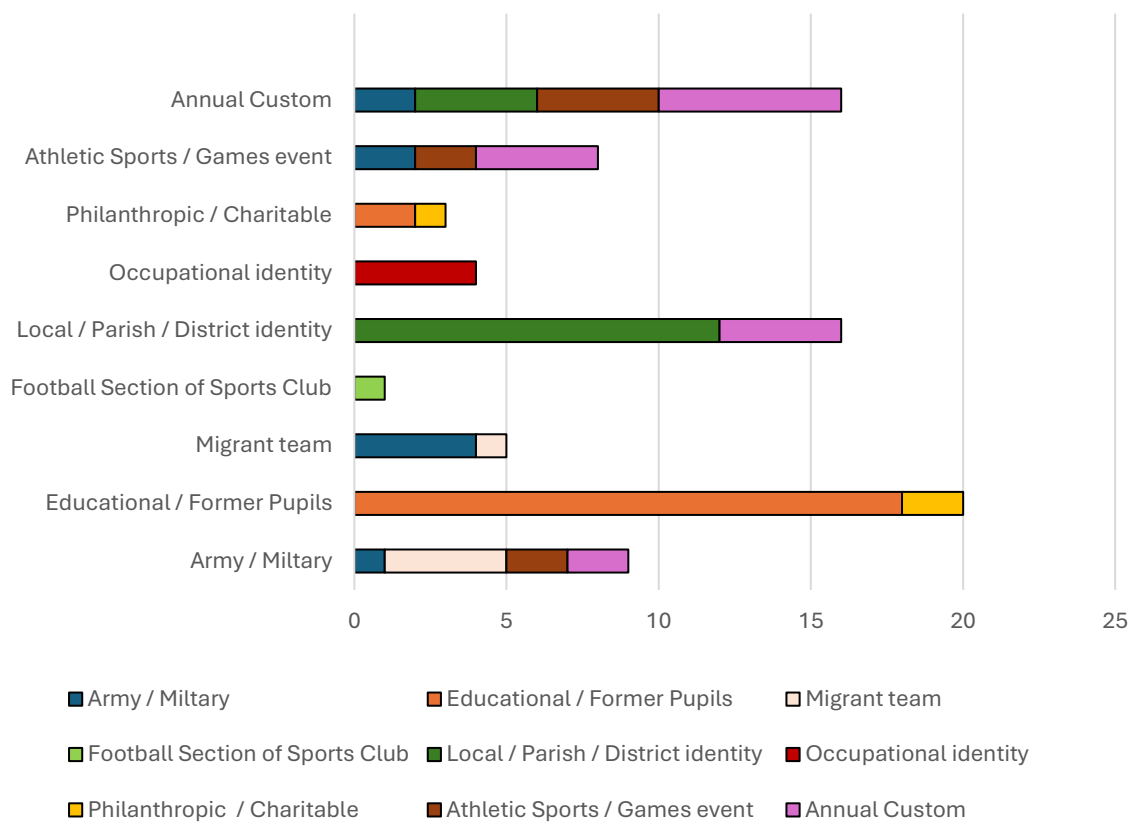


Figure 2.2: Individual breakdown of football teams (excluding football clubs) listed by Type, 1860-1873. As compiled from the data listed in Table 2.1 (See Appendix 3).

Although this gap is already notable, as will be seen, the figures for 1860-1873 are vastly underestimated by the absence of football clubs linked to education. With respect to the development of the rugby game in Scotland, the close connection between education and organised football activity which has been found in the evidence supports the view of Phillips that the introduction and subsequent growth of the rugby game in Scotland can be attributed to the leading schools and the former pupil organisations that were connected to them (Phillips, 1925: pp. 1-2). A comparison of the individual breakdown of teams by type from 1830 to 1859 and that of 1860 to 1873 show some similarities with respect to the subsets relating to education and local identity. Although the data column for education is noticeably larger for the latter period, the data is less nuanced across both timeframes. In the former period, six of the eight data points link exclusively to education, compared to 18 out of 20 in the latter. This suggests that, with the obvious exception of the football clubs, football team activity within the Scottish education system was largely disconnected from any of the other external influences across almost the entirety of the timeframe covered by this thesis. Similarities can also be found in the data for local identity. For 1860-1873, 12 of the 16 data points are connected solely to that particular subset (the remaining four being linked to 'Annual Customs'). This bears some resemblance to the period from 1830 to 1859, where five of the 10 references relate exclusively to local identity (with the rest being linked to annual customs).

Even without the presence of clubs, Figure 2.2 demonstrates the underlying importance of school and university teams in the growth of organised football activity for the period running from 1860-1873. Although the elite schools and universities sided with the rugby game, Chapter 4 will provide evidence of growing support within educational institutions for the association game as it continued to expand. The growth of organised football in Scotland during the 1860s and early 1870s was linked to the general advancement and expansion of education in Scotland. As mentioned previously, this sector was multifaceted, being supported by a disparate group of organisations and individuals, ranging from the local burghs and churches to the benevolent actions of wealthy philanthropists. The expansion of the education sector was particularly beneficial to the middle-classes, but it increasingly offered value and opportunity to a much broader demographic. In some respects, the experience of the Scottish education system during the early 1870s mirrored that of organised football. According to R. D. Anderson, the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 was established to gently push "a diverse patchwork of education provision towards a national system" (R. D. Anderson, 1977: p. 20). In 1873, the newly formed governing bodies for football had similar aspirations for their own respective sports – working with member clubs which, in many cases, were connected to a diverse group of parent organisations, the objective was to establish a national structure which would promote uniformity in playing rules and improve organisational standards.

The regularity of football activity: comparison between 1830–1859 and 1860-1873

A comparison with respect to the regularity of games can be made for both periods by once again using the 55 non-club examples which exist in Table 1.1 (1830–1859). This data can be directly compared with the 62 examples that appear for 1860-1873 in Figure 2.3. As with the previous comparisons between both periods, the extraction of football clubs from the data restricts any overall conclusions that can be made relating to the regularity of football activity. It does, however, provide evidence of some underlying trends. This can be seen, for example, with the high percentage recorded for staged games that appear in Figure 2.3. The substantial total of 60 percent compares with just 15 percent from the earlier period and suggests that the clubs were inevitably becoming dominant with respect to the provision of regular football matches. A caveat that must be made here, however, is the possibility that some of the examples of team-based activity, whilst suggesting one-off staged games, may indeed be the partially recorded evidence of an activity which otherwise took place on a more regular basis.²³⁵

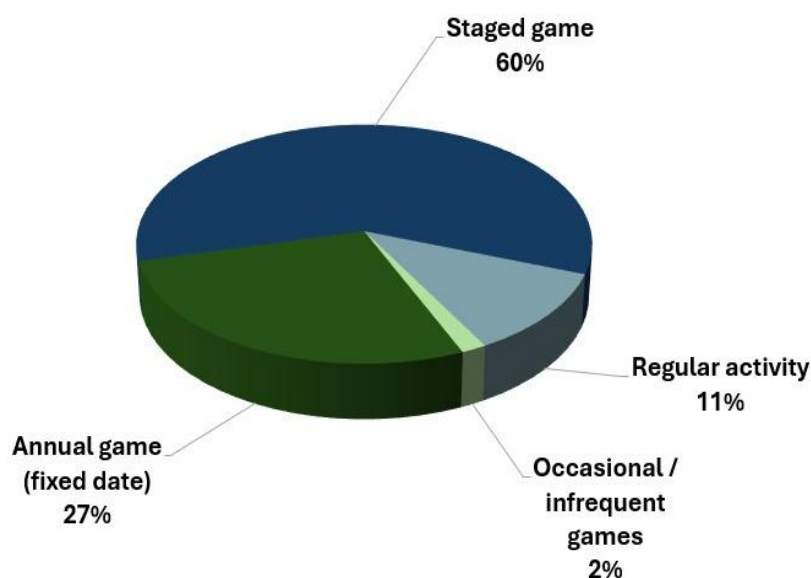


Figure 2.3: Regularity of football activity 1860-1873 (excluding football clubs). As compiled from the data listed in Table 2.1 (See Appendix 3).

Linked to the increase in staged games (recorded in Figure 2.3) is the significant drop in regular activity. The examples for 1830-1859 account for 31 percent of the total, while the corresponding figure for 1860-1873 is just 11 percent. Added to this, the number of games played on an annual basis experienced a decline, dropping from 42 percent for 1830–1859 down to 27 percent for 1860-1873. This chimes with the earlier conclusion that the growth

²³⁵ It is plausible, for example, that the football match involving the Academy and College teams at Crieff in 1865, whilst having been recorded just once, may have suffered from a lack of coverage in the local newspapers. Based on the experiences of other teams linked to educational institutions, it is conceivable that these teams may have been more active. For the original article, see, Anonymous (1865) *Strathearn Herald*, 12 December, p. 3.

of football clubs was increasingly changing the way that people connected with football as a recreation. It can be argued that changes to patterns in the provision and enjoyment of football activity mirrored a much bigger development; for many Scots, the increasing regulation of life, as much within the work place as out on the playing field, was a notable trend for the period overall.

However, this process was encapsulated by transition rather than by sweeping change. Griffiths, in particular, presents a strong case for this argument;

In place of a narrative marked by discontinuities and a wholesale displacement of 'traditional' by 'modern' leisure activities, a picture emerges in which the two co-existed and often overlapped (Griffiths, 2010: p. 175).

Indeed, the emergence of variety theatres and music halls, as with sport, provide examples of this process which, on the one hand can be viewed as a modern development, but on the other, provided an element of continuity. Although these forms of musical entertainment emerged and flourished in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Griffiths argues that the bills often carried older forms of entertainment (Griffiths, 2010: p. 175).

Section 3 — Evidence of football clubs: 1860-1873

Overview to the data

The study has found evidence of 213 football clubs which are referenced as existing in Scotland between 1860 and 1873. It has to be noted, however, that in addition to this number, several references have been found in newspaper articles which relate to the proposed formation of football clubs but where there is no evidence as to whether the clubs were ultimately created. An example of this can be found at Wick in Caithness, where members of the local cricket club had proposed "establishing a club for the practise of football in weather not suited to cricket".²³⁶ No evidence, however, has been found as to whether a club was started up in Wick. In such circumstances the reference has not been included.

Additionally, in undertaking this research there have been cases where clubs are retrospectively referenced as being from this period but where there is at present limited or insufficient corroborating evidence to confirm this. The author has looked at such issues on a case by case basis and where there is insufficient evidence, the relevant club has been omitted. One such example is the Hamilton Thistle Cricket and Football Club which is referenced as having a formation year of 1862.²³⁷ This foundation year is corroborated by an article in the *Hamilton Advertiser* in 1876 (confirming that the club had been in existence for

²³⁶ Anonymous (1864) *Northern Ensign and Weekly Gazette*, 24 November, p. 4.

²³⁷ See, *Naismith's Hamilton Directory for 1878-79*. Hamilton: W. Naismith, p. 59.

14 years).²³⁸ However, the club for many years was solely a cricket club with the football section being introduced in the winter months of 1875.²³⁹

Conversely, the Queen of the South Wanderers Club has been attributed a formation year of 1872, due, in the main, to several editions of the *Scottish Football Annual* (including a specific reference from J. J. Coutts, the honorary secretary of the Southern Counties Association) as well as a newspaper report of a 10th anniversary celebration of the club's foundation which took place in February 1883 (and which confirms the existence of the club in season 1872-73).²⁴⁰ As more local newspapers and archives become accessible, additional clubs may be added to the list. Of the overall figure of 213, more than half (115 clubs or 54 percent) are linked exclusively to the rugby football code and a little under a third (67 clubs or 31 percent) are linked exclusively to the association football code. Eight additional clubs played to both codes, meaning that the total number of rugby playing clubs can be increased to 123 and the total number of clubs linked to the association game can be increased to 75. Figures 2.4a and 2.4b depict the geographical locations of clubs adhering to each of the distinct codes across Scotland. As can be seen, the rugby game not only had the most clubs overall but also the greatest range of geographical spread.

At the national level, rugby football, with a prolonged period of growth, had clearly established itself ahead of its rival code. The association game, however, had a much larger concentration of clubs in the west of Scotland region.²⁴¹ Here, the number of clubs connected to the association game amounted to 70; a figure considerably higher than the 33 clubs associated with rugby which have been recorded within the same area. Indeed, the west region accounted for 93 percent of all known association clubs in Scotland for the period.²⁴² This established the West as the heartland region for association football in Scotland from a very early period and, as will be seen in Chapter 4, the number of clubs in and around Glasgow continued to rapidly increase post 1873. Whilst Edinburgh and the east of Scotland experienced a decent period of growth in the years leading on from the

²³⁸ Anonymous (1876) *Hamilton Advertiser*, 25 November, p. 2.

²³⁹ While Hamilton Thistle's cricket club can be found in newspaper reports from May 1869 (see, Anonymous (1869) *Hamilton Advertiser*, 22 May, p. 2), the earliest reference of a football section is December 1875 (see, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 28 December, p. 3).

²⁴⁰ For more information, see, Fleming, J. S. ed. (1880) *Scottish football annual*, 1880-81. Glasgow: Gillespie, p. 57, Livingstone, R. ed. (1881) *Scottish football annual*, 1881-82. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 115, Coutts, J. J. (1882), Football in the Southern Counties. In: McDowall, J. K. ed. *Scottish football annual*, 1882-83. Glasgow: W. Weatherston & Son, p. 120, and, Anonymous (1883) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 10 February, p. 4.

²⁴¹ For the purpose of this study, the west of Scotland region covers the city of Glasgow and the outlying counties of Lanarkshire, Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire, Ayrshire and the coastal communities of the firth of Clyde.

²⁴² The only clubs to be found outside of the west of Scotland region is the cluster of five clubs in Dumfriesshire.

Rugby



Association



Figure 2.4a and 2.4b: Geographical locations of clubs linked to the dominant playing codes, 1860-1873

exhibition match of December 1873,²⁴³ the association game was starting off from a much lower base and had the added challenge of being in the shadow of the rugby game which was already long established. Edinburgh (including neighbouring Musselburgh) was home to at least 30 clubs connected to the rugby game by 1873. However, while this figure, at almost a quarter of the total number of known clubs playing to rugby rules in Scotland, is sizeable, the fact that three quarters of the rugby football clubs were located in other parts of the country serves to highlight the general spread of clubs across many of the leading towns and cities.

Although rugby in the west region was significantly behind the association game in terms of club numbers, it could more than match the rugby scene of Edinburgh and Musselburgh, with 33 recorded clubs, while the north east coastal populations running from Dundee to Aberdeen accounted for an additional 25 clubs. Despite the notable geographic spread of rugby football clubs, overall, Edinburgh held a generally recognised position as the natural centre for the rugby game north of the border. This was partly through having a significant concentration of influential clubs, and partly through widely held perceptions of the city as the birthplace of the sport in Scotland. For the association game, Glasgow quickly assumed a similar position,²⁴⁴ and by March 1873 the city was the obvious choice as the home for the sport's national governing body.

Beyond clubs associated with the two dominant codes, there are an additional 23 clubs who cannot be directly linked to either. This may be because the clubs had their own independent playing rules or because the nature of the playing rules is unclear.²⁴⁵ A list of these clubs can be found in Table 2.2. (see Appendix 4). The examples provided in Table 2.2 attest to the variety of football clubs for the period. For instance, the Strathnairn and Stratherrick clubs from Inverness-shire were established solely for the purpose of organising an annual game at New Year. The Stratherrick game of 1871 took place in a field at Errogie and the Strathnairn contest of 1872 was recorded at Brinmore Farm.²⁴⁶ Whilst both events were well organised and well supported, the actual games may have been mass participation affairs, the game at Strathnairn attracting "about 200 of the young men" while the game at Stratherrick involved "two to three hundred young men".²⁴⁷ As has been mentioned

²⁴³ An exhibition match for association football involving players from the west of Scotland region first took place in Edinburgh on 27 December, 1873.

²⁴⁴ Although the Marquis of Queensberry established his Kinmount Club as early as 1866, the development of association football in the South of Scotland region was limited. Queen's Park's influence in promoting the game in Glasgow and the surrounding counties had a much bigger impact and the Glasgow club would be widely acknowledged as the 'Premier' or 'Senior' club as a result of this.

²⁴⁵ In the case of the 5th Lanark RV Club (Glasgow) and 52nd Lanark RV Club (Hamilton) both clubs could have played to either rugby or association rules as both codes were prevalent in each area by 1873 but no evidence has been found to date to ascertain which type of game they played.

²⁴⁶ See, Anonymous (1871) *Inverness Courier*, 19 January, p. 5, and, Anonymous (1872) *Inverness Courier*, 11 January, p. 5.

²⁴⁷ Anonymous (1872) *Inverness Courier*, 11 January, p. 5, and, Anonymous (1871) *Inverness Courier*, 19 January, p. 5.

previously, these events have some similarity with the example of the Springkell Club in Dumfriesshire which appears to have originally been established for an annual game to mark the New Year. The Springkell Club, however, does identify as playing to the association code by 1870 and may therefore have been playing more regular games by then.²⁴⁸ The playing rules adopted in the Strathnairn and Stratherrick contests remain unknown.

In Dumfries, two clubs can be found in 1872 which do not appear to have played to either of the dominant codes.²⁴⁹ The match between the Free Templars Club and the Rob Roy Club involved 15 players on each side and was played to the rules of the former organisation. The scoring system of the Free Templar rules counted 'goals' and 'byes'.²⁵⁰

Arguably the most important group of clubs listed in Table 2.2 are those from Edinburgh. In total, a cluster of six clubs have been found which played to a hybrid form of rules. A series of late nineteenth and early twentieth century articles which relate to the introduction of association football in Edinburgh, although conflicting in places, help to provide some information as to the nature of the clubs. The earliest clubs within this cluster appear to be Moray House and Castle Terrace. A match report from their game in 1869 suggests that both clubs date from at least 1865, but possibly earlier, the entry merely stating that the match was "the fifth successive year in which the Castle Terrace Club has carried off the honours".²⁵¹ The detailed article provides some information on the type of game that the clubs played. The match took place in the Meadows, Edinburgh's most important public park (see Figure 2.5), and was played at 20-a-side with Moray House adopting red colours and Castle Terrace wearing blue.

The only goal of the game was scored when the ball was "kicked through" (rather than being kicked over as per the rugby game). Timekeeping for the match was determined by the time-gun at Edinburgh Castle; the firing of the gun bringing the match to an end. An article from 1905, which quotes the reminiscences of Thomas Fraser, an early pioneer of association football in Edinburgh, states that the club members connected to Moray House and Castle Terrace were Normal School students.²⁵² This suggests that the clubs were linked to the Normal Schools of both the Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland.²⁵³ The article from 1905 goes on to state that a third club, Thistle FC, who appear to have been established in 1871, also played to these rules. The rules are described as being basic and supporting a 'mixed game'. In the words of Fraser, "It was a mere scramble, and from a fair

²⁴⁸ See, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 61.

²⁴⁹ The existence of this match is noteworthy because, as Tables 2.4 and 2.5 will attest, the rugby and association codes had already reached Dumfries by this period.

²⁵⁰ Anonymous (1872) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 7 February, p. 12.

²⁵¹ Anonymous (1869) *Scotsman*, 23 March, p. 7.

²⁵² Anonymous (1905) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 21 January, p. 4.

²⁵³ In Edinburgh, the Normal school for the Established Church was located at Johnstone Terrace (beside Castle Terrace) while the Normal school for the Free Church was at Moray House.

catch a man could run for a short distance. There was neither off-side, foul nor penalty, and the result can be well imagined”.²⁵⁴

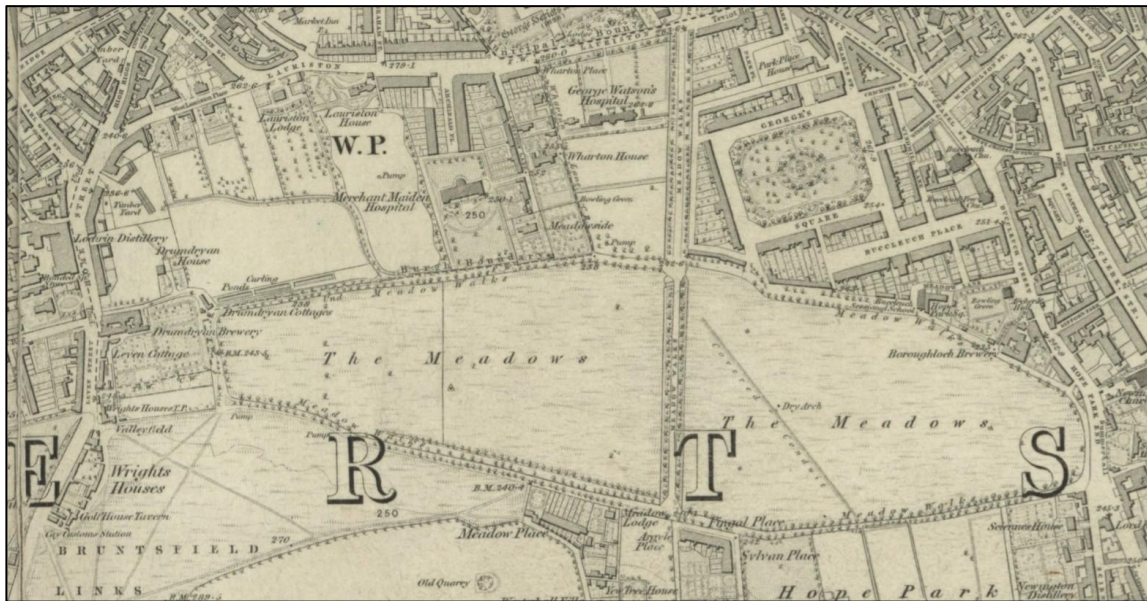


Figure 2.5: Ordnance Survey map of the Meadows and Bruntisfield Links from a survey undertaken in 1852. The latter named ‘common’ was home to the Edinburgh Foot-Ball Society during the late 1820s while the Meadows hosted traditional football matches during the 1860s and early 1870s involving clubs like Moray House and Blue Bonnet FC. The first meeting of the 3rd Edinburgh RV association club took place in the East Meadows in January 1874 and this part of the park would also host the first ever match between the Heart of Midlothian and Hibernian clubs in December 1875. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

The fair catch may at first glance seem like a rule more suited to the rugby game and it was indeed a feature of that particular code. However, the fair catch was used more broadly; it can, for example, be found within examples of non-rugby football activity in Scotland. Queen’s Park’s hybrid rules of the late 1860s era allowed for the ball to be caught and kicked on. This is evidenced when the club played against Hamilton Gymnasium in 1869.²⁵⁵ It also featured in the Sheffield Association game of the late 1860s and within the Football Association’s early versions of the Laws of the Game (up until 1866). Tony Collins argues that “all forms of football that were played in the 1850s and 1860s had far more in common than that which set them apart” (T. Collins, 2015: p. 1137). There is much merit to this viewpoint as a general overview for the period although John Hope’s Stockbridge Rules of 1854 serve

²⁵⁴ Anonymous (1905) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 21 January, p. 4.

²⁵⁵ A poem written about the game which is quoted in Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay, Nisbet & Co Ltd, pp. 32-34, includes the following lines; “And ere the ball can reach the ground 'Tis caught and kick'd with a rebound”.

to highlight the existence of football activity which was suitably different from many of the games of the mid-nineteenth century period which permitted a degree of handling.²⁵⁶

A newspaper article from 1882, which references Thistle FC as being an early Edinburgh club, also mentions two other clubs; Blue Bonnet and the Southern.²⁵⁷ This article goes on to suggest that the three clubs played to “a mongrel or bastard set of rules”. The sixth club was the Sciennes Hill Athletic Club which played the Blue Bonnet Club at football in the Meadows in 1870.²⁵⁸ Three of these clubs appear to have transitioned into the modern codes. After the introduction of the association game to Edinburgh in late December 1873, Thistle FC would go on to adopt that code and had already done so by 1874.²⁵⁹ The Moray House and Castle Terrace clubs would play to both codes. Moray House played association rules against the Breadalbane Club on 11 March, 1875 and rugby rules against Castle Terrace in the annual fixture of 20 March, 1875. In the fixture of 1877, the two clubs were playing to the association code, the Church of Scotland side being praised for sending the ball through to earn a goal after some clever dribbling.²⁶⁰

The eight clubs that are known to have played to both codes over the period are listed in Table 2.3 (See Appendix 5). They can be divided up into two categories; 1) those who were open to playing to both codes and 2) those who opted to switch codes. The first category is well represented by Southern FC of Glasgow who on one particular Saturday in 1873 sent out two separate teams; one to play against the Granville Club under association rules and the other to play the Pollokshields Club under rugby rules.²⁶¹ Other clubs were persuaded to switch codes. This can be seen, for instance, with Kilmarnock FC which had originally been a staunch supporter of the rugby game but converted to association rules after being convinced to do so by Queen’s Park FC.²⁶²

²⁵⁶ In the Stockbridge Rules the ball could not be handled at any point during the game or even as a method of restarting the game. This even differs from association football which, beyond the early use of the fair catch, allowed goalkeepers to handle the ball and permitted throw ins from the touch line.

²⁵⁷ The article is titled “Football in Edinburgh” and can be found in Anonymous (1882) *Scottish Athletic Annual*, 22 December, p. 10.

²⁵⁸ Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 13 June, p. 7.

²⁵⁹ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, there was a debate as to whether the 3rd Edinburgh RV FC or Thistle FC were the first to adopt the association code. While the Thistle club was certainly the older organisation, it appears that the 3rd Edinburgh RV Club, established in January 1874, was the first to implement the association code and that Thistle FC adopted the rules later in the year. For more information, see, Anonymous (1882) *Scottish Athletic Annual*, 22 December, p. 10, Anonymous (1905) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 14 January, p. 4, and, Anonymous (1905) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 21 January, p. 4.

²⁶⁰ See, Anonymous (1875) *Scotsman*, 12 March, p. 7, Anonymous (1875) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 23 March, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1877) *Scotsman*, 19 March, p. 7.

²⁶¹ Both matches took place on 1 February, 1873. See, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 3 February, p. 6, and, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 4 February, p. 7.

²⁶² The Kilmarnock FC minutes from the meeting of 3 March, 1873 refer to the approach made by Queen’s Park FC and the subsequent decision of the Ayrshire club to change to the association code. See, Kilmarnock Football Club (1872–1879) Minute Book. *Kilmarnock Football Club Archive*, uncatalogued. Ayrshire: Kilmarnock Football Club.

Certainly, in terms of the association game, clubs were not duty bound to play exclusively to that code when seeking membership of the governing body. The Scottish Football Association in 1873 appears to have been relaxed about potential members continuing to play rugby football as long as they devoted as much time to the association game.²⁶³ Other clubs like Dumfries FC started out playing to the rugby code before switching to the association game.²⁶⁴ Such a move had its risks; this can, for instance, be seen with the motions and counter motions that appear in the Kilmarnock FC minute book over the course of 1873, highlighting the division over the vote to switch to association rules.²⁶⁵

A significant trend by the end of 1873 was the action taken by most football clubs to coalesce around either of the dominant codes. There were some exceptions to this rule and Chapter 4 will highlight a small number of clubs that continued to play to both codes in and around Glasgow up to 1875. In Ayrshire, the Ayr Club provides an example of compromise. This club was one of the first to challenge Queen's Park FC to a game in 1868 but the match had to be declined due to distance. In June 1873, Ayr rejected an invitation by the recently formed Scottish Football Association to "unite with them", opting instead to stick with rugby rules.²⁶⁶ However, in September 1873, they could be found playing the local garrison team at association rules on the Low Green in Ayr only to switch back to the rugby code the following Saturday for their match with the Ayr Academy Club.²⁶⁷ A degree of confusion surrounds the Madras College Club of St Andrews due to entries in the *Football Annuals* of 1872 and 1873 which imply that the club was playing solely to association rules.²⁶⁸ However, as the overwhelming evidence in the match reports shows Madras to be a staunchly rugby playing organisation for the period, the author has accordingly classified Madras as a rugby playing club.

²⁶³ Quoting from the Scottish FA Letter Book, T. W. R. Johnston's article on the Scottish Football Association states that Archibald Rae, the Scottish FA secretary, expressed his opinion to the secretary of the Eastern Club that they "would be at liberty to play both codes" provided they played "bona fide Association matches as regularly as Rugby ones" (see, Johnston, T. W. R. (1894) *The Scottish football association: its formation and early days*. In: McDowall, J. K. ed. *Scottish football annual, 1894-95*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co, p. 74).

²⁶⁴ Dumfries FC in 1870 stated that they had recently been playing rugby rules but had now changed to association rules although the club played a rugby match against Carlisle FC in January 1874. See, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 60, and, Anonymous (1874) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 28 January, p. 1.

²⁶⁵ At the general meeting of 16 December, 1873 the proposal that "we play no other than Association rules" was met with an amendment stating that "we play no other than Rugby Union rules". The original motion was only carried by seven votes. See, Kilmarnock Football Club (1872-1879) Minute Book. *Kilmarnock Football Club Archive*, uncatalogued. Ayrshire: Kilmarnock Football Club.

²⁶⁶ Anonymous (1873) *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 7 June, p. 5.

²⁶⁷ See, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 29 September, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 6 October, p. 6.

²⁶⁸ See, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1872) *Football annual*, London: Virtue, p. 74, and, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1873) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 94.

The rugby game

The period 1860-1873 saw rugby rules clearly emerge as the most popular version of football in Scotland. Table 2.4 provides a list of all known clubs for the period who appear to have been linked exclusively to the rugby game in Scotland (See Appendix 6). Educational establishments were a dominant feature of the rugby football landscape in Scotland by 1873. The schools and universities were a significant reason as to why the game was already being played in Scotland's four main cities as well as in many of the principal towns. Part of the reason for this substantial spread can be put down to the importance of the code as a physical form of recreation within Scotland's universities and leading schools, a point which is made by R. D. Anderson.²⁶⁹ It is no coincidence that the starting point for the significant growth of the rugby game in the Scottish universities and schools came in the late 1850s and 1860s at a time when the ideology of Muscular Christianity was being popularised.

Educators had an important role to play, firstly in understanding the significance of sport as part of the educational experience and secondly, on acting upon this understanding. The leading figure for rugby in Scotland arguably was Hely Hutchinson Almond of Loretto School. Phillips indeed contends that Almond's influence lay behind the creation of inter-school rugby matches in Scotland, pre-dating similar matches in England (Phillips, 1925: p. 139). The number of clubs connected to education was clearly significant; there were direct associations through the leading schools as well as with smaller independent schools and there were also indirect links in the form of former pupils' clubs. Additionally, all of Scotland's universities had clubs playing to the rugby code by 1869.²⁷⁰ In total, a substantial 44 percent (54 clubs) of the 123 clubs with connections to the rugby game can be linked to education.

The rugby game had a strong presence in the Tayside region. Ten clubs could be found in Dundee and neighbouring Broughty Ferry while, just along the coast, the Angus towns of Monifieth, Arbroath and Montrose accounted for an additional nine clubs. By 1872 a competitive element was added to local competition when three clubs, Dundee, Dalhousie and Arbroath, subscribed towards the purchase of a silver cup.²⁷¹ A network of clubs running from the Scottish Borders up to Inverness and the Black Isle could only have developed through the expanding railway system. The transport links as well as educational networks aided this relatively rapid expansion out and around the country. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, Scotland's regional industrial hubs had effectively become connected through a national rail network by the 1850s. The rail industry increasingly diversified in order to meet the demands of emerging markets. Although, the early purpose of the railways, to carry raw materials and other goods, remained a core objective which brought in

²⁶⁹ See, Anderson, R. D. (1987) 'Sport in the Scottish universities, 1860-1939', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 4(2), pp. 177-188.

²⁷⁰ The Edinburgh and St Andrews universities appear to have rugby football clubs by the late 1850s, while the Glasgow and Aberdeen universities had clubs playing to the rugby code by 1869.

²⁷¹ See, Anonymous (1872) *Dundee Courier*, 14 November, p. 2.

significant revenue, the transformation of the railway system to cater increasingly for passenger transport was a major development of the second half of the nineteenth century.

The experience of Glasgow serves to illustrate the significant growth in demand for passenger services. Slaven, for example, states that 2,760,000 passengers were being brought into Glasgow by the Caledonian Railway in 1864; however, by the early 1870s that number had almost doubled (Slaven, 1975: p. 47). Such an expansion of passenger services could only be beneficial to the emerging football clubs as they sought out and arranged fixtures with other clubs. By 1867 rugby football clubs from Glasgow and Edinburgh were already travelling by train to play each other²⁷² and the Glasgow v Edinburgh inter-city fixture had commenced by 1872. Such was the cohesive nature of these networks that some clubs could even compromise and agree to meet at neutral locations in order to save on travel time. For example, Aberdeen University's match against the St Salvator Club of St Andrews University took place at Baxter Park in Dundee in 1869 and on the Montrose Links in 1870.²⁷³ A final point which relates to the role of the rail sector in creating a national transport network for passengers is the increased level of migration that inevitably followed. People were able to move and relocate to different parts of the country more than ever before and this trend will be examined in Chapter 3.

The association game

While the association game was certainly behind rugby football in terms of the overall number of clubs, it was primed for a period of unprecedented expansion. Table 2.5 provides a list of the clubs that were exclusively linked to the association code by 1873 (See Appendix 7). A key development, as has been referenced earlier, relates to the establishment of Glasgow and the west of Scotland as a central hub for the game. From a starting point of just one known club in Glasgow in 1867, there would be a notable increase in the number of clubs over the course of 1872 and 1873.²⁷⁴ In the south of Scotland a separate and unconnected cluster of association clubs could be found around Dumfries and Annan. The Marquis of Queensberry appears to have had a role in this local activity. From his family estate in Dumfriesshire in 1866, he established the Kinmount Club and is credited with influencing the creation of the neighbouring Annan Club in 1867.²⁷⁵ His influence may even

²⁷² The West of Scotland Club played Merchistonians and Edinburgh Academicals in this year (see, Anonymous (1867) *Glasgow Herald*, 2 December, p. 4, and, Anonymous (1867) *Scotsman*, 18 December, p. 7).

²⁷³ See, Anonymous (1869) *Dundee Courier*, 11 January, pp. 2-3, and, Anonymous (1870) *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 21 December, p. 3.

²⁷⁴ As Table 2.5 confirms, only 13 clubs are known to have been exclusively linked to the association code prior to 1872 while an additional 54 clubs are known to have been exclusively linked to association rules between 1872 and 1873.

²⁷⁵ *The Field* newspaper, reported that, "The revival of the game, which a good many years ago formed the favourite sport of the men of Annan, is chiefly due to the Marquis of Queensberry, who has lately taken a deep interest in the other pastimes of the town" (see, Anonymous (1868) *The Field*, 21 March, p. 22).

have extended to the Dumfries Club, which changed its playing rules from rugby to association around 1870,²⁷⁶ and to the Springkell Club, associated with Sir John Heron Maxwell, which was registered as playing to association rules in the same year. It is interesting to note that beyond the indirect link of future FA president Lord Arthur Kinnaird to association football north of the border,²⁷⁷ it was the Marquis of Queensberry who provided a direct connection with the association game of southeast England. Described as being an all-round sportsman, Queensberry attended Cambridge University between 1864 and 1866 and was involved in the plethora of sporting activities on offer.²⁷⁸

The revised edition of the Cambridge University football rules, printed in 1863 (just one year prior to Queensberry's arrival at Magdalene College), acted as a basis for the drafting of the original edition of the Football Association's Laws of the Game.²⁷⁹ Whilst it is noteworthy that the emerging association game in Scotland has some links to Scottish aristocrats, the connection appears to have been comparatively limited to a small enclave close to Scotland's southern border. The future relationship with the Scottish aristocracy would be aimed more at broader forms of patronage rather than specific involvement with respect to the running of the game.²⁸⁰

The geographical locus of the association game was Glasgow and its hinterland of local towns and villages from the neighbouring counties of Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and Dunbartonshire. Due to the excellent train links across the west of Scotland region, Ayrshire was also an important early home for the association game. A striking contrast with the rugby game, however, is the sparsity of links to educational institutions. Only Ayr Academy FC and Deaf & Dumb FC, the latter being connected to Glasgow's Deaf and Dumb Institution, can be linked to education up to 1873. It has to be noted, however, that the Ayr Academy club appears to have been primarily concerned with the rugby game. The Vale of Leven district also quickly took to the association game although not until the last couple of years of the period. By the end of 1873 at least 17 clubs were operating in that area of Dunbartonshire, many possessing significant working-class memberships with close ties to local factories.²⁸¹

²⁷⁶ An entry in Alcock, C. W. ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 60, states that the club had recently been playing rugby rules but had now changed to association.

²⁷⁷ Lord Arthur Kinnaird of Rossie Priory in Perthshire served as a committee member in England's Football Association from 1868 and would hold the position of FA President from 1890 to 1923. However, apart from making one official appearance for the Scotland national team in London in 1873, he had very little to do with the association game in Scotland.

²⁷⁸ See, Strattman, L. (2013) *The Marquis of Queensberry: Wilde's nemesis*. London: Yale University Press, p. 42.

²⁷⁹ See, Witty, J. R. (1960). The FA frames its laws. In: Fabian, A. H. and Green, G. eds. *Association football, Vol. 1*. London: Caxton Publishing Company, p. 147.

²⁸⁰ The Marquis of Lorne was honorary president of the Scottish Football Association between 1875 and 1878. Lord Rosebery replaced him in the latter year. See, Anonymous (1875) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 7 October, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1878) *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 20 November, p. 4.

²⁸¹ For more information see, McBrearty, R. (2024b) 'The Footballers from the Vale'. *International Football History Conference*. Cardiff City Stadium. Available at:

Summary

In this era, below the level of the newly formed clubs, organised football activity continued to take place involving teams functioning to less formal arrangements. As mentioned earlier, a correlation exists between the increase in clubs playing under either of the two dominant codes and the decline of less formal teams playing to localised rules. There is even evidence to suggest that, as well as games involving clubs, the rugby and association codes were starting to permeate into games involving less formal teams by the end of the period. This too, would have been to the detriment of localised rules. The significant rise in the number of football clubs over the period and the growing dominance of the two principal football codes may explain the position of some early articles, like that in the *Scottish Football Annual* of 1875, which proposed that in contrast to the ongoing growth, football had “almost died out” by the middle of the nineteenth century.²⁸²

On the contrary, whilst acknowledging some localised references to decline, the evidence, on the whole, suggests that organised football activity was taking place throughout the era and the dominance of the football clubs only really started to take hold towards the end of the period.²⁸³ If the history of organised football is primarily viewed through the prism of the two dominant codes and judged on the formation of clubs then the explanations given in early articles (suggesting a dearth in organised football activity prior to these developments) can be better contextualised.

Section 4 — The importance of networks: 1860–1873

The rapid growth of a network of football clubs — the vast majority of which played to one of the two dominant codes — was achieved in such a relatively short space of time due to a significant level of external support coupled with wider economic and social factors which encouraged and enabled this phenomenon. There are four key aspects which can be considered to be part of an overarching network which facilitated the rapid increase in the number of clubs. In some respects they acted independently of each other but in other ways they were interlinked. The first of these agents was the already well-established sport of cricket.

<https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2024/06/08/the-footballers-from-the-vale/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

²⁸² See, Anonymous (1875) Foot-Ball. In: Dick, W. ed. *The Scottish football annual, 1875-76*. Glasgow: W. Weatherston & Son, p. 7.

²⁸³ Of the 213 football clubs recorded between 1860 and 1873, 72 percent (153) relate to the three year period running from 1871 to 1873 while 28 percent (60) relate to the 11 year period running from 1860-1870.

Cricket

While there are examples of other sports being linked to organised football activity,²⁸⁴ cricket in particular appears to have developed a strong connection to both the association and rugby variations. The sport of cricket was already highly organised in Scotland with the leading clubs based at their own grounds and playing to well-developed rules. Being well established, many of these clubs were in communication with one another to arrange matches and, indeed, fixture lists and match reports can be commonly found in Scottish newspapers over the summer months by the 1860s.

The connections between cricket and football were well developed by the end of the period; as will be seen, both sporting activities were increasingly favoured within the leading schools and universities (although rugby rather than association was the overwhelming choice of rules adopted by educational institutions). Some of the leading cricket clubs that were not linked to the schools or universities also invested in organised football activity and here examples for both codes can be found. Cricket in Glasgow, for example, was linked to two particularly successful football clubs covering both codes in Clydesdale FC (association) and West of Scotland FC (rugby).²⁸⁵ In Edinburgh, the prestigious Carlton Cricket Club had instituted a rugby football club by 1871.²⁸⁶ With cricket already being a highly organised sport across the central belt of Scotland, it is perhaps of no surprise that the first official international matches for rugby and association football were played on cricket grounds.²⁸⁷

Outside of educational institutions the association game succeeded in winning over a significant number of cricket clubs. Two examples of the adoption of football by existing cricket clubs are provided in the newspaper reports in Figure 2.6. While both forms of football offered winter activity for cricket club members (once the cricket season was over), the association game in Scotland may have held an advantage by the end of 1872 in that the football contests were fixed at 11 players for each team, mirroring the numbers involved with cricket teams. By contrast, the rugby game could require up to 20 players in a team. This anomaly in numbers may therefore have been a contributing factor with respect to the preponderance to adopt association rules.

²⁸⁴ As noted previously, as early as 1855 Paisley had its own “Football and Shinty Club” while Hamilton Gymnasium (1866) and Alexandra Athletic (1873) were in effect multi-sport organisations.

²⁸⁵ Clydesdale Cricket Club was established in 1848 with the football club being instituted in 1872. The West of Scotland Cricket Club was founded in 1862 with the football club of the same name being formed in 1865.

²⁸⁶ Anonymous (1871) *Scotsman*, 21 November, p. 7.

²⁸⁷ The Association international football match took place at the West of Scotland Cricket Ground in November 1872, while the first Rugby international was played at Raeburn Place in March 1871. The latter venue had originally been established as a cricket ground for Edinburgh Academy in 1854.

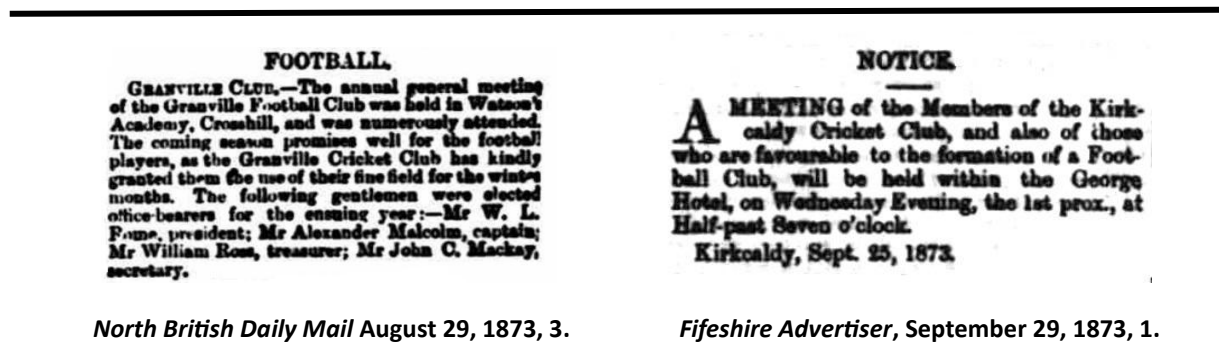


Figure 2.6: Cricket's close links with the association and rugby variations of football. **Left:** In Glasgow in 1873, Granville FC (Association) is granted use of the field of Granville Cricket Club. **Right:** Also from 1873, the Kirkcaldy Cricket Club in Fife forms a football club (Rugby).

The success of the football international match at Partick, Glasgow in November 1872 and the subsequent formation of the Scottish Football Association in March 1873 led to increased press coverage, especially in the west of Scotland. In May 1873, the *North British Daily Mail* provided a lengthy and very complimentary article which not only promoted association football in general but, as the extract below indicates, commended it to cricket clubs,

Equally obvious are the benefits which cricket clubs will secure by joining the Association and playing football in its season. Just now the difficulty they have to contend with is the want of some means to keep their members together after August or September, when cricket finishes... Now, if the cricketers would wisely adopt football when September came round, they would not only have an amusement congenial to their tastes for winter months, but they would hold together and come up in the best of form for cricket in April when the football season closes. The one sport would thus be auxiliary to the other, and every club would be able to conserve the proficiency it had acquired in both, in place of as at present losing several valued players every year by failing to preserve their connection with the club...²⁸⁸

The article concluded by providing the contact details for Archibald Rae, the recently elected secretary of the Scottish Football Association. In the west of Scotland region in particular, as the association game expanded from 1873 onwards, the names of cricket clubs appearing in fixture lists over the summer months were increasingly mirrored in the fixture lists for

²⁸⁸ Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 23 May, p. 3.

football clubs for the winter months.²⁸⁹ As many of the cricket clubs were well established sporting organisations possessing playing fields and pavilions that were underutilised in the winter months, they were more than capable of hosting football clubs. While cricket clubs provided a natural fit for organised football, ensuring all round sporting activity for club members, other networks also provided support. One of these was the temperance movement.

The temperance movement

While the temperance movement does not appear to have contributed as directly to the rise in the number of football clubs when compared with the sport of cricket,²⁹⁰ it did provide a notable platform for youths and young adults to benefit from organised football activity, particularly in the summer months when outdoor excursions were a popular form of recreation. From its early beginnings in 1829 under John Dunlop, the temperance movement had grown substantially by the 1840s with a host of organisations developing in different parts of Scotland which advocated initially for moderation in alcohol consumption and latterly for total abstinence.²⁹¹ Denny's article on Temperance and the Scottish Churches highlights the "accepted role [of the movement] in the ranks of social reform" (Denny, 1988: p. 217). The offering of healthy outdoor activities became part of the strategy of the temperance movement with outdoor sport forming a popular part of the summer excursions. Football games were organised across the country by temperance societies, from Ayrshire to the Shetland Isles.²⁹² While the largely attended excursions appear on the whole to have been meticulously planned and delivered, more casual 'drop in' activities varied in terms of the levels of supervision. The attempt of the Glasgow Abstainers' Union (founded in 1854) to create a public park to support healthy recreation at Gilmorehill in 1862, prompted a complaint being published in a newspaper with respect to the wild behaviour of people playing football in what appeared to be an ad hoc and unsupervised manner.²⁹³ The letter of

²⁸⁹ There are numerous examples of football clubs being formed out of existing cricket clubs. Usually, the name of the cricket club was adopted by the football club. In some cases the parent club ran football and cricket sections. For the Glasgow area these clubs include Eglinton (1874), Northern (1874), Caledonian (1875) and Dennistoun (1875) See, Anonymous (1874) *North British Daily Mail*, 19 October, p. 6, Anonymous (1874) *North British Daily Mail*, 22 September, p. 6, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 15 September, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 24 September, p. 6.

²⁹⁰ One notable example is the 3rd Edinburgh RV Club which was formed in January 1874 and was linked to the volunteer corps of the same name. The members of this corps, which was raised by temperance campaigner John Hope, had to refrain from alcohol.

²⁹¹ Denny references the early temperance societies of the 1820s and 1830s which focused on moderation. Total abstinence emerged in 1844 with the formation of the Scottish Temperance League. See, Denny, N. D. (1988) 'Temperance and the Scottish Churches, 1870-1914', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 23, pp. 219-220.

²⁹² Football is recorded at the gala day organised by the Ayrshire Temperance Union at Kilmarnock in 1867 and at a Juvenile Abstainers event at Lerwick in 1862. See, Anonymous (1867) *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 24 August, p. 8, and, Anonymous (1862) *John O' Groat Journal*, 4 September, p. 2.

²⁹³ Anonymous (1862) *Glasgow Morning Journal*, 7 May, p. 7.

complaint drew a retort from another reader²⁹⁴ but the damage appeared to have been done as the Glasgow Abstinence Union removed football from its programme of activities.²⁹⁵ The difference with the excursions and associated sporting activities, however, was the fact that they were supervised and were often noted for the significant level of organisation. At some events, for example, the recital of hymns accompanied the sporting activity.²⁹⁶

These events involved the patronage of landowners and were carefully organised through the dedication of volunteers connected to the temperance cause. The numbers involved are significant; typically, the excursionists could be counted in the hundreds but it was not unknown for numbers to exceed 1,000.²⁹⁷ Each year, these events provided an opportunity for thousands of youths from different parts of Scotland to participate in football in a well organised and welcoming environment. As will be seen in Chapter 4, with respect to the author's analysis of the principal factors behind Glasgow's 'football explosion', the numerous examples of activity in and around Glasgow involving largely working-class participants suggests that involvement in organised football was more prevalent than has heretofore been thought. Another important place where young people could actively engage in sport was through school or, for a smaller number of those in a privileged position to do so, through university. It is no surprise then that education would have a major influence on the development of organised football, particularly with respect to the rugby version of the sport.

Education

The role of organised sport within the framework of education was as important within the Scottish education system as it was in other parts of the United Kingdom by the early 1870s. R. D. Anderson, for example, points to the significant uptake of the rugby game within the upper echelons of the education system,

The leading secondary schools had adopted the rugby code from the start – unlike English ones, which often switched to it later – and it was well established in the universities by 1870, when inter-university games were already being played... (R. D. Anderson, 1987: p. 179).

Through educationalists including David Stow, who created Britain's first teacher training college at Glasgow in 1837, the value of having playgrounds within the school system (to

²⁹⁴ Anonymous (1862) *Glasgow Morning Journal*, 9 May, p. 2.

²⁹⁵ A newspaper advert states that "Foot-Balling has been discontinued". See, Anonymous (1862) *Glasgow Morning Journal*, 9 May, p. 1.

²⁹⁶ A good example of this can be found with the Kennoway Band of Hope's fete for Juvenile Abstainers in 1862. The event at Kilmux included... "singing teetotal hymns, swinging, racing, dancing, playing at football, and such like joyous exercises..." See, Anonymous (1862) *Dunfermline Saturday Press*, 9 August, p. 3.

²⁹⁷ As early as 1856 the British League of Juvenile Abstainers attracted upwards of 1,600 excursionists for their trip to Dirleton. See, Anonymous (1856) *Edinburgh News and Literary Chronicle*, 2 August, p. 4.

encourage physical activity) was identified from an early period. Stow's article on 'Moral and Physical Training' published in 1832, connected outdoor physical activity and the playground to moral culture.²⁹⁸ The role of the playground superintendent was particularly important. Stow wrote that,

Surrounded thus for several hours a day by such a world of pupils, it is the province of the shrewd, intelligent, and pious superintendent, to watch and direct all their movements; and whilst he daily participates in their juvenile sports, he, in consequence, gradually gains a thorough knowledge of their true dispositions, which at the proper time and season, he applauds or condemns on the principle of conviction... (Stow, [1832] 1868: p. 120).

The philosophical beliefs of pioneers like David Stow were shared by others. This included Benjamin Mackay, a retired schoolmaster who had taught for many years at the Royal High School in Edinburgh. Mackay was a keen proponent of sport's usefulness as a supplement to the daily school routine. Writing in 1834, Mackay offered the following viewpoint,

Up to the age of sixteen, they ought not to be confined to study more than five or six hours a day, and I think they ought always to have Saturday to themselves. The boys of the High School have a fine run in their own playground, and they ought to show that they appreciate it. The more exercise young people take, the healthier and more vigorous they become. Hard protracted study in early youth cramps the mind as well as the body... whatever hour boys may be required to get up, I would have them to consider walking, running, leaping, hand-ball, foot-ball, cricket, shinty, bathing, fishing &c., as the appropriate amusements and recreations of their vacant hours; and, if they take my advice, they will, up to the age I have mentioned devote to these exercises nearly as much of their time as to their daily lessons (Mackay, [1834] 1849: pp. 197-198).

At the elite end of the education system, sport was firmly established as being part of the offering of schools. Indeed, schools like Millbank House in Nairn openly advertised the presence of a school football club to enhance their appeal to prospective pupils and their parents.²⁹⁹ The second report of the Royal Commission into Scotland's endowed schools and hospitals included a section relating to facilities for outdoor recreation. In one of the submissions from August 1873, the headmaster of the Royal Academy in Inverness reported that, "The boys' playground is about three-fourths of an acre; that of the girls is smaller. The usual school games [are played], such as shinty, football, cricket, marbles".³⁰⁰ The biggest winner was the rugby game which owed a lot for its advancement across Scotland to the

²⁹⁸ David Stow's tract on Physical and Moral Training, quoted in Fraser, W. (1868) *Memoir of the life of David Stow*. London: James Nisbet & Co, pp. 120-125.

²⁹⁹ The school advertised gymnastic, cricket and football clubs. See, Anonymous (1871) *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 12 December, p. 4.

³⁰⁰ *Second report of the Royal Commissioners, appointed to inquire into the endowed schools and hospitals (Scotland)* (1874) Edinburgh: Murray and Gibb, p. 499.

elite schools and the universities. As mentioned previously, enthusiastic schoolmasters like Almond of Loretto were a driving force in the growth of the game. The geographical reach of rugby through the schools was impressive; by 1873 the network stretched out from the Wellfield Academy Club in Duns, Berwickshire up to the Royal Academy Club in Inverness.

A final network with a reach across much of Scotland as well as overseas was the military and there are numerous examples of organised activity for this group.

Military

Sport formed an aspect of physical activity for all strands of the army, from the volunteer companies and militias through to the professional soldiers in the regiments. Various examples of military teams participating in local codified forms of football activity have already been demonstrated and this carried on into the early 1870s when the rugby and association games started to take off. For example, whilst the 3rd Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers established an association football club in 1872, football had already formed part of the activity of the corps from an earlier period — in July 1866, when the volunteers established a camp near the village of Inverkip on the Inverclyde coast, football was referenced as an activity as part of camp life.³⁰¹ From organising internal matches under in-house rules, military teams progressed into playing to the association and rugby rules, and over time formed their own clubs. A notable example of this can be found with the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders which organised its own internal football competition at Dundee in 1849, and which won a silver medallion (under an agreed set of rules) against the Edinburgh University Football Club in 1851.³⁰² As late as 1870 the regimental team was still competing under an arranged set of rules, playing the best of three games in a challenge match against the 105th Lanark Rifle Volunteers.³⁰³ The following year the team embraced universalism by switching to rugby rules for the return match.³⁰⁴ However, it was 1873 before the football team of the 93rd Highlanders had evolved into a fully-fledged football club, competing regularly against Edinburgh clubs under rugby rules.³⁰⁵

The above networks were well developed and provide evidence of support for organised football activity throughout the period. These were arguably the main catalysts for the growth of football during the period and for the emergence of the two major codes. The

³⁰¹ Anonymous (1866) *Dundee Courier*, 19 July, p. 4.

³⁰² See, Anonymous (1849) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 14 January, p. 6, and, A Spectator (1851) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 February, p. 6.

³⁰³ Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 9 April, p. 7.

³⁰⁴ Anonymous (1871) *Falkirk Herald*, 13 April, p. 3.

³⁰⁵ They are referenced as being a club as early as February and March 1873 for their games against the Craigmount Club, Edinburgh Institution Club and Edinburgh Collegiate Club. See, Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 19 February, p. 6, Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 24 March, p. 7, and, Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 17 March, p. 7.

next section examines evidence of how the different forms of football were played in Scotland as well as the type of rules that existed.

Section 5 — Evidence of rules and playing styles

Introduction

This study has intentionally been broadened out to include as wide a range as possible of older forms of organised football. As mentioned previously, a methodology which restricts the investigation of organised football to an examination of clubs and playing rules (important though they are), will inevitably lead to conclusions based on a narrowed perspective. By broadening out the study, a more complete understanding of the evidence can be realised. The evidence supports some of Holt's ideas surrounding the idea of cultural continuity. In particular, his argument that a sense of familiarity must have existed between some of the traditional forms of organised football activity and the emerging modern codes. This can be found in his article on *Working-class football and the city*,

Thinking about our national winter game as an invention rather than an innovation is a deeply ingrained habit of mind. The public school men, who codified and governed the 'association' and 'rugby union' forms of football, did not wish their morally uplifting initiatives to be confused with vulgar and violent folk traditions of play. Yet rugby and soccer were innovations... As they quickly spread beyond the confines of the elite schools and into the industrial cities, football and rugby continued to be played in a fashion that would probably have been fairly recognisable to previous generations of 'traditional' footballers (Holt, 1986: p. 5).

This thesis similarly highlights connections of familiarity between some of the older forms of football games in Scotland and the emerging association game. However, the evidence of continuity for the rugby game in Scotland, whilst not completely absent, is not as strong and examples are limited.

Although it can be a challenge to find examples of written rules at such an early period, it should be said that the descriptions of some of the traditional games — a number of which have already been covered within this thesis — hint at underlying strategies as to the way in which matches were played. Descriptions of teams carefully deploying themselves on the field and tactical play like counter attacking moves all suggest considered forms of structured play intended to maximise the chances of success for teams operating within the constraint of rules. While playing rules are an important aspect of organised football activity which help to separate structured games from unruly 'free-for-all' contests, the manner of play is equally important. Kitching, indeed, makes a valid point when analysing the longstanding academic discussions surrounding the 'origins of football' debate,

One of the most notable features of all the contributions to the debate to date is the limited attention they give to play as against the formulation and codification of rules.... But surely it is just odd to claim that the origins of a game go back to any set of rules, written or oral, permanently codified or occasional (Kitching, 2011: p. 1737).

This section of the thesis therefore looks at both aspects of organised football activity; evidence of football rules (written or unwritten) and evidence of structured play.

Evidence of rules: written and unwritten

It is important not to lose sight of the patchwork nature of football activity prior to the emergence of the dominant codes during the early 1870s. Teams in different regions often played to different rules but, as will be seen, the simplistic characteristics of many of the traditional forms of football activity also provided areas of similarity. There are, for instance, basic templates for football rules which reflect the often generic characteristics of older forms of organised activity. It was the introduction of the dominant codes and the personalisation of those codes by individual clubs which added a degree of complexity to the early arrangement of inter-club matches. This became less of an issue as the rugby and association codes became standardised in Scotland by the early 1870s.

While many teams would have played to unwritten rules, working in effect under a basic knowledge as to the main points of the game, there are also examples of clubs playing to written rules. The earliest example of written rules in Scotland exists in the form of a handwritten note which was penned by John Hope and is attributed to his Foot-Ball Club. The rules are few in number, but, dating from 1833, they provide an early example of the type of game that was played by its members. They are as follows:

1. Simple soled shoes. No iron.
2. No tripping.
3. Ball to pass imaginary line.
4. A free kick if ball out of bounds.
5. Pushing is allowed. Holding not illegal.
6. Allow the ball to be lifted between fields.

These rules, when compared with Hope's more detailed guidelines of 1854, hint at a game in which handling the ball was limited. In the rules of 1833, the reference to handling only appears with respect to the ball being retrieved after it had gone out of bounds (between fields). It could be carried back to the field of play but the game had to be restarted with a freekick. This method of retrieving the ball and restarting the game is consistent with the rules created by Hope in 1854 for his playground at Stockbridge. An imaginary line across either end of the field provided the goal or hailing point. As will be seen, this method of

scoring has similarities with other examples of football activity in Scotland although it was certainly not universal.³⁰⁶ Rule 5 suggests that the game allowed for a significant degree of physicality; players were permitted to push and even hold onto their opponent although tripping was banned. Hope himself in a letter to a friend gives some evidence of this.³⁰⁷

An observation relating to football rules from 1848 is provided by Scottish author Hugh D. Richardson in his book, *Holiday sports and pastimes for boys* (Richardson, 1848: p. 64). Richardson's reference is not attributed to a particular club or team and the rules are simplistic; indeed, they are used to cover more than one sport.³⁰⁸ In the description, Richardson alludes to physical goals (known as 'calls') made up of posts six feet apart. As an alternative, he describes lines drawn across both ends of the field (similar to Hope's rules of 1833). This suggests that both types of goal were relatively common. When the former scoring system was in place (goalposts), Richardson states that, if the ball was driven past rather than through the goal, then the defending side was rewarded with a free kick. This general observation of traditional rules was not restricted to Richardson. Reverend Charles Rogers, writing in 1869, described his own perspective of a typical Scottish football match. In doing so, he provides a written testimony of the type of game that would have operated to verbal or unwritten rules,

Certain rules of the game may be mentioned. It was not allowable to touch the ball with the hand after it had been cast upon the field. An opponent might be tripped when near the ball, and more especially when about to hit it with the foot, but a competitor could not be laid hold of or otherwise interfered with, when at a distance from the ball. The party who, out of three rounds, hailed the ball twice was proclaimed victor (Rogers, 1869: p. 187).

W. P. Ireland's book on Blairgowrie provides an important assessment of football from 1865. An immediate note of interest is that, within the section that is devoted to football, he published the FA's Laws of the Game, which may be the earliest known publication of the rules in Scotland. As mentioned in Chapter 1, he does refer to a drop in football activity in recent years, stating that... "One district having a set of laws differing from those of another district has been found highly inconvenient...". However, Ireland also provides an observation of traditional football rules which are as follows,

³⁰⁶ Former Scotland rugby internationalist J. W. Arthur recounts the following when introducing the subject of football in the west of Scotland prior to 1865, "...all we had to do was to kick the ball over an imaginary line, drawn from one pile of coats to another, at the end of the field of play". See, Arthur, J. W. (1900) Some football jottings. In: *Glasgow Academy chronicle*, (2, January), p. 7.

³⁰⁷ Hope, writing to a friend in Paris about his activities within the Foot-Ball Club stated that, "As it is I am pretty swift, and am still a good hand at rolling down my opponents". See, Jamie, D. (1900) *John Hope, philanthropist and reformer*. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, p. 98.

³⁰⁸ Richardson states that the rules applied to bandy (shinty) and football. See, Richardson, H. D. (1848) *Holiday sports and pastimes for boys*. London: W. S. Orr & Co., p. 64.

Simply described, Football may be said to be played in the following manner:- Any number of players are divided into two parties, who stand between two goals marked out in a field. The object of each side is to defend their own goal, and to KICK the football through the goal on the opposite side. The goals are placed eighty or a hundred yards apart, and the side which succeeds in winning two out of three goals wins the game (Ireland, 1865: p. 25).

In 1861, Charles Carnegie, MP for Forfarshire, added his own views to the subject of traditional football games. In his address to the West United Presbyterian Church of Kirriemuir, on the subject of games and amusements, Carnegie accepts the diverse nature of traditional football contests but goes on to describe football as a kicking game whilst arguing against the rugby style tactic of running in whilst holding onto the ball. Carnegie states that,

Football was a game in which the rules differed very much according to locality; but the main object was to get the ball kicked between certain goals; and a very good game might be made by abolishing all the more minute regulations, and allowing the players to get the ball through the goal in any way they chose, except by running with it in hand.³⁰⁹

It is interesting to note that while ball handling formed part of the rugby game of the late 1850s and early 1860s it was not as pronounced as it would be a decade or so later. Dribbling the ball on the ground remained a notable tactic within the rugby game³¹⁰ and the ball was much rounder in shape to enable this. However, if the ball was off the ground it could be caught and then either kicked on, thrown, or the player in possession could run on with the ball in hand. The latter tactic is what Carnegie appears to disapprove of.

Hope's Stockbridge rules of 1854 were printed in the decade prior to the contributions of Carnegie, Ireland and Rogers. The Stockbridge rules were as follows,

There must be no kicking of shins, nor tripping – for these are apt to produce quarrels and hurts, and do not form part of the game. The ball is not 'hailed' unless it is sent between the posts, by one of the side whose duty it is to send it through, and unless it touch the ground. If the ball is sent through by one on the other side, it is not 'hailed'. The ball should not be kicked out of bounds. The party thus lifting it, is entitled to a 'free kick', but the ball must not be lifted by the hand from the

³⁰⁹ Lecture by Charles Carnegie, MP for Forfarshire, on "Games and Amusements" (see, Carnegie, C. (1861) *Dundee Advertiser*, 16 December, p. 4).

³¹⁰ Law 9 of the Edinburgh Academical's 'Rules of the Game' of 1858 states that "It is not lawful to take the ball off the ground, except in touch, for any purpose whatsoever". See, Barnes, D. (2008) *The Accies: the cradle of Scottish rugby*. Edinburgh: Birlinn, pp. 41-42.

ground at any other time. The British League Cap, to distinguish sides, cost 2d, is recommended.³¹¹

The rules are significant for several reasons. Firstly, they provide simple but clear instruction with respect to playing football. As with the other quoted examples of rules, the relatively small number of rules involved suggests that there was an expectation that participants would have a reasonable working knowledge of the way in which games were played. The rules are in effect a more detailed supplement, encouraging teams to play in a certain way. In the case of the Stockbridge rules the Fair Catch, a popular rule within traditional football games, was excluded. Secondly, the potential reach of the rules is notable as they were intended, not for a single football club or elite school, but for many clubs linked to the working-class youth of Edinburgh.³¹² Finally, a notable point to take from the rules is the outright ban on handling the ball when it is in play.

Even though the playground at Stockbridge lasted a solitary year, the rules can be viewed as being significant as they highlight the type of football games that were being organised by Hope around this period; in particular the games enjoyed by members of the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. While some aspects of Hope's philosophy on how to play football had not changed from 1833,³¹³ other areas of the game had evolved; in a move away from the transitory arrangement of setting out temporary playing fields, a football pitch complete with goalposts was laid out within a designated space at Stockbridge.³¹⁴

Evidence of traditional playing styles

As has been referenced in Chapter 1, small sided regulated matches existed alongside mass participation games at Glasgow University. This is also discussed in Hutchinson's paper on 'Sport, Education and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century Edinburgh', as part of a broader examination of organised football for the period (Hutchinson, 2008: pp. 547-565). The university was highlighted for the popularity of football taking place there as a winter sport. A similar trend was evident in prominent English public schools including Eton, Rugby and Winchester, as mentioned in *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* of 1862 (Chambers, 1862: p. 413). As will be seen in Chapter 4, the type of games played at the university during the 1850s and

³¹¹ See, British League of Juvenile Abstainers (1848–1866) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/181/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

³¹² Within his rules, under "Section 11. CLUBS", Hope wrote, "It is suggested that those in the same Shop or Establishment, or at all events, those in the same occupation, who, by getting free at the same hour, may be able to join in the same Games at the same time, should form themselves into Clubs for Games". See, British League of Juvenile Abstainers (1848–1866) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/181/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

³¹³ His rule for restarting games with a free kick (if the ball had gone out of bounds) remained in place as did his ban on tripping.

³¹⁴ See, Jamie, D. (1900) *John Hope, philanthropist and reformer*. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, pp. 301-302.

1860s have not been adequately analysed. Away from the daily matches involving large numbers of students between classes, small sided games took place on a regular basis and one particular article from 1860 which reminisces about football at the university from an earlier period makes the following statement,

The Glasgow University, having extensive grounds attached to it, affords great opportunities for outdoor amusements, and students are distinguished there, not only for their knowledge of Greek and readiness in reply, but also for swiftness in the race and skill at football. Here, too, a rivalry exists between the students of Art and the students of Medicine; and well do I remember the Saturday matches, in which Art alternatively conquered and succumbed to Medicine.³¹⁵

Evidence of the university's football club can once again be found in 1865. In April of that year a Town v Gown match was organised between the club and "twenty gentlemen of the West End".³¹⁶ The College Green was selected as the location for the match. In December 1865 a general meeting, called to appoint office bearers and a committee for the "ensuing session" is reported in the *Glasgow Herald*. James Barclay, a theology student and keen footballer, was elected president. Additional club appointments included a captain, a secretary and treasurer, and an 11 man committee.³¹⁷

A contemporary of Barclay was David Murray, who attended the university between 1857 and 1865 and wrote *Memories of the Old College of Glasgow* in 1927 (Figure 2.7 shows the College Green from around the time when both were students at the university). Alongside his own personal recollections of football at the university, Murray draws from *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* of 1862 and from official university sources such as *The University Review* of 1884. Writing 70 years on from his original introduction to the university, Murray understandably expresses a view that football "as then played, at least in Glasgow and in Scotland generally, was not that now in use" (D. Murray, 1927: p. 443). This in particular relates to the numbers involved in playing the games which could vary; Murray, stating that, "Fifty or a hundred a side or more could play quite as well as a half dozen or a score; the number of players was only limited by the size of field". However, Murray goes on to state that,

The game was a dribbling one, the ball must be kicked and could not be handled; no collaring or hacking was permitted and there was little rough play. If the ball was caught in the air, a free, that is undisturbed, kick was allowed. The player who held the ball dropped it from his hand and kicked it as it fell (D. Murray, 1927: p. 444).

³¹⁵ Anonymous (1860) *Dunfermline Press*, 22 March, p. 4.

³¹⁶ Anonymous (1865) *Glasgow Herald*, 14 April, p. 5.

³¹⁷ Anonymous (1865) *Glasgow Herald*, 2 December, p. 4.

It is true that the organised games emanating from Glasgow University and elsewhere in Scotland during the 1850s and early 1860s had no direct connection with the early development of the association game in London.

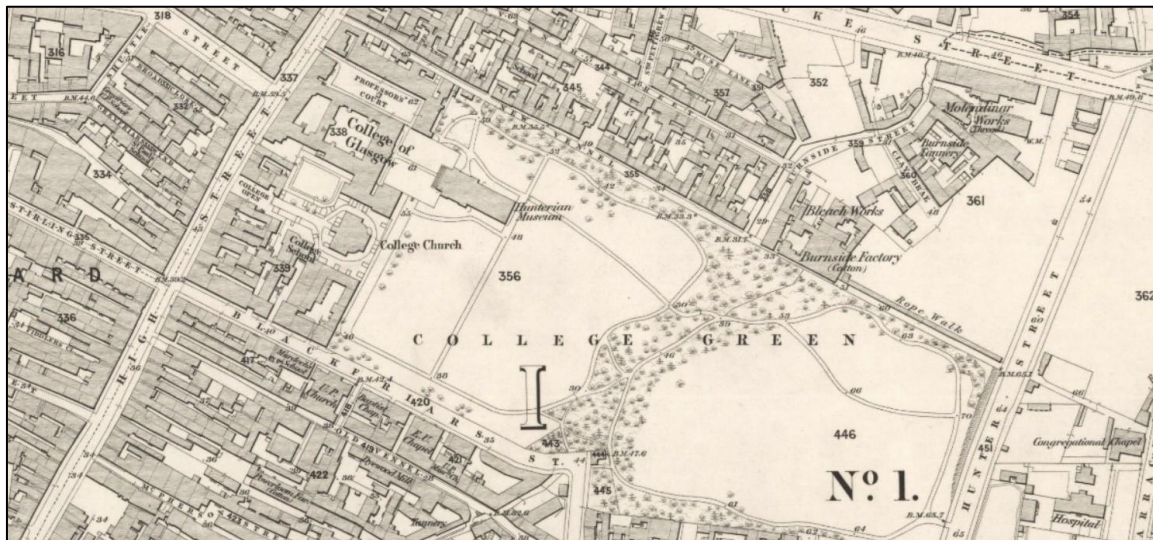


Figure 2.7: Map depicting Glasgow University's college green (surveyed 1856-57). The layout of the green is from the period when David Murray attended the university. It would also have been familiar to Thomas MacRobert, Robert Henderson and James Dunn, co-founders of the Paisley Football and Shinty Club, who all attended the university in this decade. Fellow Paisley resident, James Barclay enrolled a few years later. The College Green was crucially important for the promulgation of football activity, supporting both the inclusive mass participation games and the smaller exclusive matches which centred around the activities of the resident football club and the faculty teams. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

However, whilst acknowledging the patchwork nature of the pre-codified era, due to variations in football 'rules', many of the basic elements of football 'play' was familiar enough to allow for a general comparison to be made with the emerging association game of the early 1870s. This occurred with the exhibition match of 27 December, 1873 which formally introduced the association game to Edinburgh. The match involved leading players from the west of Scotland and an article in the *Scotsman* newspaper provided a revealing statement as to what the game represented,

With some slight alterations and definitions of terms, the game is substantially the old Scotch style of football, which may commend it more to Scotsmen. Except that the goalkeeper, no player is allowed to handle the ball any infringement giving the opposite side a free kick, a rule which looks somewhat absurd when "heading" is so frequently indulged in.³¹⁸

The reference to the lack of handling in the above quote relates to the absence of the Fair Catch (the free kick permitted after the ball had been caught out of the air) which was

³¹⁸ Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 29 December, p. 7.

commonly found in traditional games, including the hybrid game of the non-rugby Edinburgh clubs. With the demise of the Fair Catch, heading would become a more prominent tactic in the association game. Not long after the exhibition match in Edinburgh, a game was arranged under rugby rules between Dumfries FC and Carlisle FC. The method of play in that game provoked a terse response from the local newspaper,

A match at football — if the name is not a misnomer, seeing the ball is more often grasped in the hands than kicked by the foot — took place at Nunholm, yesterday, between the Dumfries Club and the Carlisle Club. The game was played according to the Rugby Union rules. These are a novelty, and a football match is now-a-days when played according to these rules very different from the old fashioned Scottish mode.³¹⁹

This statement certainly adds weight to the argument that the rugby-esque ‘carrying’ game was largely an importation into Scotland rather than being linked to an older and more traditional manifestation. But even if it was, for many supporters of the game in Scotland, rugby was a form of football and as such provided them with a connection to the ‘ancient game’.³²⁰ In addition, examples of traditional playing methods which share similarities with the rugby game, although rare, do exist. For example, in the Perthshire village of Dunning, Baxter found evidence of an old Handsel Monday game where “Players were allowed to kick or run with the ball as in present Rugby” (Baxter, 1898: pp. 40-41).

This particular example emphasises the patchwork nature of traditional football contests. It also serves to highlight the dangers within the origins debate of using isolated references to claim a linear connection between older methods of football activity and the modern codes. This practice is often referred to as being a form of teleology or presentism. Tony Collins uses the latter term when introducing the subject within the origins of football debate.³²¹ In the case of the football game at Dunning, it is evident from Baxter’s research that a traditional version of football which included ball carrying had existed within the village but it does not appear to have had any connection with, or influence over, the arrival of the rugby code in Edinburgh during the 1850s. In a similar way, Scottish connections with the initial emergence

³¹⁹ Anonymous (1874) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 28 January, p. 1.

³²⁰ The *North British Daily Mail* when reporting on the proposal of the Ayr Club to institute a cup competition under rugby rules states that, “Should this proposal be heartily taken up by the other clubs in the county, it will do much to foster an interest in this ancient and exciting national game” (see, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 2 June, p. 3).

³²¹ Collins makes the following point, “In all historical writing, especially when investigating the history of a contemporary institution, there is always a tendency to project the present back on to the past, a problem otherwise known as ‘presentism’”. See, Collins, T. (2015) ‘Early football and the emergence of modern soccer, c.1840–1880’, *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32(9), pp. 1135-1136.

of the association game in London can be said to be very limited.³²² However, it can also be argued that the basic characteristics of the association game of the early 1870s were such that they could draw a general comparison with the 'old Scotch style of football'. In this respect, there is evidence to support Holt's views on the subject of continuity.

A case can also be made to suggest that the actions of John Hope, with respect to his activities (and non-activities) surrounding organised football, highlights the existence of continuity. Football clearly was an important activity throughout Hope's life, but there is no evidence to suggest that he ever developed any connections with the emerging rugby game in Edinburgh. As a prominent member of Edinburgh's professional classes, this, at first glance, appears to be unusual as Hope was still organising football matches after the introduction and spread of rugby in Edinburgh during the 1850s and 1860s. However, he gave his backing to the association game in the aftermath of the exhibition match of December 1873.³²³ Indeed, in January 1874 it was Colonel John Hope of the 3rd Edinburgh Rifle Volunteers who kicked off the ball to start the first ever association football game of the newly formed 3rd Edinburgh RV Club.³²⁴ Beyond the body of evidence relating to the familiarity in playing styles, it appears that by the early 1870s the association game had two additional reasons for having more of a connection with some of the traditional games in Scotland when compared with the rugby game. Firstly, the relatively small number of rules (and their simplistic nature) made a connection easier. Secondly, as will be seen in Chapter 3, the codified game of rugby in Scotland largely emerged as an elitist sport (with the noted exception of the Borders region) and this inevitably restricted its integration into wider sections of Scottish society. It is undeniable that the codified rugby game which emerged from Edinburgh during the mid to late 1850s was a complex form of football. The playing rules published by the Edinburgh Academical Club in 1858 had 23 separate laws, covering an assortment of instructions ranging from the offside rule and the try at goal to explanations surrounding the correct use of the fair catch and running in with the ball.³²⁵ The Green Book of 1868 was even more detailed, containing 34 rules. It also allowed room for a degree of

³²² Two Scots were amongst the 15 representatives who attended the inaugural meeting of the Football Association in 1863 but they attended on behalf of English schools; Calcutta born William John Macintosh represented Kensington School and William Henry Gordon represented Blackheath Proprietary School. Both had been educated at Edinburgh Academy. See, Mitchell, A. (2013) 'Found: the founders of the Football Association', *Scottish Sport History*. Available at: <http://www.scottishsporthistory.com/sports-history-news-and-blog/found-the-founders-of-the-football-association/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

³²³ J. Wilkinson, an original member of the 3rd Edinburgh RV Club, states that Hope became involved after being approached by Sergeant Lamont, one of the non-commissioned officers... "When he came home he approached the late Mr John Hope, the great temperance reformer, with a view to raising a football team in the battalion. To this Mr Hope readily consented". See, Anonymous (1923) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 21 April, p. 9.

³²⁴ The first match involving the 3rd Edinburgh RV Club took place on 17 January, 1874, just four weeks after the exhibition match which had been organised to promote the association game in Edinburgh. See, Anonymous (1874) *Scotsman*, 19 January, p. 7.

³²⁵ The full version of the rules have been reproduced in Barnes, D. (2008) *The Accies: the cradle of Scottish rugby*. Edinburgh: Birlinn, pp. 41-42.

discretion; one of the accompanying notes at the end of the rules section (an addendum to Rule 14 which references hacking), stating that “An agreement can be made before a match that hacking and tripping shall be totally disallowed”.³²⁶ The complexity of the emerging rugby rules therefore played a role in restricting participation in the sport to elite clubs as well as the more privileged schools and the universities.

In conclusion, a strong case can be made for the existence of continuity between traditional versions of football in Scotland and the emergence of the association game. However, in general terms the early 1870s marked the start of an important period of transition. Tony Collins indeed argues that this was the point where the two dominant codes really started to become distinctive (T. Collins, 2015: p. 1137). Significant changes can be found within the association game in Scotland at this time. One of these was Queen’s Park’s decision to adopt the FA’s Laws of the Game in full for external matches and to gradually drop their own hybrid version of rules for internal matches.³²⁷ The comparison of the Edinburgh exhibition match of 1873 with more traditional forms of football helps to address some of the questions surrounding the rapid advance of the association game in Scotland post 1873 – there was indeed a degree of familiarity with the style of game. The idea of kicking a football from one player to another was not an invention of the 1860s or 1870s³²⁸ but the science and precision of the systematic approach to dribbling and short passing heralded a step up from traditional methods of football play. As will be demonstrated, this can be linked more to the strategy employed by Queen’s Park FC in dealing with the consequences of the three-man offside rule.

The ‘non-carrying’ football circles of Glasgow, Sheffield and London

When it comes to the emergence of football as a primarily non-carrying game within the United Kingdom, it can be argued that three major centres in London, Sheffield and Glasgow existed by the mid-1870s. Each centre had important contributions to make in terms of

³²⁶ Alcock, C. W. ed. (1869) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, pp. 42-45.

³²⁷ The change in the rules appears to have been emphatic for external games (no doubt in the pursuit of uniformity) but was more gradual for internal matches. For example, Airdrie refused to play Queen’s Park for a match scheduled for 22 June, 1871 due to the fact that the new rules prevented the use of “hands”. However, the club still allowed touch downs to be played in internal games up to 1872. See, Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen’s Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd., pp. 37-38. As Chapter 4 will explain, the internal games organised by the club by the winter months of 1872 would be crucial in the development of a systematic style of dribbling and short passing.

³²⁸ In Aberdeen, David Wedderburn’s seventeenth century Latin grammar book *Vocabula* (which provides a running commentary of a football game in Latin) yields evidence of simple forms of passing within the following short phrases... “Come on, kick the ball over here!...” and “Come on, serve me!”. See, Wedderburn, D. (1685) *Vocabula*. Edinburgh, p. 37. My thanks to Graham Robertson, teacher of Classics and former pupil of Aberdeen Grammar School, for providing the translation.

shaping the game.³²⁹ When it came to tactics and playing styles within the association game, Glasgow would emerge as a dominant influence within a relatively short space of time. As mentioned earlier, the success of Queen's Park FC and their development of a systematic form of dribbling and short passing can in part be linked to the club's decision to adopt in full the FA's Laws of the Game towards the end of 1870.

The three-man offside rule, a central component of the Laws of the Game from 1866 until 1925, was a key reason for the club's tactical move towards its methodical approach. Another factor was the need, during the early 1870s, to find a way of countering the disparity in terms of weight between the Scottish and English players who featured in the international matches.³³⁰ The future Scotland international footballer Walter Arnott, who attended the first official international game of 1872 as a youth, states that,

The English team was by far the heavier one. Their forwards played an individual game and were much faster than those on the Scottish side, whose forward work was done in pairs (Arnott, 1905: p. 22).

Queen's Park therefore designed a style of game which enabled smaller and lighter players to compete against much taller and stronger opponents. Athleticism and individual prowess were notable characteristics of the style of association game that had developed in London in the years leading on from the creation of the FA in 1863. Press descriptions of combination and cooperation referred more to the dribbler in possession of the ball being 'backed up' by teammates who followed behind as a tightly formed pack. They were ready to pounce on any loose ball in order to carry on the attack. This can be seen at representative level, the assessment of the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* in 1872 being that,

The London team play in one complete phalanx... The Londoners sweep down like an avalanche *en masse*, and once they get within the enemy's lines they number two men to their antagonist's one.³³¹

This is not to say that passing was completely absent from the association game of London. Examples can be found in newspaper reports, particularly after the offside rule change of 1866, of individual passes being made between players.

³²⁹ London is home to the Football Association of England (the oldest national association in the world) which in 1863 framed the original version of the Laws of the Game and in 1871 instituted the FA Cup competition. The FA officially established England's national association team in 1872. Sheffield is home to the oldest existing football club that plays to association rules (Sheffield FC). As will be seen in Chapter 4, it can also be argued that the Yorkshire city by 1862 was home to the United Kingdom's first informal football subculture and in 1867 hosted the first ever multi-club knockout cup competition for football (Youdan Cup).

³³⁰ For the first official international match at association rules, the *Glasgow Herald* wrote that, "The Englishmen had all the advantage in respect of weight, their average being about two stones heavier than the Scotchmen, and they had also the advantage in pace. The strong point with the home club was that they played excellently well together" (see, Anonymous (1872) *Glasgow Herald*, 2 December, p. 5).

³³¹ Anonymous (1872) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 4 March, p. 4.

This, in particular, can be seen with the crossing of the ball into the centre of the field from wide areas when play was close to the end of the field. The terms used for this practice were ‘middling’ or ‘turning’.³³² In addition to this, the Royal Engineers Club is highlighted for adopting more of a team-based approach than other London clubs.³³³ However, when a broad assessment of the playing style of the London association clubs is undertaken for the mid-1870s period, systematic multi-player passing cannot be evidenced as a primary tactic. Indeed, the famous Corinthians Club was founded as late as 1882 by Nicholas Lane Jackson after years of deficiencies in combined play by the England national team when they faced Scotland in the annual international games. Jackson acknowledged that the main advantage of the Scotland national team was the success of their playing style which by the early 1880s had become even more refined due to the fact that the leading Scottish footballers played regularly together.³³⁴

The first high profile instance of this innovative style of play came in the first official international match between Scotland and England in November 1872. While the Scotland team included players from other football clubs, all 11 of the players were members of Queen’s Park FC. The *North British Daily Mail*, provided a telling observation with respect to the different playing styles,

Individual skill, as we prophesied a week ago, was generally on England’s side... The Southrons, however, did not play to each other nearly so well as their opponents, who seem to be adepts at passing the ball.³³⁵

At this stage in the evolution of the association game, the Glasgow and London based clubs, although at a significant variance with respect to playing styles, were nevertheless playing to the same rules. In contrast, the Sheffield game was played under a separate set of rules which, while similar in many areas, was vastly different with respect to the issue of offside. The original playing rules that were framed by the Sheffield Club in 1858 did not include an

³³² For example, with the match between Wanderers FC and the Forest Club in January 1869 “the ball, being judiciously middled from the neighbourhood of touch by C. F. Reid, was again planted between the Woodford posts by T. C. Hooman”. Also, in the match between Royal Engineers and Wanderers in November 1871, Betts... by a brilliant run down the left wing turned the ball judiciously to Currie, who as judiciously sent it flying through the strangers’ goal in first-rate style. See, Anonymous (1869) *Sportsman*, 26 January, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1871) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 18 November, p. 5.

³³³ Although Charles Alcock does not mention the team in his own appraisal of the early development of association football, Frederick J. Wall, his successor as secretary of the FA, argues that the Royal Engineers “...were the first English eleven to show the advantages of combination over the old style of individualism” (see, Wall, F. J. (2006) *50 years of football, 1884-1934*. Cleethorpes: Soccer Books, p. 22). Their match against Sheffield in December 1873 is referenced as being a notable example of “combination” (see, Clegg, W. (1932) *Sheffield Independent*, 2 June, p. 10). In that match (a 4-0 win over Sheffield), the Engineers adopted the prevailing Scottish formation of 2-2-6, deploying a goalkeeper, two backs (cover-goals), two half-backs and six forwards (see, Anonymous (1873) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 22 December, p. 4).

³³⁴ See, Jackson, N. L. (1899) *Association football*. London: George Newnes, pp. 329-330.

³³⁵ Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 2 December, p. 6.

offside rule. When the Sheffield Association was instituted in 1867, the general dislike of the FA's strict three man offside rule meant that a looser one man rule was adopted.³³⁶

As will be seen in Chapter 4, with the author's analysis of the 'passing game' within Glasgow's emerging football subculture, some examples of traditional forms of play evident in Scotland, at a rudimentary level, can draw comparison with aspects of the Sheffield game. However, the Sheffield game of the 1860s, appears to have been significantly influenced by individualism. The reminiscences of Sir William Clegg, a patriarch of Sheffield football, for example, points to a general lack of combined effort. Clegg states that, "we had no such thing as combination or team spirit. It was all individual play".³³⁷ Sheffield team formations of the late 1860s and early 1870s included a 'kick through' position; the player or players designated to this role taking up a position close to the opposition goalkeeper in order to act as a focal point for the long punt forward.³³⁸ Prior to 1868, when the rouge system of scoring was still being used in the Sheffield game (requiring additional posts on either side of the main goal) the role of the kick through was guided less by scientific play and more by brute force. In the words of Clegg,

The goalkeeper had a very hot time of it in those days. Not only had he to look after the big goal, but he had also to look after the smaller ones as well. And to prevent him doing that it was part of the game that a man on the opposite side [the kick through] should be constantly with him. It was his job when he saw the ball coming towards goal to knock the goalkeeper about as much as possible.³³⁹

As the Sheffield Association game of the early 1870s drew closer to that of the association game of London, tactics and strategies also evolved. However, the function of the kick through, in terms of physicality, does not appear to have significantly changed by the time of the inaugural match between Sheffield and Glasgow in March 1874.³⁴⁰ Even by this period, Sheffield football was still being underpinned by a one-man offside law resulting in a substantially more expansive game than that of London or Glasgow. Passing was clearly a feature of football games in Sheffield, due to the lack of offside, and Charles Alcock indeed acknowledges this within his own appraisal of early playing styles. However, he goes on to

³³⁶ For a list of the Sheffield Football Club's rules of 1858, see, Harvey, A. (2005) *Football: the first hundred years: the untold story*. London: Routledge, pp. 97-98. For the Sheffield Football Association's rules of 1867, see, Anonymous (1867) *Sporting Life*, 13 March, p. 4.

³³⁷ Clegg, W. (1932) *Sheffield Independent*, 2 June, 1932, p. 10.

³³⁸ An example of the long ball tactic involving the 'kick through' can be found in Sheffield's match with Glasgow in 1874. The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, states that, "Gregory [of the Sheffield team]... ran the ball well down the sides next to the booths, and then letting out [punting long] sent it forward to the Glasgow goal. Hunter, the kick through, was laying in wait for the ball, only the goal-keeper being up to oppose him" See, Anonymous (1874) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 16 March, p. 4.

³³⁹ Clegg, W. (1932) *Sheffield Independent*, 2 June, p. 10.

³⁴⁰ The *Glasgow Herald* report on the match states that "Gardner, the Scottish goal-keeper, caught the ball, and while he held it in his hands, Hunter made an ugly rush at the goal-keeper, who, being unable to resist the charge, was carried through, ball and all". See, Anonymous (1874) *Glasgow Herald*, 16 March, p. 5.

state that the rules of the Sheffield Association “gave rise to a loose and disjointed game”.³⁴¹ As with London, individual examples of shorter forms of passing can be found in newspaper articles for Sheffield football but the loose form of offside prioritised the long punt towards goal with the kick through lying in wait. As late as 1875 comments made in the *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, regarding proposed changes to the “London Association Rules”, imply that larger playing fields were a prerequisite for the long ball strategy of Sheffield football,

The Royal Engineers also propose a minimum length and breadth of 150 and 75 yards respectively, the maximum only having been given previously. This will suit the Sheffields, if carried, as the debateable portion of the ground in some of their foreign matches has been inconveniently small, but favourable to dribblers.³⁴²

In contrast, the three-man offside rule meant that the Scottish association teams typically had to pass their way through the crowded ranks of opponents when no advantage could be gained from dribbling the ball forward. The significant variance in the offside rule which differentiated the football circles of Glasgow and Sheffield was at the centre of Archibald Rae’s letter to the secretary of the Sheffield Association in August 1873. Rae, as secretary of the Scottish Football Association, was involved in the preparations for the staging of the first Sheffield v Glasgow fixture (which took place in March 1874). In the letter, he likened the one-man offside rule with that of a game with no offside due to the fact that attacking players could remain far up the field beside the opposing goalkeeper,

In the second place we don’t quite understand the game with no off-side. We never played such a game, and to be frank, don’t see that it can make a good game. That kind of thing is what we here call ‘loafing’ or ‘sneaking’. I have no doubt you quite see the excellence of the arrangement; and we are willing, on that account, to try what it is. Can you send on a copy of your rules? We, however, wish to play Association rules simply.³⁴³

The pejorative language used by the secretary of the Scottish FA, when criticising the Sheffield Association’s offside rule, highlights the ideological differences that existed at the time between both organisations when it came to playing rules. Despite the relatively young age of the Scottish Association (at the time that the letter was written the Scottish FA was less than six months old) the letter conveys a strong sense of conviction as to how football

³⁴¹ Alcock’s exact phrase is as follows, “...the credit of introducing passing must not be ascribed altogether to the Scotchmen. The rules affected by the Sheffield Association gave rise to a loose and disjointed game, which directly encouraged the adoption of a certain kind of passing...” See, Alcock, C. W. (1906) *Football: the association game*. London: G. Bell & Sons, p. 36.

³⁴² Anonymous (1875) *Sheffield Independent*, 6 February, p. 7.

³⁴³ Johnston, T. W. R. (1894) *The Scottish Football Association, Its Formation and Early Days*. In: McDowall, J. K. ed. *Scottish football annual, 1894-95*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co, p. 76.

should be played.³⁴⁴ This conviction would be put to the test a few years later when the national body in Scotland refused to acquiesce to the Football Association over a divergence in the Laws of the Game on either side of the border.³⁴⁵

Queen's Park FC actively promoted their brand of football, taking it into Dunbartonshire when they faced the recently formed Vale of Leven Club in December 1872. A clear example of the playing style can be seen in the return match against Vale of Leven in February 1873, with an intricate five player passing move being described in the *Glasgow Herald*,

Shortly before time was called the Queen's Park came away in fine style, and drove their opponents before them — Messrs Gardner, Leckie, Wotherspoon, Taylor, and M'Kinnon working beautifully to each other's feet.³⁴⁶

This form of football, blending together individual technique with an acute awareness of positioning, firmly established the combination of dribbling and complex multi-player passing within the association game. Other Scottish clubs began to emulate the playing style, as can be seen with the match between the 3rd Lanark RV Club and Western FC in January 1874. Descriptive details of passing play in the build up to one of the goals in the *Glasgow Herald* article is accompanied by superlatives like 'beautifully' and 'judiciously'. Much more than that, however, the term 'passing game', as described in the excerpt below, now formed part of the lexicon of the Scottish sporting press:

No better sample of the passing game could be desired than that shown in the taking of this goal; and as in this case, when combined with good dribbling, it has a telling effect and ought to be the principle study of all Association players.³⁴⁷

Recognition of the role of Queen's Park in transforming the way that the association game was played is widely acknowledged. For example, beyond the comments of Charles Alcock, which have already been alluded to, William McGregor also comments on the role of the

³⁴⁴ The Sheffield Association would hold on to its one man offside rule until 1877 when, in the words of Tony Collins, "...it accepted completely the FA's rule book, in particular its stringent offside rule, and abandoned its own 'kick-in' for the FA's throw-in when the ball went out of play". See, Collins, T. (2015) 'Early football and the emergence of modern soccer, c.1840–1880', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32(9), p. 1130.

³⁴⁵ Gibson and Pickford, when referring to the commencement of season 1882-83, state that, "Scotland, with its wonderful playing pre-eminence, shown by her six international wins in the previous seven encounters, was very strong upon two points, one being her own ideas as to the Laws of the Game, and the other a fear of being in any way tributary to the Football Association" (see, Gibson, A. and Pickford, W. eds. *Association football and the men who made it*, Vol. 1. London: Caxton Publishing Company, p. 71). The Scottish FA refused to concede any authority to its English counterpart. The impasse with respect to playing rules was resolved through a process of arbitration when a conference involving the four national associations was held at Manchester on 6 December, 1882. A permanent solution to future disputes was established in 1886 with the creation of the International Football Association Board.

³⁴⁶ Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 17 February, p. 7.

³⁴⁷ Anonymous (1874) *Glasgow Herald*, 20 January, p. 7.

Glasgow club. Writing in 1906, he depicts Queen's Park FC as pioneers, being "the first club to introduce really scientific methods into the game" (McGregor, 1906a: p. 156).

Over the course of the 1870s the new style of game would elevate Scottish teams and Scottish players to the forefront of the game within the United Kingdom.³⁴⁸ The legacy of the short passing game can be seen through notable individual achievements as well as more general developments. For instance, Glasgow's win over Sheffield in 1876,³⁴⁹ Vale of Leven's victory over Wanderers FC in 1878,³⁵⁰ and Scotland's largely dominant position at international level against England up to 1887.³⁵¹ In addition to this, the importation of Scottish players (Scotch Professors) into the English association game was a major legacy of the success of the Scottish short passing game.³⁵²

The 'passing game' in rugby football: Edinburgh and East Lothian

The rugby game in Scotland could also claim to be a pioneer with respect to the way that the game would develop. Almond, the headmaster of Loretto School in Musselburgh is credited with the introduction of passing tactics into the rugby game in Scotland. When writing a history of Loretto School in 1911, H. B. Tristram (himself a Lorettonian and former England rugby internationalist) states that,

It is almost certain that the first hero who passed the ball to a neighbour lived before 1860... Almond's ideas embraced a great deal more than the occasional pass in which the players of that day used to indulge. He urged on his boys in the Sixties

³⁴⁸ Charles Alcock wrote, "The Queen's Park team were the first to demonstrate the possibilities of combination. In the main they favoured a system of short passing, and it was in a great measure the readiness with which the Scotch players adapted themselves to the new idea that enabled Scotland to show so much greater advantage in its international matches with England for many years". See, Alcock, C. W. (1906) *Football: the association game*. London: G. Bell & Sons, p. 36.

³⁴⁹ This match was noteworthy for the following reasons: Firstly, it was the last match involving both sides to be played under the rules of the Sheffield Association. Secondly, the Glasgow side featured J. J. Lang and Peter Andrews who, on afterwards being enticed to move down to Yorkshire, became the first example of 'Scotch Professors' (Scottish players moving to England to derive benefit from playing football). Thirdly, it provides a clear example of the materially different playing styles of both teams; the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* stating that "The play of the Glasgow team all through was most unselfish, and they crossed [passed] to each other admirably. We cannot say the same for Sheffield, who have much to learn in that respect. They rely too much on individual instead of concerted play" (see, Anonymous (1876) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 21 February, p. 4).

³⁵⁰ Vale of Leven were Scottish Cup holders when they defeated English Cup holders Wanderers FC in a specially arranged match at Kennington Oval in 1878. This was the first high profile victory of a primarily working-class side over an elite group of gentleman players.

³⁵¹ Scotland would win 10 games and lose only twice in the first 16 internationals against England between 1872 and 1887.

³⁵² For example, when addressing the importation of Jimmy Love and Fergie Suter from Partick FC to Darwen FC in 1878, Gibson and Pickford claim that, "...the characteristics of Scottish football, with its close and studied combination, were in some degree superior to that of English play, which, while more brilliant individually, was lacking in a due appreciation of the merits of the passing game". See, Gibson, A. and Pickford, W. (1905) *Association football and the men who made it, Vol. 1*. London: Caxton Publishing Company, pp. 59-60.

that if they would pass constantly and systematically to each other, they would baffle any side unaccustomed to such tactics (Tristram, 1911: p. 153).

Phillips attributes the development of “combined movement among the backs” or “passing game” in rugby to the Scottish schools, particularly Loretto School and Fettes College in Edinburgh, although he argues that the “modern style of play” only really started to come to the fore in the “later seventies and early eighties” (Phillips, 1925: p. 3). Phillips claims,

That Scottish innovation was the genesis of all that followed in the way of development of combined play behind the scrummage. From the Scottish schools the 'passing game' was carried to the English universities, and became general among the English clubs before it was finally adopted in Scottish club football (Phillips, 1925: p. 3).

In some ways it can be argued that the role of Almond and Loretto School for rugby, mirrored that of the initial contribution of the Queen’s Park Club within the association game. However, one notable difference was the fact that the schoolmaster in later years (according to Tristram) would come to regret aspects of his innovation.³⁵³

Summary

By the end of 1873, the two dominant football codes had become firmly established in Scotland. While traditional forms of football were still being played, it is clear that these games, particularly the annual contests, as much cultural as they were sporting, were somewhat in decline. The subsequent (post 1873) success in the association game can be explained by several factors. The first of these was the relative simplicity of the game which, as has been explained, offered a degree of familiarity to players accustomed to traditional forms of football. This therefore confirms the existence of continuity at the beginning of an era which was otherwise marked by significant change. Teams evolved from playing to separate rules into playing under uniform rules within a relatively short span of time. The game would also enjoy widespread appeal amongst a broader section of society. Association football in Scotland in the early 1870s was played by mercantile clerks and commission agents but it was also played by coal miners and labourers.³⁵⁴

³⁵³ Tristram wrote that, “...when the passing game had come to be the recognised style, he regretted the change keenly. Admitting that the new system encouraged unselfishness, and forced a team to work harmoniously in combination, he maintained... that it made the game too fast for growing boys, and would probably do away with the brilliant efforts of the individualist...” See, Tristram, H. B. (1911) *Loretto school, past and present*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, p. 154.

³⁵⁴ Chapter 3 provides an in depth study into the social class composition of association football club members between 1868 and 1873. Included within this study is Robert Bird of Ibrox FC (mercantile clerk), Lewis Black of Queen’s Park FC (commission agent), Edward Fannan of Airdrie FC (coal miner) and Donald McCrimmon of Renton FC (dye wall labourer).

The rugby game was already well established in different regions of Scotland but within just a few years, it would be overtaken in quantitative terms as a surge of new clubs playing to the association code swept across central Scotland. Even the broader geographical spread of the rugby game would start to be challenged. If the rugby game was indeed more of an importation, then it was the warm embrace of the educational institutions and the elite clubs towards the sport which made it so widespread by 1873. The central positioning of rugby football within the philosophy of Muscular Christianity made the game popular amongst the upper echelons of Scottish society. Added to this, the relative complexity of the rugby code, due in the main to the large number of rules, proved to be a barrier to the spread of the game beyond Scotland's more respectable classes although in time it would attract a wider social base within the Scottish Borders. Chapter 3 will explore this subject in more detail by examining the composition of social class within football club memberships for both the rugby and association games.

Chapter 3

Early football club memberships

The composition of social class: 1868-1873

Section 1 — Methodology

Introduction

In order to create a detailed study based around social class, short biographies of 246 football club members have been compiled. The biographies were created through accessing a range of primary source archives such as census returns, birth and death certificates, newspaper reports (for references to players in team lines) and football club minute books (where available). These sources helped to identify each individual club member within the 1871 census.³⁵⁵ The biographies can be found on the author's *Scottish Football Origins* website.³⁵⁶ The data gathering for the club memberships was restricted to a six-year period (1868–1873) in order to keep the information as close to the 1871 census as possible. Where feasible, birth and death certificates and census returns from other decades were consulted as part of the process to confirm identity. Central to the study was the requirement to identify each club member in the 1871 census. In some cases, football club members, whilst identified from other records, could not be found in the 1871 census. In such circumstances the relevant club member was omitted from the survey.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁵ This process included numerous visits to the National Records of Scotland in Edinburgh as well as utilising online digital resources through the Scotland's People, Ancestry, Find My Past and My Heritage websites. See, National Records of Scotland (2026) *Scotland's People*. Available at: <https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. Ancestry (2026) *Ancestry*. Available at: <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. Findmypast (2026) *Findmypast*. Available at: <https://www.findmypast.co.uk/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. MyHeritage (2026) *MyHeritage*. Available at: <https://www.myheritage.com/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

³⁵⁶ See, McBrearty, R. (2026) 'Short biographies of association football club members (1868-1873', *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2026/01/03/short-biographies-of-association-football-club-members-1868-1873/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. McBrearty, R. (2026) 'Short biographies of rugby football club members (1868-1873', *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2026/01/04/short-biographies-of-rugby-football-club-members-1868-1873/> [Accessed, February 4, 2026]. McBrearty, R. (2026) 'Short biographies of football club members involved with both codes (1868-1873', *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2026/01/04/short-biographies-of-football-club-members-involved-with-both-codes-1868-1873/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

³⁵⁷ An example can be found with John Mellon, a coal miner who played for Airdrie FC. In the *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser* he and Edward Fanning [Fannan] are cited as still being alive and are referenced playing in the game between Airdrie and Queen's Park in September 1870 (see, Anonymous (1929) *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 10 August, p. 6). Edward Fannan could be traced in the 1871 census but John Mellon could not and was therefore omitted.

In addition to this, information relating to the parents of all of the football club members was recorded. This in part helped with the process of identifying the club members. However, a study of family households is important within this thesis for two reasons. Firstly, to assist in the process of determining the social class of each household. Secondly, to address the subject of migration. With the first subject, the relatively young age of many of the club members and the fact that they were still often living in the parental home, made this additional data important in order to get a more accurate understanding of social class. With the second subject, the comparatively young ages of the club members meant that their location in the 1871 census was more likely to match their birthplace. As the parents may have had a key role in the migration process, the study will investigate first and second generation migration patterns to get a better understanding of the movement of family households. This approach is important for the study on migration. Schurer, for instance, argues that “little is known about the part played by the most basic and fundamental domestic institution, the family, in influencing the processes of migration” (Schurer, 1991: p. 106). This study will, therefore, seek to look beyond the migration patterns of individuals by including family households.

Finally, the number of servants per household has been recorded to help ascertain the wealth and social class of each family. This study, although important, has presented some challenges with respect to gathering applicable data. For instance, there are numerous examples of club members who are recorded as living as boarders or lodgers, either within a separate household or within an educational setting. This will be explained in more detail in Section 2. To get a fairer assessment of the number of servants per family household, the following criteria has therefore been applied:

- The number of servants is included where the football club member is recognised as being the head of a household.
- The number of servants is included where the football club member is living within a recognised family household.

A final challenge has been the discovery of club members who played to both codes. This particular development transpired in two ways. Firstly, as seen in Chapter 2, some clubs played to both the association and rugby codes and some of the club members have been verified as being linked to both from having played or been actively involved in club meetings. Secondly, some club members played rugby football with one club and association football with another club. Whilst the numbers are small, representing under five percent of club members (20 of the 246) within the study, it has meant, that a third category has had to be created. The application of data for this smaller category will follow the same criteria as with the two main categories.

The data

As mentioned earlier, three main subsets have been used to divide the 246 player biographies, which are as follows:

- Association club members – 113 individuals
- Rugby club members – 113 individuals
- Club members linked to both codes – 20 individuals

Data from the biographies has been tabulated to ascertain the following areas of interest,

- Class composition based on occupation of each club member (including their parents' occupations where appropriate)
- A brief analysis of the number of servants per household
- Migration information relating to each club member
- Migration information relating to the parents of each club member

The data will be extrapolated in a number of ways. First, for the study of class composition, 246 data samples will be formatted (according to the 113 / 113 / 20 split) in order to establish the following social stratifications for the three subsets:

- Working-class
- Skilled working-class
- Lower middle-class
- Merchant / Professional class
- Upper-class

Second, the data on households will focus on a ratio of servants to households based on the studies of:

- 97 households connected to association club members
- 86 households connected to rugby club members
- 10 households connected to club members involved with both codes

Finally, the data on migration figures will be based on the 246 club members, plus a separate study of their parents. Both sets of migration data will be divided up according to the relevant subsets to facilitate a meaningful comparison. This will mean a division of 113 / 113 / 20 for the club members and a division of 226 / 226 / 40 for the parents.

The chart on migration for club members will compare birthplace with their location at the time of the 1871 census. The charts on migration relating to the parents of club members will compare the place of birth of each parent with the location of the relevant club member at the time of the 1871 census.

Section 2 – Class composition of households

Introduction

Certain areas of the scholarship on social class which has been appraised in the literature review highlights the close alignment between the lower middle-class and the skilled working-class by the time of the 1871 census. Joan Smith's claim, for example, of a parity between skilled craftsmen and clerks (J. Smith, 1986: p. 187) would indeed explain the intermixing of players from both social classes within the same football clubs. It would also explain the lack of social segregation which enabled primarily middle-class clubs to organise games against primarily working-class opposition. In Glasgow, the close approximation of working and middle-class families within localities, particularly in suburbs on the south bank of the River Clyde, is mirrored by the football clubs which attracted club members from different social stratifications from within the same district.³⁵⁸ The district of Tradeston, in particular, is an area of interest (see Figure 3.1).

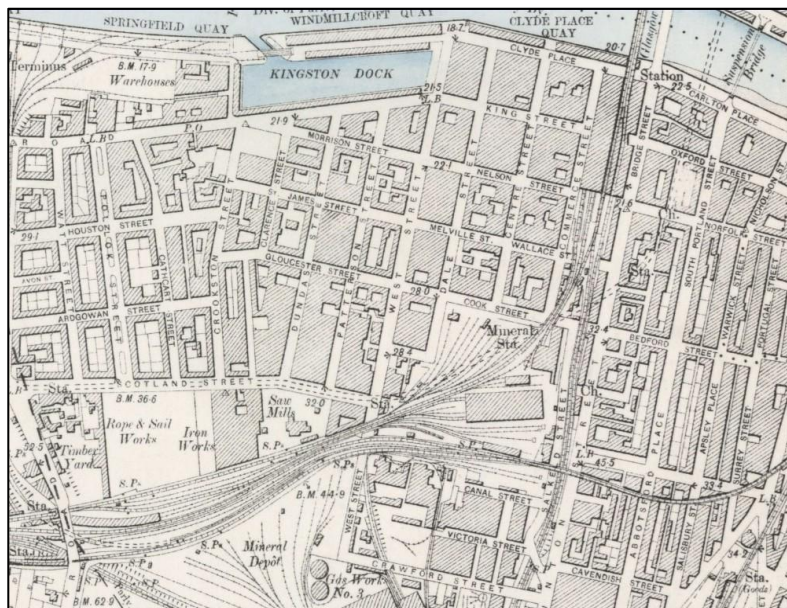


Figure 3.1: Glasgow's Tradeston district from an ordinance survey map published in 1897. Back in the early 1870s, a significant number of football club members lived in this neighbourhood. The clubs linked to these members include Clydesdale, Queen's Park, Oxford, Havelock, Granville, Third Lanark and Rovers. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

As noted in the literature review, the views of Morris and Robb chime with the experience of football club members from a range of social classes living in the southside districts of Glasgow. Morris argues that whilst cities were developing specific social identities, the separation of middle-class and working-class should not be over-emphasised (Morris, 1990a:

³⁵⁸ For example, in the 1871 census, J. J. Lang, a boilermaker, was living at 10 Crawford Street in Tradeston, while his Clydesdale FC teammate William Gibb, an apprentice law clerk and arts student, was living just a couple of streets away at 60 Paterson Street.

p. 97). Robb's assessment of the southside Gorbals district is that it retained a middle-class presence and that "...continuity of character with peripheral change was the overriding theme" (Robb, 1983: p. 163). These insights help to explain the existence of football clubs where it was not unusual to find skilled working-class footballers appearing beside teammates who were from the lower middle-class.

Social class composition of club members

A number of factors were considered with this aspect of the research. Firstly, the occupation of each football club member, if evidenced, was examined. For many of the individuals, the occupation listed was useful in helping to determine social class. Secondly, the occupation of the parents of each club member was also taken into consideration. This was important to get a rounded perspective of the social status of the immediate family group surrounding club members. In some cases, this information was crucial, due to the relatively young age of many of the club members involved; some are listed as scholars or do not have a status attributed to them. In such circumstances the position of the parents was helpful in highlighting the social status of the family unit.

The guidance which accompanied the 1871 census reasserted traditional values associated with the parental household. Higgs indeed states that,

The nineteenth-century census authorities plainly had a clear picture of what they thought a household to look like. It was made up of a husband and wife, their relations by birth or marriage, servants and apprentices. The family had exclusive possession of a house or apartment which they owned or rented from a landlord. Experience showed, of course, that this ideal was often not achieved in the working-class areas of towns and cities, where individuals and families sublet from other households (Higgs, 1989: p. 60).

Within the sample of census returns examined by this study, the father is often documented as being head of household and having an occupation, while the mother is frequently recorded as not having a status or is simply listed as 'wife'. There are, however, exceptions to this general position, especially where the father was recorded as being deceased.³⁵⁹ Figures 3.2a, 3.2b and 3.2c individually highlight the social class composition of football club members for each of the three subsets, based on data from the 1871 census.

³⁵⁹ In the case of Thomas Lavell of Airdrie FC, his mother Maria is recorded as being head of the household in the 1871 census and working as a pawnbroker. His father was deceased and had been a pawnbroker. On the rugby side of the study, George Couper of Warriston FC is recorded as living with his mother Jane who is listed as being an annuitant. Couper's father is deceased and had been a Supreme Court solicitor.

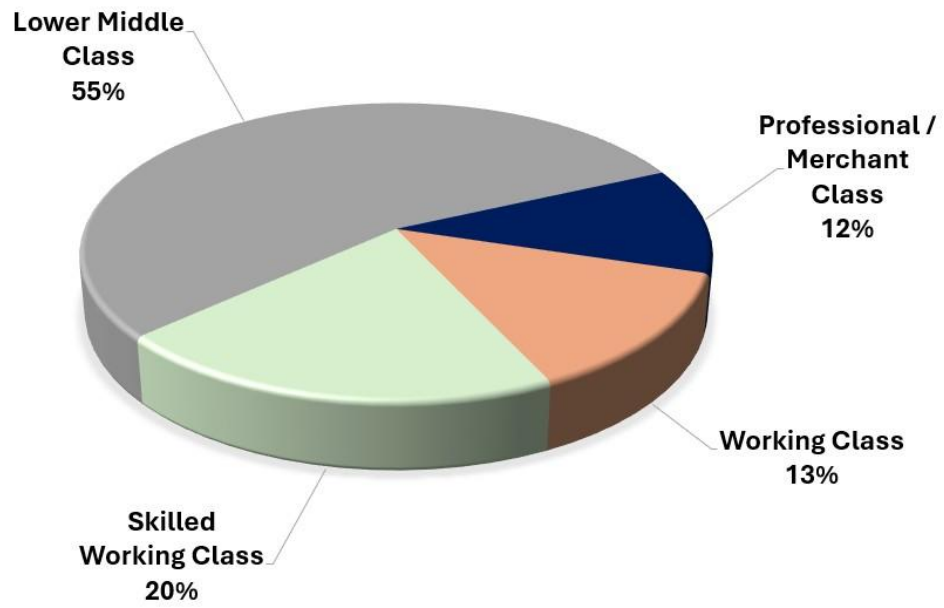


Figure 3.2a: Class composition of club members (association football)

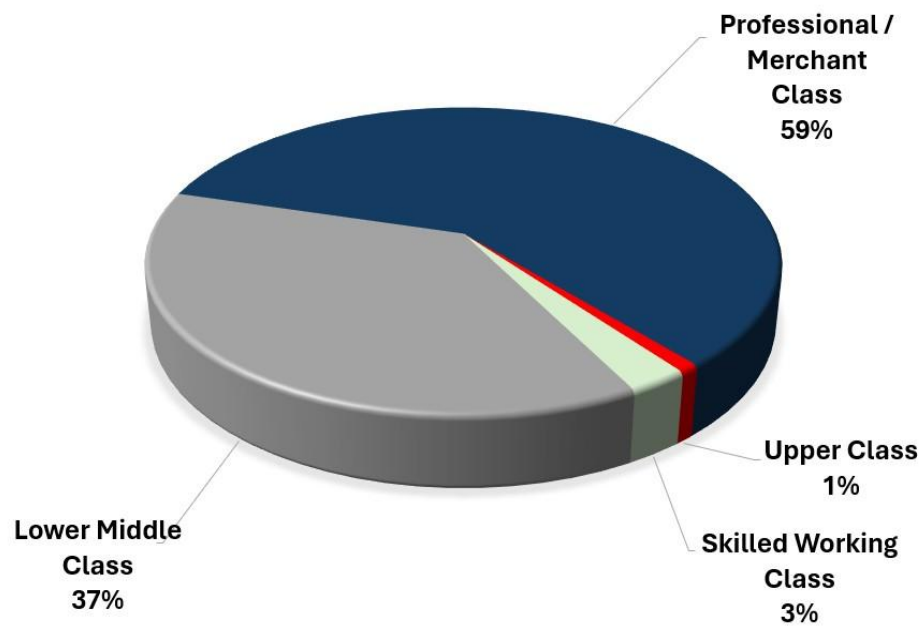


Figure 3.2b: Class composition of club members (rugby football)

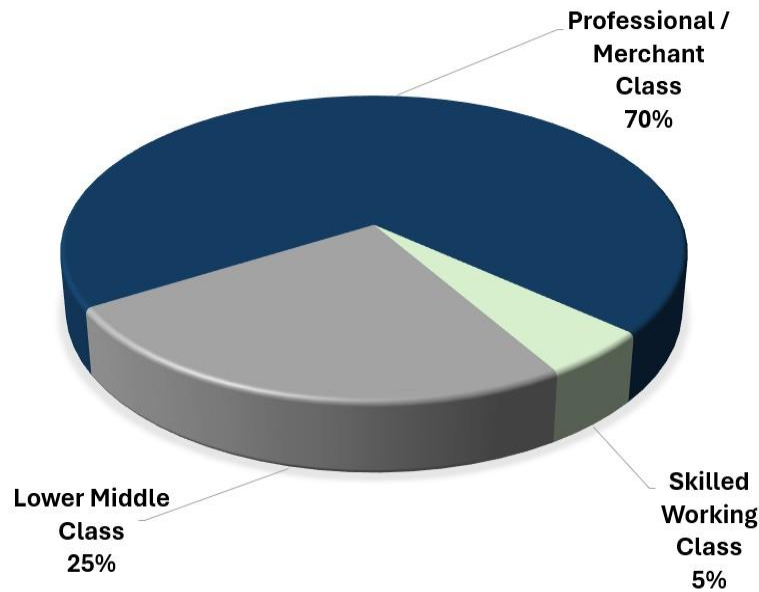


Figure 3.2c: Class composition of club members (playing to both codes)

As can be seen, the results on social class composition with respect to the two main subsets are significantly different. The headline from the analysis of the association club members is the fact that one in three (33 percent) of the football club members were from a working-class background. In contrast, only three percent of the rugby club members could be classed as being from a working-class background. The small proportion of club members from the professional and merchant class within the early association game in Scotland points to a development which contrasts with the findings for other parts of the United Kingdom. Indeed, Curry, when summarising the evidence accumulated from a number of localised studies, argues that,

With the growing number of local studies being completed, the influence of local sporting or footballing elites, solidly positioned in the upper middle-class of mid-to-late Victorian society, has presented us with a third force in this process of diffusion (Curry, 2018a: pp. 3-4).

This statement, whilst factually correct when applied to studies into association and rugby football in some parts of the United Kingdom — for example with Curry's own findings for early football development in Derby and South Derbyshire (Curry, 2018b) — does not hold as much weight when applied to the early association game in Scotland, whose early leadership was largely drawn from the lower middle-class. The first president of the Scottish FA, Archibald Campbell, is recorded as being a 'Commercial Clerk & Traveller in Leather Warehouse' in the 1871 Census. Archibald Rae, the association's first secretary was employed as a 'Marine Insurance Clerk'. The five ordinary members of the original committee who can be verified are comprised of clerks, salesmen and a commercial

traveller.³⁶⁰ Only William Ker, the association's honorary treasurer, who held the occupation of 'Banker' and whose father was a physicist, could be considered to be from the upper middle-class. As referenced in Chapter 2, the Scottish experience may therefore be closer to the conclusions of James and Day for Manchester, where "football's emergence" was dependent upon "key individuals from varying backgrounds" as opposed to "specific class interests" (James and Day, 2014: p. 49).

Another notable difference between the association and rugby data within this study can be found when analysing the largest social class grouping for each respective subset. For the former subset (association), the lower middle-class grouping accounts for the largest individual sample at 55 percent of the total. For the latter subset (rugby) the professional / merchant class grouping provides the largest single sample amounting to 59 percent of the total.

The third subset, (Figure 3.2c — club members who played to both codes), is much closer by way of comparison with the study of rugby club members (Figure 3.2b). While the amount of data for this category is considerably lower with just 20 club members being recorded, the dominant presence of the professional / merchant class grouping at 70 percent and the contrastingly low return for working-class members (just five percent recorded for skilled working-class members) points to this subset being closer by way of class composition to the rugby club members. An interesting point to take from this evidence is the fact that the association game appears to have been more successful in attracting club members from across all of the social class stratifications.

Although not a part of this study, the involvement of the Marquis of Queensberry at Kinmount FC demonstrates that the upper-classes were not completely absent from the association game in Scotland at this early period. Figure 3.2c shows that solidly middle-class clubs in Kilmarnock, Southern and Western were prepared either to switch codes altogether or at least to play to both codes.³⁶¹ While the West of Scotland Club would not directly participate in the association game, many of its leading players were content to set up an offshoot club in Glasgow Wanderers.

³⁶⁰ The occupation of eight of the Scottish FA's 13 inaugural committee members (including the three main office bearers) have been verified using the 1871 census returns. Seven of these members can be found in the biographies section for association club members in the Scottish Football Origins website. See, McBrearty, R. (2026) 'Short biographies of association football club members, 1868-1873', *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2026/01/03/short-biographies-of-association-football-club-members-1868-1873/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. The eighth committee member (Archibald Campbell) was verified separately.

³⁶¹ In the case of Southern FC, the club started out playing to both codes but after declining to play in the first round of the Scottish Cup against the 3rd Lanark RV Club in October 1873, it subsequently only entered into rugby matches for the remainder of season 1873-74. See, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 13 November, p. 7, and, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 29 November, p. 6.

Analysis of servants per household

As mentioned previously, rather than analyse the data individually for all of the club members, analysis of servant keeping is by household. There are a number of reasons for taking this decision. First, a proportion of the club members have family members living at the same address who are also recorded as being members of a club in the study. In one case (the Andrews brothers) there are three family members connected to Paisley FC who are all recorded as living at the same parental home in the 1871 census. Rather than count the same servants more than once, the study will count each relevant household once.

Second, there are numerous examples where the club members are living as boarders or lodgers within a non-family household. This situation can be due to a variety of reasons. For example, they may be living separately due to work or study or perhaps out of necessity because their parents are deceased. In the case of Louis Neil Fowler, he is one of 33 students and two assistant schoolmasters boarding with Dr John Paterson, headmaster of Clifton Bank School in St Andrews, Fife. This 'boarding establishment' had seven servants registered to the address. Another example can be found with Ebenezer Hendry who in the 1871 census is recorded as living in the hotel business of his father-in-law. That hotel also had seven servants listed within the workforce. In both circumstances, the number of servants listed would artificially skew the data within the study.

As a result of this, the overall number of football club members has been reduced for this specific area of the study. However, the sample of households is still significant with 193 included. A breakdown of the data can be found in Figure 3.3.

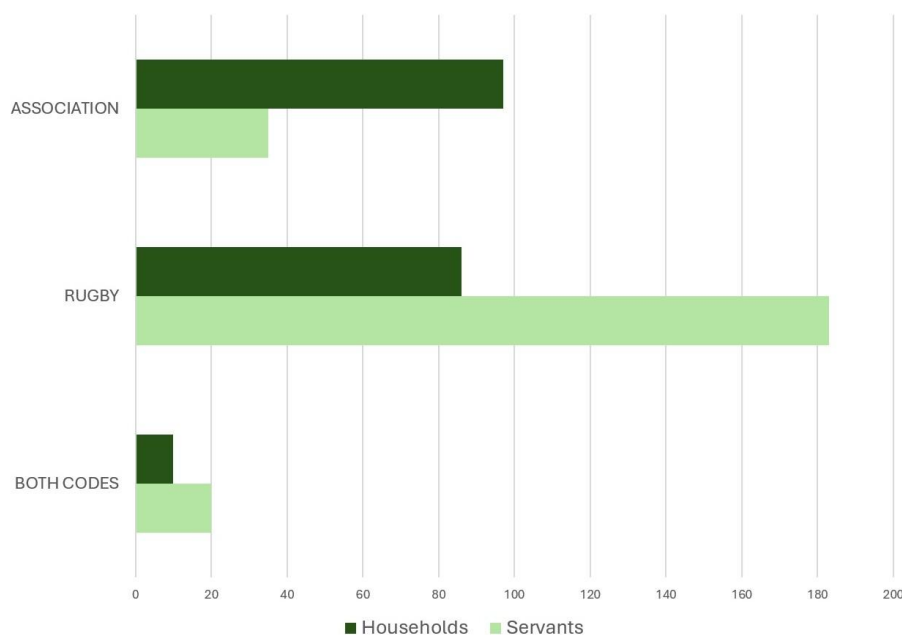


Figure 3.3: Comparison of servants to households

The chart highlights a significant contrast between the two larger categories. Although the households connected to rugby club members are smaller in number than the association category (86 households compared with 97), the number of servants are considerably higher with 183 servants being attached to the rugby member households and 35 being attached to the association member households. This equates to 2.1 servants per household for the rugby club members and just 0.4 servants for the households linked to the association club members.

Although the numbers are of course much lower for the third category (relating to club members that played to both codes), the average results compare more closely with the rugby member households. The 20 servants linked to the 10 households works out at exactly two servants per household. This can in part be explained when looking at the clubs represented. Club members connected to the West of Scotland Football Club account for four of the households – all four also played for Glasgow Wanderers. Of the remaining clubs – Kilmarnock FC was solidly placed within the rugby camp but later switched to association rules. The Southern and Western clubs appear to have taken up each code around the same time.³⁶²

The headline findings of the study into social class composition largely align with the views of Briggs, Gray and Foster, as laid out in the literature review. Briggs argues that the cities provided more space for the middle-class (away from aristocratic influence and interference) and provided “greater independence and greater organisation” for the lower orders (Briggs, 1968: p. 24). Gray argues that the skilled working-class (labour aristocracy) helped to “stabilise the class structure of capitalist society” (Gray, 1976: p. 4). This connects with Foster’s view on the theory of “system status” particularly the argument that it “protected people from irrelevance within society at large by allowing them to build up smaller subcultures with their own small-scale versions of success” (Foster, 1968: p. 283). However, the influence of the landed-class and industrial magnates should not be completely discounted as patronage forms an integral part of the evolving association and rugby games. This patronage could materialise in a number of ways. First, in the form of direct financial support. Second, in the granting of land for hosting football games and third, through reputational advancement, from being linked to powerful and well-connected individuals.³⁶³

³⁶² Kilmarnock FC agreed to switch to the association code at a club meeting held on 3 March, 1873. The Southern Club was playing to both codes in 1872 while Western can be found playing to both codes in 1873. See, Kilmarnock Football Club (1872–1879) Minute Book. *Kilmarnock Football Club Archive*, uncatalogued. Ayrshire: Kilmarnock Football Club. Anonymous (1872) *Glasgow Herald*, 25 March, p. 5. Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 25 November, p. 7. Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 15 September, p. 6. Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 24 November, p. 5.

³⁶³ In Broughty Ferry, Lord Dalhousie’s patronage of the newly formed Dalhousie Club included the gift of land for football games while the neighbouring Abertay Club benefitted financially from the Chief Magistrate, to the tune of a £1 donation to the club funds. In Glasgow, a list of patrons linked to the newly formed Alexandra Athletic Club in 1873 included the Earl of Glasgow. See, Anonymous (1871) *Dundee Courier*, 21 October, p. 3, Anonymous (1872) *Dundee Courier*, 5 March, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 27 May, p. 3.

Section 3 – Analysis of migration

Analysis of migration: club members

Migration was common among Scottish families and individual workers over the course of the nineteenth century. As pointed out in the literature review, a study of the 1851 census found that a third of the population had moved to a different county from their place of birth (Devine, 1992: p. 7). Based on this trend, the 1871 census returns for the football club members should therefore show significant levels of migration. Figure 3.4 provides a breakdown of the results for club members linked to the association game, rugby game, as well as those who were involved with both codes.

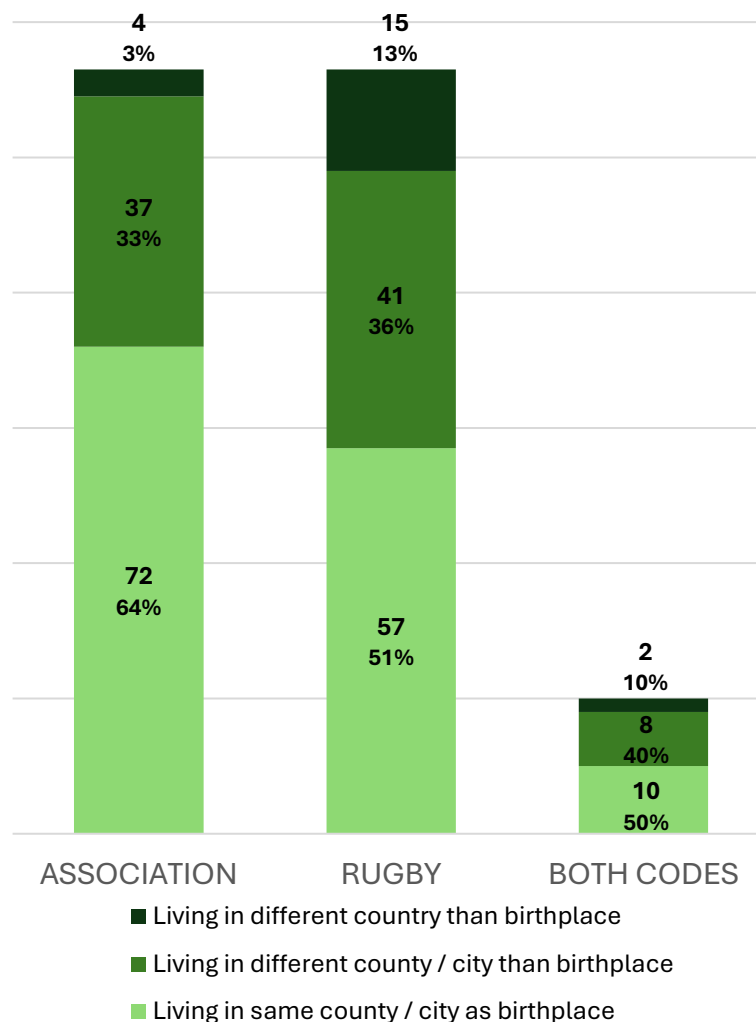


Figure 3.4: Migration of club members linked to the 1871 census

An initial assessment of the data returns for the association club members suggests significant migration patterns which are similar to the 1851 census findings; in the 1871 census, 64 percent were living in the county or city that they had been born in, meaning that over a third (36 percent) had been born outside of the county. However, the rugby club members were even more mobile; it can be seen that around a half (49 percent) of the 113 members had been born outside of their location at the time of the 1871 census. A final statistic of note is the comparatively large number of rugby club members who were long-distance migrants, having been born in a different country compared with their location at the time of the 1871 census. Of the 15 examples, eight had been born overseas (mainly India, which likely meant 'British' India), with four others having been born in England; two originating in Ireland, and one club member having been born in Wales.

Statistically, the smaller sample of club members who played to both codes is closer to the rugby club members; 50 percent were born in the same county or city that they are recorded as living in at the time of the 1871 census, with 50 percent having been born outside of the county / city.

Analysis of migration: parents of club members

Due to the relatively young ages of a proportion of the club members at the time of the 1871 census, the migration data for parents have also been included.³⁶⁴ The respective results for each subset can be found in Figure 3.5a, 3.5b and 3.5c.

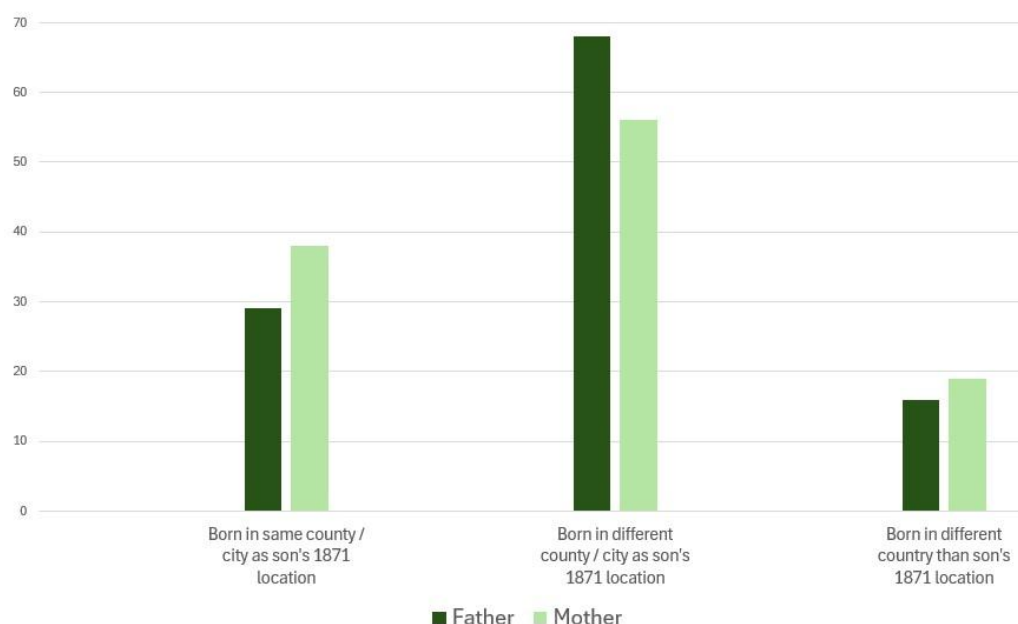


Figure 3.5a: Birthplace of parents compared with location of association club members in 1871 census

³⁶⁴ The average age recorded for each of the three categories is as follows; rugby club members, 18.7; association club members, 19.8; club members playing to both codes, 20.4.

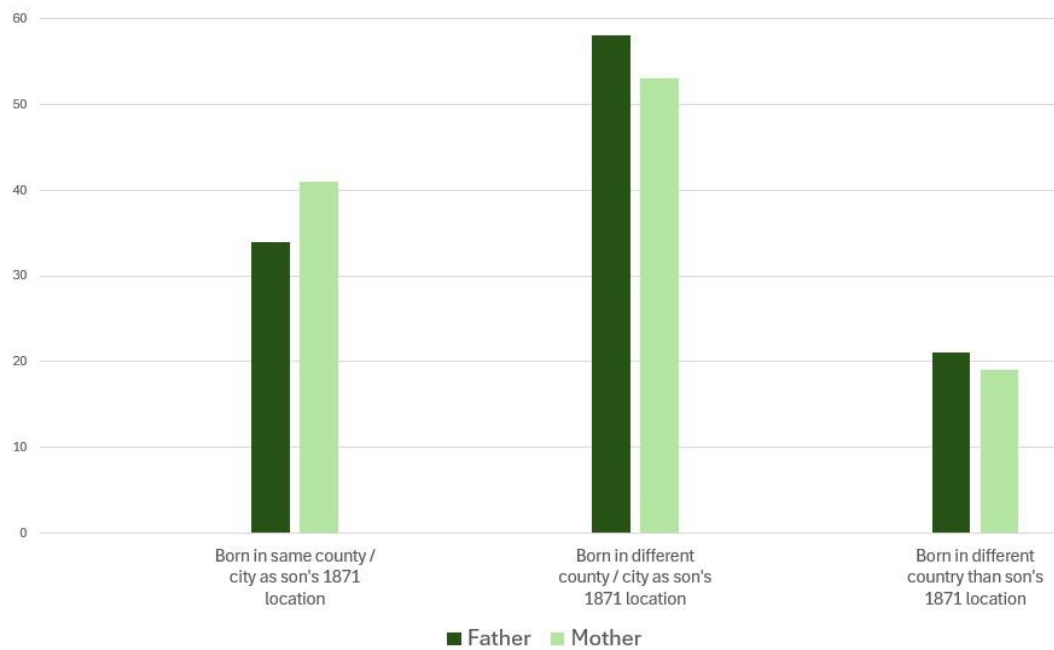


Figure 3.5b: Birthplace of parents compared with location of rugby club members in 1871 census

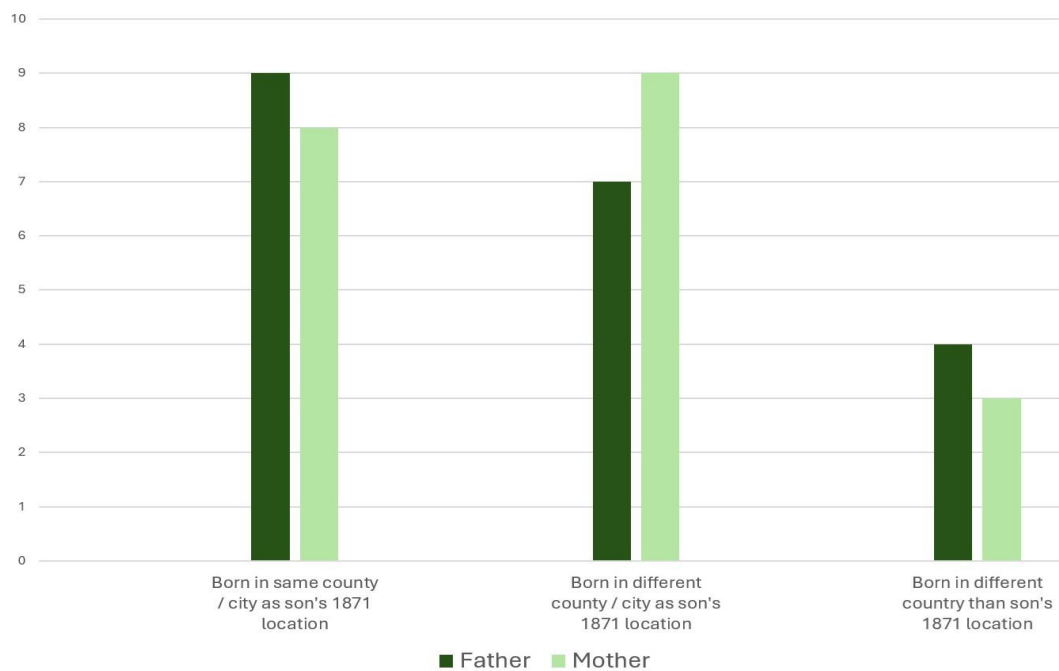


Figure 3.5c: Birthplace of parents compared with location of club members playing to both codes in 1871 census

When the location of each football club member in the 1871 census is related to the birthplace of their parents, the results are more pronounced. It can be seen for the association club members (Figure 3.5a) that just 67 parents (out of 226) were born in the same county as their son's location in the 1871 census. This means that 70 percent of parents were born in a different county or country than their son's location in 1871. For the rugby club members (Figure 3.5b) the figures are comparable with 67 percent of parents being born in a different county or country from the location of their son in the 1871 census. The respective number for club members who played to both codes (Figure 3.5c) is somewhat lower at 58 percent but this may in part be down to the lower sample size.

The data relating to parents born in a different country provides a significant degree of contrast. For the rugby data, 22 of the 40 were born in England, four were born in Ireland with two parents born in Wales. Of the 12 parents born overseas, the locations are diverse, India accounting for five with others having been born in Canada, the West Indies, South Africa, Spain and Penang. The occupations of parents reflect important areas of work that are connected to aspects of colonial rule. Four are recorded as being army officers (two of which had already reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel), while a church minister, surgeon and civil servant (the latter born in India) are also included. One of the most noteworthy cases is that of Alfred Clunies-Ross, who played for St Andrews University and Edinburgh Wanderers, and represented Scotland in the first rugby football international of 1871. Alfred had been born in the remote Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean. His mother, S'pia Dupong, was Indonesian and Alfred, in playing in the international match of 1871, became the first dual-heritage player in the history of international rugby. His family were ruler-proprietors of the Cocos islands.

For the association club members, 33 parents were born outside of Scotland. A large number of these were born in Ireland (25), with England accounting for the remaining eight. The occupations recorded are clearly at a lower level than that of the parents of the rugby club members. The list includes a commercial clerk, pawn broker and an inland revenue official. It also includes several miners (coal or iron stone), a blacksmith, ship carpenter and a labourer. The final category (both codes) understandably due to the small sample involved, brings up just four examples of parents born outside of Scotland.³⁶⁵ One is the French born William Aristides Verel who manages a factory in Glasgow (more information will be provided about him later). The remaining three are Irish born; Robert Robinson, a timber merchant, and his wife Sarah Wilson who were the parents of Arthur G. Robinson, and Wilhemina Campbell, who was married to John Cunningham Orr, an Ayrshire born 'Bookseller and Printer'. The last named couple were the parents of John Campbell Orr who played rugby football at St Andrews University and was later a co-founder of the Birmingham Clerks Association Football Club.

³⁶⁵ Although seven parents are listed under 'born in different country than son's 1871 location', two of them were born in Scotland (with their son, J. P. Tennent, living in England in 1871) while French born William Verel has two sons in the study. The tally therefore reduces to four relevant individuals.

Summary

The results of the study highlight the significant difference in social class composition between the association and rugby club members. While both categories had a majority of middle-class representation, rugby was particularly high at 96 percent compared with 67 percent being registered for association club members. Looking within these figures, the largest sub-group of middle-class members within the rugby sample was from the more elitist professional / merchant class at 59 percent. The largest sub-group of middle-class members within the association sample was for the lower middle-class at 55 percent. It therefore appears that the rugby game was more aligned with the upper tiers of the middle-class while, based on this analysis of early club members, the association game enjoyed a broader appeal, reaching significantly out to the lower middle-class and to the skilled working-class. This broader appeal is particularly evident when the third subset (club members connected to both codes) is added to the analysis. The high proportion of professional / merchant class representation (70 percent) and low yield of working-class representation (five percent) suggests that the professional classes participated in the association game, but this level of engagement was not reciprocated when it came to working-class representation in the rugby game.

The difference in disposable income between the association and rugby club members was clearly notable. This can be seen by the fact that the rugby club members had considerably more servants per household than the association club members. However, as has been explained, young men from wealthier backgrounds and higher social status were clearly more comfortable in taking up the association game in contrast to the relatively low yield of working-class players in the rugby game. It is important to note that the association game, although more egalitarian in its overall structure in Scotland, was more of an elitist recreation in London and this may have made the game socially acceptable within some sections of the professional and merchant class in Scotland.³⁶⁶

The evidence with respect to migration is more mixed. When comparing the data on parents born outside of the county from where their son was living at the time of the 1871 census, then it can be seen that the figures equate to 67 percent recorded for rugby club members and 70 percent recorded for association club members. The numbers are more pronounced when the birthplace of the club members are compared with their location at the time of the 1871 census; the rugby club members posting a sizeable 49 percent figure (born outside of the county or country) compared with 37 percent for the association club members.

³⁶⁶ When highlighting the move to expand the FA Committee in 1868, Tony Collins argues that, “This was not merely a numerical increase but significantly altered the social status of the FA by bringing in former pupils of Eton, Harrow, Charterhouse and Westminster. This considerably raised the FA’s credibility with public school and gentlemen’s club footballers, especially in London, and went some way to countering the authority of the rugby game”. See, Collins, T. (2019) *How football began*. London: Routledge, pp. 33-34.

Breaking down these figures further, the proportion of club members born in another country equates to 13 percent (rugby) and four percent (association) respectively.

The fact that the rugby club members, as a group, tended to be from a higher social class, chimes with the broader findings of M. Anderson and Morse who argue that as early as the mid-nineteenth century significant levels of migration were experienced from Scotland into London and the southeast of England as well as Lancashire. Significantly, this pattern of migration particularly involved “young single men, and contained a markedly disproportionate number of the most educated and to some extent skilled section of the population” (M. Anderson and Morse, 1990: p. 17). The prospect of marriage and the subsequent arrival of children (prior to their return to Scotland) would in part account for the increased level of rugby club members found to be born outside of Scotland. This can be seen, for example, with James Pitcairn Sym who was born in Southampton to Scottish parents. By the time of the 1871 census, Sym and his family were back in Scotland, living in Edinburgh.

However, it also reflects the arrival of English and Welsh migrants into Scotland, including skilled workers and students attending Scottish universities.³⁶⁷ For instance, Carlisle born Samuel George Brittain was a member of Perth Football Club whose father George senior (a civil engineer from Cheshire) had migrated to Scotland with his family. Another example can be found with Cuthbert Gibbes, a medical student at Aberdeen University (and son of an English church minister) who was born in Sidmouth, Devon. Taking into consideration all of these findings, a case can be made to suggest that migration was as much a factor in the lives of football club members in Scotland and their parents as it was for society in general.

Section 4 – Case studies

Association football clubs and club members

It is important now to look in more detail at some of the individuals that appear in the biographies as well as the clubs that feature. An analysis of the members of the association clubs has uncovered clubs that were essentially working-class in terms of the membership as well as clubs that were primarily middle-class. The former group is of interest as Holt, when addressing the subject of the importance of locality and community within working-class neighbourhoods, argues that “Organized team sports, especially football and cricket, were integrated into this close-knit pattern of collective life through neighbourly solidarities and the ‘local’” (Holt, 1986: p. 7).

³⁶⁷ M. Anderson and Morse estimate that a quarter of a million people from England and Wales migrated to Scotland between 1841 and 1914. See, Anderson, M. and Morse, D. J. (1990) *The People*. In: Fraser W. H. and Morris, R. J. eds. *People and society in Scotland. Vol 2, 1830-1914*. John Donald: Edinburgh, p. 18.

However, as will be seen, there does not appear to have been any class barriers which prevented primarily working-class clubs from playing against their predominantly middle-class counterparts. Indeed, Airdrie FC, a mainly working-class club made up of Irish and local Catholic players, was an important early opponent of Queen's Park FC, itself a mainly lower middle-class club whose players were from the Protestant religion. Airdrie FC was nicknamed the 'Hammer Drivers',³⁶⁸ which brings to mind the stereotyped caricature of the 'Irish Navvy', which combined Irish ethnicity with the lowly social status of the labouring class. If, as alluded to in the literature review, there was a significant cultural difference between Irish Catholic migrants and the native population (T. Gallacher, 1991: p. 21), then sports like association football, during this period, established a common area of interest, providing opportunity for positive interactions. Indeed, judging from the match of September 1870, the off-field relationship between Airdrie and Queen's Park appears to have been cordial.³⁶⁹ Sectarian hostility which would blight association football in the west of Scotland would not significantly materialise until the early part of the twentieth century.³⁷⁰

The Vale of Leven district had numerous clubs largely made up of working-class members. Whilst this subject will be examined in much detail later in the chapter, it can be said that local clubs like Renton and Vale of Leven regularly played against clubs like Queen's Park and Clydesdale whose membership was largely drawn from the lower middle-class. It has to be said, though, that whilst these clubs were largely working-class outfits, they also had some lower middle-class representation and they received patronage from the landed gentry or from factory owners. In the case of Airdrie FC, an important patron of the club was Archibald Gerard of Rochsoles; a Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant as well as a notable landowner. Although the Gerard family had been Scottish Episcopalians, Archibald followed his wife Euphemia in converting to Catholicism. In 1859 Gerard gifted land for the creation of a Roman Catholic cemetery and when the local football club was established, he allowed early matches to be played on his Rochsoles estate.³⁷¹ However, not all of the Airdrie players were working-class. At least one member of the team, Thomas Lavell (whose brother was a future lord provost of Coatbridge), came from a lower middle-class background. Although he

³⁶⁸ See, Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay, Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 36, and, *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, October 13, 1945, p. 36.

³⁶⁹ The following statement appears in a newspaper article covering Airdrie's match against Queen's Park in September 1870. "At the close both clubs adjourned for refreshments, and a very social evening was spent with songs, recitations, &c. – the utmost good feeling prevailing". See, Anonymous (1870) *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 24 September, p. 2.

³⁷⁰ Bill Murray argues that the significant rise in sectarian hostility, which would become a feature of the rivalry between Celtic and Rangers supporters, dates from around 1912. He cites the arrival in Govan of Belfast shipbuilding company Harland and Wolff as being a catalyst; with Celtic FC already being a sporting focal point for the Irish and Catholic community of Glasgow and the west of Scotland, the arrival of the shipbuilding firm established a large Protestant workforce within the vicinity of Rangers' Ibrox Park. See, Murray, B. (1998) *The Old Firm in the new age*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, pp. 34-35.

³⁷¹ See, Anonymous (1945) *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 13 October, p. 11.

is listed as an assistant in a pawn shop in 1871, the shop was a family business which had been established by his father and later taken on by his widowed mother, Anna.

Lavell's teammate, Edward Fannan, a coal miner, born in Ireland, provides a better representation of the working-class status of many of the players associated with the Airdrie Club. His biography also highlights the difficulty in verifying individuals based on their surnames from this period. Fannan had played against Queen's Park FC in September 1870 and was initially discovered by the author in two newspaper articles from 1929 and 1945 (where he was referenced as E. Fanning and E. Faunen respectively).³⁷² In the former article, the old Airdrie player was referenced as still being alive and a member of the Airdrie Veteran's Club. The minute book of the veteran's club verified the correct spelling of his surname as well as the date of his death, hence information about him could then be verified from official records.³⁷³ At the time of the 1871 census, Fannan was 27 years old, was married with a daughter, and living at 59 Bell Street in Airdrie. He was a close neighbour to several Airdrie FC teammates, including James Blackley and the Skelton brothers (who also lived on Bell Street) and James Berry and Thomas Lavell (who lived just round the corner on Aitchison Street and High Street respectively). The occupations of the Airdrie Club members vary, although the majority can be considered to be working-class jobs. There were several connections between the group of teammates, including religion (Roman Catholic), identity (most were either born in Ireland or had Irish born parents) and community (they lived close to each other).

The Renton and Vale of Leven clubs were also primarily working-class outfits based around the local textile industry. However, in line with the findings in the earlier part of this chapter, there are once again examples of connections with individuals from the lower middle-class. The local textile factories required clerks as well as block printers and printfield labourers. Charles Glen, for example, an early player associated with the Vale of Leven Club was recorded as being employed as a 'Clerk at Printfield' in the 1871 census. In a similar manner to the connection between the Airdrie Club and a wealthy benefactor in the Gerard family, the two leading clubs in the Vale of Leven district also relied heavily on patronage. This support came from factory owners and managers — the Vale of Leven Club had the backing of John and Archibald Orr-Ewing who dominated the textile industry surrounding Bonhill and Alexandria. Similarly, Renton FC was supported by Alexander Wylie, who from 1874 was manager of the Dalquhurn Dye Works (owned by Wiliam Stirling and Sons). Wylie adopted a

³⁷² Anonymous (1929) *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 10 August, p. 6. Anonymous (1945) *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 13 October, p. 11.

³⁷³ Edward Fannan is referenced in the Old Men's Shelter (Airdrie Veteran's Club) minute book (5 March, 1929) as "Ed. Fannan". His death is recorded, aged 88, under the name Edward Fannan in the Airdrie Veteran's Club "In Memoriam" Book, on 30 May, 1931. See, Airdrie Veteran's Club (1928–1972) Minute Books and other Records. *Airdrie Veterans' Club Archive*, U32. Motherwell: North Lanarkshire Archives.

strong paternalistic approach towards his employees and became involved in numerous projects aimed at the self-improvement of his workforce.³⁷⁴

As with the case of the Airdrie Club, the importance of ‘community’ drew working-class members of these clubs together as neighbours. Certainly, in the case of Renton, the seven players who form part of this study can be traced to three neighbouring streets within the village (Main Street, Back Street and Thimble Street). The map of Renton from 1914 (Figure 3.6) shows the close proximity of these streets to each other. It can be seen that the players were close neighbours as well as teammates.



Figure 3.6: Ordnance Survey Map detailing the village of Renton in Dunbartonshire (from a survey taken in 1914 and published in 1923). The close proximity of Main Street, Back Street and Thimble Street can be seen. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland..

Club member biographies for Glasgow sides show a clearer pattern of individuals from primarily lower middle-class backgrounds. One such player was George Burrell Ramsay who played for the Rovers Club. The son of a master ironmonger, Ramsay is listed as being a 16 year old scholar at the time of the 1871 census. Living with his parents in the village of Cathcart on the outskirts of Glasgow, he played for Rovers against Rangers FC in November 1873.³⁷⁵ By 1876, Ramsay had moved to Birmingham to work as a clerk in a brass foundry. He became associated with Aston Villa FC, and according to William McGregor, was instrumental as a player in introducing the Scottish short passing game at the club.³⁷⁶ As club

³⁷⁴ For a detailed overview of the paternalistic approach adopted by Alexander Wylie see, McDowell, M. L. (2010) *The origins, patronage and culture of association football in the west of Scotland, c. 1865-1902*. PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, pp. 69-73.

³⁷⁵ Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 10 November, p. 7.

³⁷⁶ McGregor wrote, “... it was George Ramsay who first moulded the style of the club’s play, and the Aston Villa team have never lost the reputation they gained for short, quick passing under Ramsay’s direction”. See, McGregor, W. (1906b) *The romance of Aston Villa*. In: F. J. Wall, et al., eds. *The book of football*. London: The Amalgamated Press Ltd, p. 6.

secretary, he took on managerial responsibilities for the team and statistically remains one of the most successful managers in the history of English football, presiding over six League Championship titles and six FA Cup victories.³⁷⁷ As briefly mentioned in Chapter 2, the examples of J. J. Lang and Frederick Anderson stand testimony to the existence of club members and teammates in Glasgow who can be placed on either side of the dominant lower middle-class grouping. James Joseph Lang was a future Scottish Cup finalist and Scotland internationalist who would be enticed down to Sheffield for his football ability. The son of Irish migrant parents, he was recorded as being employed as a boilermaker in the 1871 census. Appearing in the same Clydesdale team as Lang in 1873 was Frederick Anderson, who would similarly contest a Scottish Cup final and play for Scotland. The son of a merchant, Anderson was employed as a commercial clerk in 1871 and had been educated at the prestigious Glasgow Academy.

The Queen's Park Club was a solidly middle-class outfit, but again an example can be found from within its playing ranks of a prominent skilled working-class member in James Biggar Weir. A highly talented player, 'Jerry' would go on to make four appearances for Scotland and would win the Scottish Cup three times with Queen's Park. Born in the Gorbals district of Glasgow, he was employed as an apprentice house joiner in the 1871 census (his father was a master house builder). The early Queen's Park membership had been largely split between those born in and around Glasgow and those who had migrated from the north of Scotland. Lewis Stewart Black represented the latter category within the club. Born in Cullen in Banffshire, Lewis was lodging at Struan Terrace in the Queen's Park district of Glasgow in 1871. A fellow lodger at the address was club teammate James Cruickshank Grant who also originated from Banffshire. Both were employed as commission agents. Lewis had an important contribution to make in the early years of the club. He chaired the inaugural meeting in July 1867, becoming the first club captain, and was elected president a year later. Lewis served on the club committee until 1871 and was registered as a member up until 1875.³⁷⁸

The early interactions between clubs of different social standing and the mixing of individuals from different backgrounds within clubs (as described in this chapter) indicates that the emerging game in the west of Scotland was built upon a sense of egalitarianism. There certainly does not appear to have been any barrier by way of social class status for people joining association football clubs at this early period. It should be noted, however, that in Edinburgh a little later in the decade Hibernian FC may have experienced

³⁷⁷ For an overview to Ramsay's success, see, Goodyear, D. and Matthews, T. (1992) *Aston Villa: a complete record, 1874–1992*. Derby: Breedon Books, p. 9.

³⁷⁸ Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 13.

discrimination based on ethnicity/religion when initially being denied membership of the Edinburgh Association.³⁷⁹

Part of the reason for this sense of inclusiveness may have been due to the porous nature of the divide between lower middle-class and skilled working-class in the west of Scotland.³⁸⁰ This is a point which is made by Joan Smith and which has been referenced earlier in the chapter (J. Smith, 1986: p. 187). This notion of egalitarianism can also be seen through William Agnew and the Deaf & Dumb Football Club. Agnew, a bookbinder who was recorded as deaf and mute in the medical disabilities question included in the 1871 census, was a founding father of Deaf & Dumb FC around this time.³⁸¹ The club was linked to the Deaf and Dumb Institution (see, Figure 3.7), which was established at Mount Florida in 1868 and overlooked an area of the Southside Park.³⁸² That area of the park was where Queen's Park



Figure 3.7: An image of the original Deaf and Dumb Institution building at Mount Florida. The Southside Park was situated close to the institution on the opposite side of Prospecthill Road.

³⁷⁹ There is a degree of confusion surrounding the exact reason but an article in the *Edinburgh Evening News* implies that Hibs had to fight their way into the Edinburgh Association whilst having an “easier passage into the Scottish Association”. The article suggests that “they may have been regarded as alien intruders in a Scottish national game” (see, Anonymous (1905) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 7 January, p. 4). An article in a later edition of the same newspaper contradicts this by stating that it was down to a ruling which applied to all clubs – the Edinburgh Association had to decline the application because Hibs at that point was not a member of the national association and needed to be (see, Anonymous (1905) *Edinburgh Evening News*, 21 January, p. 4). An earlier article which appears in the *Scottish Athletic Journal* states that the initial censorship was down to the “exceedingly rough play” of the Hibernian Club (see, Anonymous (1882) *Scottish Athletic Journal*, 22 December, p. 10).

³⁸⁰ These two categories jointly account for 75 percent of the 113 individuals linked to association football clubs between 1868 and 1873.

³⁸¹ There is a degree of doubt over the exact year of formation. R. J. Smith, for example, highlights the uncertainty by referencing both the *Deaf and Dumb Magazine* of 1882 (suggesting 1871) and a testimony from co-founder Alexander McGregor, writing in the *British Deaf Times* in May 1906 (suggesting 1872). Both references can be found in a special section devoted to the club’s foundation in, Smith, R. J. (2003) *The history of Glasgow deaf athletic*. Glasgow: Deaf Connections, pp. 2-6. A separate reference for 1872 can also be found in the *Football Annual* of 1874 — see, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1874) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 126.

³⁸² The Southside Park is now known as the Queen’s Park Recreation Ground.

FC organised internal practise matches and played early games against opposing clubs. Queen's Park had access to a lodge in the grounds of the Institution for storing equipment necessary for training sessions and football games.³⁸³ An early history of the Queen's Park Club, published in 1880, provides an insight into the interactions between members of the football club and pupils from the institution,

It was here some of our members learned what little they know of the art of talking with the fingers. The boys of the institution used to get lessons in the game from some of our fellows, and taught their speech in return. Some very amusing scenes took place in games with the boys. It was no easy thing to get an institution boy told he was off-side, or had fouled a ball; especially if he didn't want to be told. Then you would hear one of us shout to a boy – "pass here;" "shy;" "kick;" only to be reminded by laughter that institution boys did not hear! though some of them were actually taught to speak, and that wonderfully well (Old Black and White, 1880: p. 88).

In 1870, when the Drummond Club turned up two players short, two students from the Deaf and Dumb institution readily agreed to take part in the match.³⁸⁴ It is perhaps no surprise that a club would be formed soon after. Deaf & Dumb FC regularly participated in matches against other local teams and Agnew can still be found playing for the club in match reports from 1877.³⁸⁵

Rugby football clubs and club members

In the main, rugby football clubs appear to have been more defined by social class. The membership criteria of former pupils' clubs understandably promoted exclusivity. On one level it could be argued that primarily working-class clubs like Renton FC and Vale of Leven FC selected players almost exclusively from within the local community who were usually employed within local industry. However, the local communities and local factories provided middle-class as well as working-class members. The former pupils' clubs were populated exclusively by young men from wealthier backgrounds who had benefited from the elite end of education.

As referenced in the literature review, R. D. Anderson argues that not only were the educational demands of middle-class families better catered for through a growing number of newly built private schools, but controversially through an effective takeover of burgh schools and endowment schools (R. D. Anderson, 1997: p. 35). Moreover, the impressive

³⁸³ Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay, Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 26.

³⁸⁴ See, Capel-Kirby W. and Carter F. W. (1933) *The mighty kick: the history, romance and humour of football*. London: Jarrolds, p. 195.

³⁸⁵ See, Anonymous (1877) *Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette*, 29 January, p. 3.

spread of the game across much of urban Scotland was down in part to the adoption of rugby football by the leading educational institutions as part of their wider promotion of Muscular Christianity. Tony Collins in particular links the popularity of Muscular Christianity amongst the middle-class to the significant uptake of rugby football (T. Collins, 2019: pp. 18-19). However, while the rugby game in England initially found competition from the association code when competing for the elite schools and universities, the same cannot be said for Scotland. As mentioned in Chapter 2, R. D. Anderson claims that north of the border the elite schools and universities, as a body, were much quicker to throw their weight behind the rugby game (R. D. Anderson, 1987: p. 179).

The biographies of the Edinburgh Academical Football Club members can be found to be linked to the upper middle-class grouping of legal professionals, members of the clergy, and merchants. It also includes Francis Moncreiff, a notable figure in the early history of rugby football in Scotland who captained Scotland's national team in the inaugural match against England in 1871. He was the second son of James Moncreiff, Member of Parliament, Lord Justice Clerk, Rector of the University of Glasgow, and soon to be 1st Baron Moncreiff of Tulliebole.

In the 1871 census, Francis was living at Great Stuart Street in Stockbridge. Similarly, as Figure 3.8 shows, the residences of a majority of the Edinburgh Academical Club members that have been included within this study (from the time of the 1871 census) can be found clustered around the affluent neighbourhoods of Stockbridge and Edinburgh's New Town. Fellow club members can be linked to neighbouring streets such as Eton Terrace, Fettes Row, Scotland Street, Northumberland Street and Drummond Place.



Figure 3.8: A view of Edinburgh's affluent Stockbridge and New Town districts from an 1894 survey. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Similarly, in Glasgow, members of the Glasgow Academical Football Club can be found in prime middle-class locations. They do, however, appear to be spread out more across a wider area of the city and surrounding suburbs. The locations vary from Sandyford and the upmarket Park District in Glasgow's west end, to Partick and Cathcart just beyond the western and southern boundaries of the city. In the case of William Davie Brown, he can be found living with his family in a lavish townhouse at Park Terrace. The household has five servants. His father, James, is listed as being a merchant in the 1871 census while William's occupation is recorded as 'Merchant's Clerk'. While the Edinburgh and Glasgow Academical clubs ran exclusive former pupils' teams with a membership that can be considered to be of a high social standing, there are numerous examples of clubs who were not linked to elite educational institutions. The Paisley and Dundee Junior clubs certainly come under this category.

The Paisley Club included members who came from the lower middle-class. The Andrews brothers, for example, were all employees of their father's drapery business within the Renfrewshire town. Their teammate James McKean was in a similar position, being employed in his father's soap and starch business. Likewise, the Dundee Junior Club appears to have attracted lower middle-class members. For example, Kirkwood Buik, a scholar at the time of the 1871 census, was the son of a 'Rope and Sail Maker'. This business, however, generated sufficient income for the Buik household to employ three servants. Other occupations associated with club members include a flax inspector's clerk and an apprentice dentist. Interestingly, one of the members, Walter Glass, can be considered to be from a skilled working-class occupation; that of machine fitter. This may have been down to circumstances; by the time of the 1871 census both of his parents were deceased. Walter's late father had been a 'Legal Writer' and 'Procurator in Practise'. By the time of the 1871 census, Walter aged 16 is living as a boarder in Dundee. If economic necessity had changed his living and working arrangements, then the football club membership may have been a vital connection to peers from his former social circles.

In other respects, the occupations of many of the rugby club members can be linked to the type of activity associated with the predominant professional and merchant occupations within their respective locations. As mentioned in the literature review, Treble argues that Dundee had a virtual monopoly of the jute industry by the 1860s (Treble, 2018: p. 13) while Morris points to the dominance of Edinburgh in the banking and legal sectors as well as in national matters relating to the Church (Morris, 1990a: p. 80). The importance of the legal establishment in Edinburgh is highlighted through the occupations of rugby club members from the city.³⁸⁶ Likewise, in Dundee and the surrounding area, the prevalence of the jute

³⁸⁶ Within the list of rugby club member biographies, those linked to the legal profession includes Robert Christie of the Carlton and Royal High School FP clubs (legal writer), Thomas Marshall of the Edinburgh Academical Club (apprentice writer to the signet), Angus Buchanan of the Royal High School FP and Edinburgh University clubs (student of law), and William Considine of the Royal High School FP Club (law apprentice).

and flax industry is reflected through the occupations of local rugby club members. This can be seen, for example, with David Laing, a prominent member of the Dalhousie Club. The son of a prominent jute manufacturer, in the 1871 census, Laing, aged 23 and still living with his parents, is employed as a commercial clerk. However, by the time of the 1881 census he has advanced to the position of 'Jute Manufacturer', being a partner in Laing Brothers & Co., Jute Spinners in Dundee.

In line with the migration trends discussed in the first part of this chapter, university clubs were represented both by home grown talent as well as by club members from other parts of the United Kingdom and further afield. Aberdeen University FC, for instance, includes the aforementioned Cuthbert Gibbes as well as Charles Lethbridge Swaine. Both were medical students. While the former was born in England, the latter was born in Bengal, at that time part of east India, the son of a Devon-born factory manager who oversaw the production of indigo dye at Contai in West Bengal. The profiles of both rugby club members fits with the comments of R. D. Anderson who states that at Aberdeen University in the 1870s there, "...were also many English medical students, who brought 'great energy in organizing games, and a good sporting tradition'" (R. D. Anderson, 1987: p. 178). Such was the strength of the English students within the university football club that an annual match under rugby rules was arranged against the Scottish students.³⁸⁷ With access often limited to the elitist Oxford and Cambridge universities, the Scottish universities were an attractive alternative to prospective students from across the border and overseas. As stated in the literature review, R. D. Anderson highlights the diversity of Scotland's universities and the absence of the "social barriers" which marked out Oxford and Cambridge as "places of privilege" (R. D. Anderson, 1983: p. 4).

The West of Scotland Football Club is well represented within the list of biographies with 10 members recorded in the rugby section and a further six recorded within the section relating to both codes. The 16 recorded members of the West of Scotland Club are almost universally to be found within the merchant and professional classes, reflecting the influential status of the club itself.³⁸⁸ In the early 1870s, the McClure brothers were central figures within the club both on and off the field. Indeed, at the annual general meeting of

³⁸⁷ The *Aberdeen Journal* refers to the contest between the English and Scottish students as being an "annual match" (see, Anonymous (1873) *Aberdeen Journal*, 17 December, p. 6).

³⁸⁸ Cricket historian Richard S. Young states that the West of Scotland Cricket Club's name was deliberately chosen in 1862 to reflect the ambition of the club to become a Scottish equivalent of the historic and influential Marylebone Cricket Club in London. The West of Scotland Football Club extended this influence within the rugby community, being one of the most influential rugby clubs in Scotland. See, Young, R. (2014) *As the willow vanishes: Glasgow's forgotten pioneers*. Whitley Bay, Consilience Media, p. 39.

1872 George Buchanan McClure was elected as captain of the club.³⁸⁹ In the 1871 census, George is recorded as being aged 19 and an accounts clerk. His father James is a legal writer.

The emerging rugby football clubs in the Scottish Borders appear to have appealed to a broader membership even at this early period. Although the data is limited, Hawick FC provides some evidence of club members who came from skilled working-class backgrounds. Andrew Landels, for example, a co-founder of the Roxburghshire club, was the son of a blacksmith who was himself, at the time of the 1871 census, employed as a wool sorter. His fellow teammate (and co-founder of the club) Robert Michie was employed as a journeyman currier. However, Hawick FC, also attracted members from the middle-class. This can be seen with Thomas Ker (better known in Hawick by his nickname 'Tee Kay') who was listed as a scholar in 1871. He was the son of James Ker, a local schoolmaster who would go on to become headmaster of Hawick Industrial School. Tee Kay was subsequently recorded as being a hosiery warehouseman at the time of the 1881 census.

Club members involved with both codes

Although this sub-section has the smallest number of individuals, the list includes some prominent athletes, with a majority of the people being connected to the professional and merchant class. Reverend James Barclay, a notable figure in the football circles of Dumfriesshire, is one of the members of this particular group. A native of Paisley, Barclay was working as a Minister in a Dumfries parish at the time of the 1871 census. His father was also a member of the clergy, listed as a Residenter in Paisley in the same year. James Barclay had originally been associated with the rugby code, playing for the Merchiston Castle school team against Edinburgh Academy in 1859. Later as a divinity student at Glasgow University he would captain the cricket and football clubs.³⁹⁰ Barclay later joined the Dumfries Football Club which played to the rugby and association codes. His ministry would take him to Canonbie in Dumfriesshire in 1874 where he would be instrumental in establishing Canonbie Football Club.

The story of John Pattison Tennent is that of a long-distance migrant. His family was connected to J. & R. Tennent, owners of the Wellpark Brewery in Glasgow. Born in Tasmania, he was boarding with his brother at North Moels in Lancashire at the time of the 1871 census and was listed as an undergraduate of Oxford University. John was a talented athlete whose football connections initially centred around the West of Scotland Football Club, Glasgow Wanderers, Clydesdale and Alexandra Athletic. At the time of the census, his father William was overseeing the business interests of J. & R. Tennent in Liverpool. J. P. Tennent

³⁸⁹ The meeting took place at the Bedford Hotel, Glasgow on 1 April, 1872. See, West of Scotland Football Club (1871-1875) Minute Book. *West of Scotland Football Club Archive*, GD321/3/1/1. Bearsden: East Dunbartonshire Council Archives.

³⁹⁰ See, Sulte, B. (1906) *A history of Quebec, its resources and people, vol II*. Montreal: The Canada History Company, p. 629.

moved to Glasgow where he became a notable figure within both football codes and as a cricketer.³⁹¹

Another family of migrants are the Verels and, in particular, the brothers Francis and Julien who played rugby and association football with Southern FC in Glasgow. In 1871 Francis and Julien can be found living with their parents in Regent Park Square, an upmarket neighbourhood within Strathbungo in Glasgow's southside. Their father, William, was French born and having lived for many years in the northeast of Scotland (where Francis and Julien were both born), he relocated to Glasgow to become manager of the Tharsis Sulphur and Copper Company. In 1871, 18 year old Francis was recorded as a 'Chemist'.

Section 5 — Case study on the Vale of Leven district

Introduction

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the Vale of Leven district became an early hotbed for association football. It forms the subject of a distinct case study in this thesis due to the preponderance of working-class footballers linked to clubs in this area. Preliminary research for this case study was the subject of a presentation titled *The Footballers from the Vale* which was given by the author at the International Football History Conference at Cardiff in 2024.³⁹² As a result of further research, additional clubs and members have been discovered, hence a more detailed case study of the Vale of Leven district can be included within this thesis which significantly adds to the research from 2024.

The original research uncovered nine clubs that had been established between August 1872 (when Vale of Leven FC was founded) and the end of 1873. That figure has now been increased to 17 clubs. Figure 3.9 maps out the location of the clubs within the district. The original study of football club members from the Vale of Leven district from 2024 examined the social class composition of 44 individuals traced to seven clubs. The timeframe for club membership was limited to a four-year period running from 1872 to 1875. It should be noted that whilst some of the club members from the original study of 2024 appear in the broader examination of social class composition undertaken by this thesis (Figure 3.2a), many of them do not feature as they could only be dated to 1874 or 1875.³⁹³ The original

³⁹¹ In 1873, J. P. Tennent held the position of secretary of the prestigious West of Scotland Cricket Club. See, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 4 July, p. 3.

³⁹² See, McBrearty, R. (2024b) 'The Footballers from the Vale'. *International Football History Conference*. Cardiff City Stadium. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2024/06/08/the-footballers-from-the-vale/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

³⁹³ Of the 44 association club members from the Vale of Leven district who made up the data for the original study of 2024, only 21 of those individuals were traced to 1872 or 1873 and appear in the larger study relating to class composition of association football club members (Figure 3.2a) within this thesis.

study from 2024 overwhelmingly relied on the ‘big three’ clubs of Vale of Leven FC, Renton FC and Dumbarton FC, with 39 of the 44 individuals being traced to these organisations (representing 89 percent of the total).

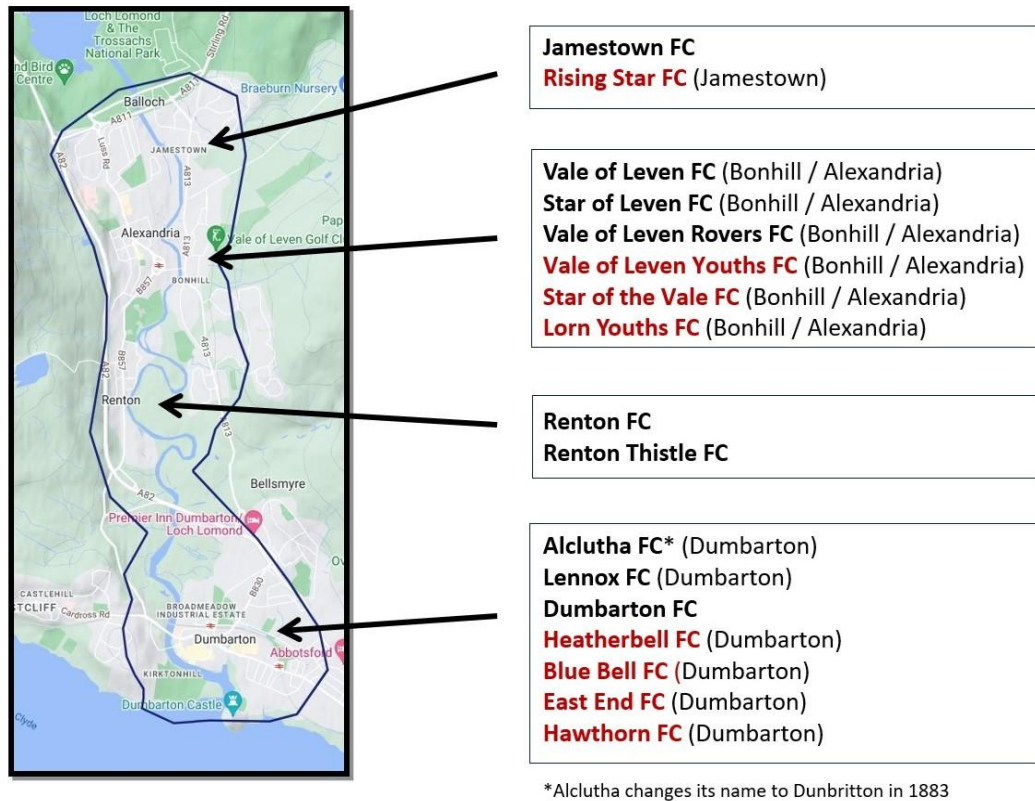


Figure 3.9: Association football clubs in the Vale of Leven district by 1873. The recently discovered clubs are highlighted in red. Image courtesy of Google maps.

Social class composition

The original study has been significantly enlarged to include an additional 40 club members with 15 of the 17 clubs recorded in Figure 3.9 now being represented.³⁹⁴ The new additions have no connection with the ‘big three’. This overall has had a positive effect by reducing the dominance of the three main clubs within the data; the combined membership figures for the three clubs have dropped significantly from 89 percent to 46 percent. The increased bank of data has enabled a more comprehensive study of the social class composition of 84 football club members from the Vale of Leven district based on the census returns from 1871. In a similar way to the larger study of social class which has already been presented in this thesis (Figure, 3.2a), individual biographies were created for the new sample of 40 club

³⁹⁴ The two clubs that are not represented by club members are the Hawthorn and East End clubs. Moreover, an 18th club, West End FC which can only be traced to January 1874 has two members in the study although the club itself does not feature in Figure 3.9 (which concludes at the end of 1873).

members and these were added to the existing list of 44 club members. All of the biographies can be found in the author's *Scottish Football Origins* website.³⁹⁵ The results relating to social class can be seen in Figure 3.10 below. The immediate impression, from looking at the percentages, is that the data from the 84 association club members from the Vale of Leven district includes a significantly higher proportion of working-class individuals than the broader study of 110 association club members from across the west of Scotland

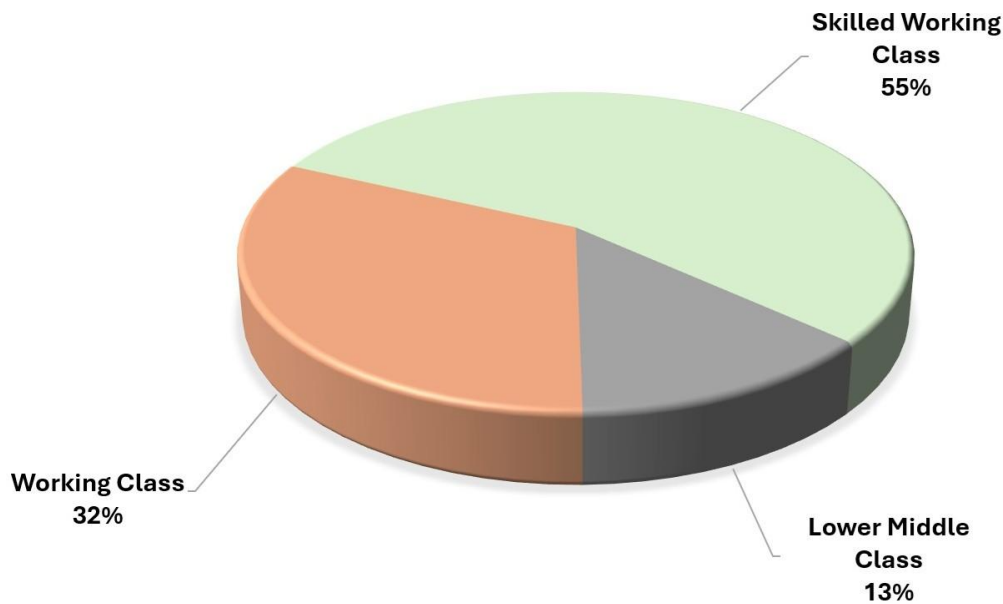


Figure 3.10: Social class composition of football club members from the Vale of Leven district

region.³⁹⁶ The Vale of Leven district has a combined working-class proportion of 87 percent which compares with 33 percent from the wider survey. As a result, the middle-class representation is much lower, sitting at 13 percent (compared with 67 percent for the west of Scotland as a whole). This clearly sets apart the Vale of Leven district from other areas within the wider region. It can be said that while the working-class formed an important part of the emerging game across the region as a whole, in the Vale of Leven they were clearly the dominant influence. The larger sample size only serves to reinforce the dominance of the working-class members within the local clubs.

³⁹⁵ See, McBrearty, R. (2026) 'Short biographies of association football club members from the Vale of Leven district, 1872-1875', *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2026/01/11/short-biographies-of-association-football-club-members-from-the-vale-of-leven-district-1872-1875/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

³⁹⁶ Although Figure 3.2a features 113 football club members, three of these individuals came from the south of Scotland region and played for Annan FC. The remainder (110) are all from the west of Scotland region. By removing the three Annan Club members, the Vale of Leven district can be directly compared with the broader west of Scotland region.

Migration

For the purpose of this thesis, the data on migration has been increased to include the 40 additional club members who were recently discovered. In this case study, Bonhill and Alexandria are treated as one settlement as both communities geographically sit side by side on either bank of the River Leven. The other communities within the study are the villages of Jamestown and Renton, and the town of Dumbarton; the latter being the largest population centre within the Vale of Leven district. The results can be seen in Figure 3.11. As can be seen from the chart, the vast majority of club members in 1871 were living in the same

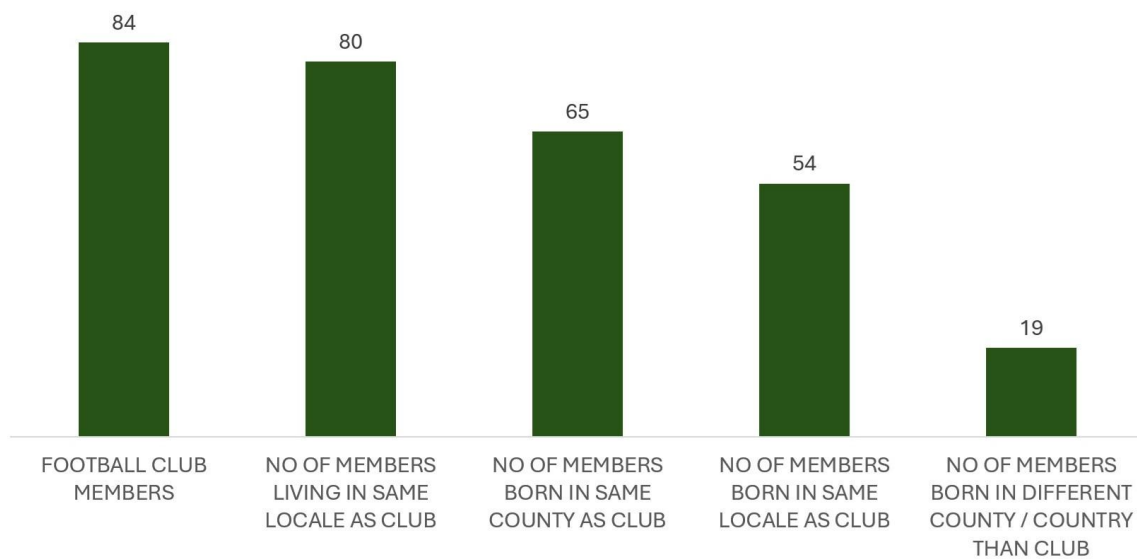


Figure 3.11: Geographical proximity of members to their clubs

locale as the club that they would go on to join. Only four members can be found to be living outside of the locale of their club. The first of these members is Alexander Lockhart who is listed as living in Renton in the 1871 census and would play for Lorn Youths FC from Alexandria. Another example can be found with Renton born Findlay Kennedy who would play for Renton Thistle but is recorded as living in Dumbarton. The Sharp brothers account for the remaining two anomalies. Both were living in Bonhill in 1871 but are recorded as playing for Rising Star FC in Jamestown. However, the distances involved are relatively short. Renton, as the crow flies, is one and a half miles from Alexandria and a little under two miles from Dumbarton, while Bonhill is just over a mile in distance from Jamestown.

Overall, 77 percent of the club members were born in the same county as the club that they would play for. With respect to the number of members born in a different county or country than the location of their club, only 23 percent fall within that category. This provides a noticeable difference when compared with the broader study of the association club members (Figure 3.4). Once again, by removing the three Annan FC members from the data, a study of 110 individuals from within the west of Scotland region can be presented. In

doing so, it can be found that 37 percent of the club members from across the west of Scotland were born in a different county or country than the location of their clubs. This suggests that the migration levels were lower across the Vale of Leven district when compared with the general position across the west of Scotland, although a separate study of the birth location of the parents of club members would be useful as a way of understanding the wider role of the family unit in the migration process.

The pride of being locally born and representing the local community was an aspect of the sporting experience of club members within the Vale of Leven district. It also mattered greatly in other urban communities across the west of Scotland. The notion of community was of course hugely important to migrants and in both cases it can be said that the emerging association game, even with its modern structures and move towards uniformity, provided an opportunity for young men to mark and even celebrate the history and heritage that formed an important aspect of their own identity and helped to define the local communities that they were very much a part of.³⁹⁷ As mentioned earlier, this aligns with Holt's view on the importance of football, amongst other sports, as a form of local identity within urban communities.³⁹⁸

Summary

This chapter has highlighted the significant difference that existed by the end of 1873 with respect to the social class composition of football club members connected to the two main codes. The research has established that the association game drew a majority of its club members from the lower middle-class but, significantly, one in three of the members could claim to be from a working-class background. On the other hand, the rugby game largely drew its members from the more elite professional and merchant class with working-class membership sitting at a mere three percent. It can generally be said that for both codes the subject of migration impacted upon a significant proportion of football club members and their parents. The position of the rugby game in Scotland can be better understood within a national context when the case studies are placed alongside the statistical analysis relating to social class composition. It can be said that the largely elitist nature of the sport was in many respects a strength during the early phase of development. The wealthy male exponents of rugby football, playing in their clubs during the early 1870s would have already been immersed in the game from their time at the elite schools and the universities. The impressive spread of the game across much of urban Scotland was down at least in part to the adoption of rugby football by the leading educational institutions. Add to this, improved

³⁹⁷ A notable example can be found with the Perthshire migrants who created the Drummond Club in Glasgow. With this club, links to identity and heritage can be found not only in the choice of name (which connects the club members to traditional Drummond territories in Perthshire and Stirlingshire) but also through the adoption of football caps adorned in the Drummond clan tartan. See, Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay, Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 36.

³⁹⁸ See, Holt, R. (1986) 'Working-class football and the city: the problem of continuity', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 3(1), p. 7.

transportation networks and the financial clout that the largely middle-class members could bring to the game and it is easy to see why the rugby game took hold so quickly. Whilst the rugby game was largely a game of the elites, there is some evidence to suggest that the Scottish Borders region, even at this early stage, may have bucked this trend.

Alongside the respectable grammar schools that adopted the sport, clubs were also starting to form within the towns and the example of Hawick FC points to skilled working-class players already being an integral part of the club. This would indeed help to explain why the association game largely struggled to make as much of an impression across the Scottish Borders region as it did elsewhere in Scotland. However, in most other parts of Scotland, the elitist nature of the game inevitably meant that the rugby code would struggle to broaden its appeal. By contrast, the association game in Scotland by the end of 1873 had only just entered the initial stage of a rapid and protracted expansion. As will be seen in Chapter 4, the heartland area of Glasgow would continue to grow exponentially. Already considerably bigger than its rugby counterpart across the west of Scotland region, the spread of the game out into other parts of Scotland would increasingly challenge the dominance of the 'carrying' game. It can be said that the association game already had a significant working-class presence across the west of Scotland region and in the Vale of Leven district it was by far the most dominant grouping.

As discussed in this chapter, the two outstanding Scottish association clubs of the 1870s era, Queen's Park FC and Vale of Leven FC, differed significantly in terms of the social standing of their respective members. The former continued to field teams made up primarily of middle-class players, while the latter club would largely be dominated by players from traditional working-class backgrounds. However, as alluded to earlier, the porous nature of the distinction between skilled working-class and lower middle-class meant that class identity was not an area of friction when it came to the association game in Scotland. Moreover, migrant clubs in the cities, whether Scottish or Irish in origin, were accepted within the game. In an era marked by sectarian tensions, it could even be argued that the association football field was a place where divisions could temporarily be set to one side and where clubs representing different communities had an opportunity to meet on equal terms. Glasgow was very much at the centre of this substantial development in association football. A city with a long tradition of football activity,³⁹⁹ the rapidity in which the association game subsumed older traditional forms of football was nevertheless remarkable. Tony Collins refers to Glasgow as the football capital of the nineteenth century⁴⁰⁰ and the next chapter

³⁹⁹ Football was already a significant activity in Glasgow by the sixteenth century. Entries in the burgh accounts record the order of multiple footballs for the festival of Fastern's E'en from 1575 onwards. Even as recent as 1854, Glasgow Green appears to have been a popular venue for football activity. See, Scottish Burgh Record Society (1914) *Extracts from the records of the burgh of Glasgow, 1573–1642*. Glasgow: Scottish Burgh Record Society, p. 456. Also, MacDonald, H. (1854) *Rambles round Glasgow*. Glasgow: Robert Lindsay, p. 26.

⁴⁰⁰ See, Collins, T. (2019) *How football began: a global history of how the world's football codes were born*. London: Routledge, pp. 47–52.

will analyse this claim in some detail by comparing the growth of organised football in the city and surrounding suburbs with another major football city of the nineteenth century – Sheffield.

Chapter 4

Continuity and Reinvention

Glasgow and the rise of the modern association game: 1873-1875

Section 1 – Overview and methodological approach

Introduction

This chapter sets out to explain the rapid rise of association football in Glasgow and the west of Scotland in the two-year period which followed on from the region's hosting of the first official international match. This chapter explains the rapid rise of association football in Glasgow and the west of Scotland in the two years following the region's hosting of the first official international match. First, a comparative study between Glasgow and Sheffield provides context for the scale of growth in and around the Scottish city. Second, the broader cultural associations linking organised football with non-football networks are examined. Finally, the principal factors that combined to facilitate the surge of football activity are outlined. Building upon the conclusions in Chapter 2, a case is made to argue that the west of Scotland region had obtained a leading position within the association game by the mid-1870s. This was due to the unprecedented increase in new clubs and the central role of Queen's Park FC in the development of a systematic playing style which revolutionised the association game.

Whilst Glasgow's status as a major hub for association football was already in place by the end of 1873, the game would push on considerably over the two-year period that followed the first international match. By the end of 1875 the association game had reached a considerable distance beyond Glasgow. It could now be found across large swathes of the heavily populated central belt region. Southwards, clubs had already formed or were forming within the Dumfries and Galloway region.⁴⁰¹ As will be seen, the game extended up the north-east coast as far as Dundee.

In central Scotland, clubs were also forming. Two clubs, for example, could be found in the outskirts of Falkirk, in the village of Greenhill and the small town of Bonnybridge.⁴⁰² In Paisley, rugby clubs were increasingly prepared to play to association rules. Following on from Paisley FC (who could be found playing to the association code as early as 1873), clubs

⁴⁰¹ Whilst Dumfriesshire was already home to several clubs, a new club was formed in October 1875 in Galloway at Castle Douglas (see, Anonymous (1875) *Galloway Gazette*, 23 October, p. 2).

⁴⁰² For the formation of the Midland Football Club of Greenhill and the Grasshoppers Club of Bonnybridge, see, Anonymous (1875) *Falkirk Herald*, 23 December, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1875) *Falkirk Herald*, 21 October, p. 2.

including Craigielea and Linside were playing association matches by the latter half of 1875.⁴⁰³ Additional clubs were also forming in Paisley exclusively to the association code. This can be seen with Paisley K. Y. K. FC and Kelburne FC. Interestingly, the former club was made up of rugby players.⁴⁰⁴ In Ayrshire, new clubs continued to form. The addition of Maybole Carrick, Ayr Eglinton, Dalry FC, the Ladeside Club of Kilbirnie and Beith FC added to the growing strength of the association game in the county.⁴⁰⁵ As alluded to in Chapter 2, the establishment of a national governing body, national cup competition, national football team and unified playing rules were all catalysts in the accelerated growth of the game in Scotland.

For the rugby game, Figure 2.4a from Chapter 2 has already established the impressive reach of rugby football across large areas of the Scottish mainland by the end of 1873. Whilst the geographical boundaries do not appear to have been significantly extended over the following two years, additional towns became home to rugby clubs, including Cupar in Fife and Nairn in Morayshire (both towns had rugby clubs from 1874).⁴⁰⁶

A comparison between Glasgow and Sheffield is of interest for two main reasons. Firstly, as referenced earlier, the Yorkshire city had a notable football scene from an early period, leading one academic to claim that it had “the most important football culture... in the world during the 1850s and 1860s” (Harvey, 2005: p. 93). Whilst it is difficult to accept Harvey’s premise for the 1850s, due to the fact that only two clubs appear to have been established across the entire decade,⁴⁰⁷ the rise of organised football in Sheffield during the 1860s was significant with 41 clubs (in addition to the Sheffield and Collegiate School clubs) having been created between 1860 and 1869.⁴⁰⁸ Moving into the 1870s, the number of clubs continued to increase within the Yorkshire city. With Glasgow experiencing a surge in new clubs in the aftermath of the first official football international match under association rules in November 1872, a comparison with the experience of Sheffield up to the mid-1870s is useful to better contextualise the level of expansion experienced by Glasgow and the wider

⁴⁰³ See, Anonymous (1875) *Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette*, 13 November, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 8 November, p. 6.

⁴⁰⁴ See, Anonymous (1875) *Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Gazette*, 27 March, p. 1, and, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 27 December, p. 3.

⁴⁰⁵ For the Maybole Carrick Club, see, Anonymous (1875) *Ayr Observer*, 19 October, p. 2. For the Ayr Eglinton Club, see, Anonymous (1875) *Ayr Observer*, 17 July, p. 2. For the Dalry Club, see, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 23 November, p. 6. For the Ladeside Club, Kilbirnie, see, Anonymous (1875) *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 24 April, p. 3. For Beith FC, see, Anonymous (1875) *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 9 October, p. 5.

⁴⁰⁶ See, Anonymous (1874) *Fife Herald*, 15 October, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1874) *Nairnshire Telegraph*, 18 February, p. 2.

⁴⁰⁷ Sheffield FC, which was instituted in 1857, was thought to be the only club existing in the city for the 1850s decade. More recently, the British Newspaper Archive digitisation project has helped to establish evidence of a football club attached to the city’s Collegiate School in 1859 (see, Anonymous (1859) *Sheffield Daily News*, 14 May, p. 2).

⁴⁰⁸ All 41 clubs can be found on the Sheffield Home of Football website. See, Wood, S. T. and Stocks, J. (2023) ‘Football Clubs 1857 to 1875’, *Sheffield Home of Football*. Available at: <https://sheffieldhomeoffootball.org/clubs/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

Scottish association game. An analysis of the growth experienced by Glasgow and Sheffield during this period tests the validity of the argument which suggests that the Sheffield football scene remained paramount throughout this period. Sheffield had developed its own specific set of playing rules which was separate from the Football Association's Laws of the Game and the Rugby Football Union's Laws of Football. Indeed, within the Yorkshire city, Sheffield rules,⁴⁰⁹ with its expansive form of offside, which allowed players to spread out across large areas of the playing field, was unquestionably the preferred code.⁴¹⁰ Playing to 'Rugby' or 'London' rules was often resisted, with Sheffield teams only agreeing to adopt either of the rival codes when circumstances dictated.⁴¹¹ While some commentaries refer to similarities between the Sheffield and Football Association codes, there are also indications of differences, beyond the obvious one of offside.⁴¹² The development of national cup competitions and international contests under a uniform set of rules were beneficial towards the advancement of association football in Glasgow and London. The reluctance of Sheffield to fully accept the Football Association's code until 1877 suggests that the game in Yorkshire was still in a position of strength by the end of 1875.

Case study on Glasgow and Sheffield football up to 1875

In order to get a better understanding of the significant growth of football in and around Glasgow it is beneficial to extend the timeframe of the study period of this thesis by two years. This needs to be done because the rapid expansion of clubs only appears to have really started from 1873. By incorporating the years 1874 and 1875 for the study of clubs, a better idea of the level of expansion at such a crucial early stage will be achieved. It is also

⁴⁰⁹ From 1867 until their discontinuation in 1877, the Sheffield rules were also referred to as the Sheffield Association rules.

⁴¹⁰ When referring to the Football Association's three man offside rule in 1873, the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* stated that "this system finds no favour in Sheffield, where they have adopted a very scientific and strategic disposition of their forces over the field" (see, Anonymous (1873) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 17 March, p. 4).

⁴¹¹ Occasionally, Sheffield clubs would play one half Sheffield rules and the other half under the code of the opposing team. This happened with Sheffield FC when the club faced the Royal Engineers in Sheffield in December 1873. Another compromise was to play Sheffield rules when playing at home to clubs from beyond the Sheffield area then play to the code of the opposing team for the return match away from home. This can be seen with Sheffield Norfolk's match against Leeds FC in June 1865 which took place at Royal Park, Leeds and was played "strictly to the rules at Rugby School" as well as with the Sheffield select team which played to Sheffield association rules against Glasgow in 1874 then played under the association football rules (Laws of the Game) for the return match in Glasgow in 1875 (see, Anonymous (1873) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 22 December, p. 4, Anonymous (1865) *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 June, p. 7, Anonymous (1874) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 16 March, p. 4, and, Anonymous (1875) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 March, p. 5).

⁴¹² In the Glasgow v Sheffield match of 1875, the height of the goals was highlighted as being different in both codes of football. For example, *Bell's Life in London* criticised Sheffield's performance due to the lack of a passing game and the lack of long shooting. With respect to the latter tactic the article states that "...under Sheffield rules it may be mentioned that this style of play pays best, for the goal is a foot higher than under the rules of the English and Scottish Association" (see, Anonymous (1875) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 March, p. 5).

useful to be able to benchmark this information against that of another major football city of the period. The reasons for selecting Sheffield have already in part been covered above in the chapter introduction. However, another notable reason why Sheffield is an appropriate candidate is because it is a uniquely well-researched city in terms of the development of organised football.⁴¹³

The comparison between the two footballing cities is not absolute. For example, a notable difference with respect to the development of football clubs in both cities is the fact that Glasgow had a significant representation of association rules and rugby rules amongst its clubs. In Glasgow University FC (mark I), it also includes at least one football club which predates the arrival of the two dominant codes to the city. On the other hand, clubs in Sheffield developed separate rules which were standardised in 1867 and remained the predominant code within the city and across parts of the wider region until 1877. The Glasgow study therefore does two things. Firstly, it provides a general comparison of all football clubs, irrespective of playing rules. Secondly, since the Sheffield game was closer to the association game which was developing in Glasgow, than with the rugby game, a separate and specific comparison is made between the growth of the Sheffield clubs and the growth of Glasgow clubs linked to the association rules.

From the outset, the Glasgow study, aligning with the earlier studies of football clubs in Scotland, has been based around the calendar year rather than across a season. The analysis of football clubs for 1875, as with the analysis of clubs in previous years, is taken fully to the end of December. A major benefit of this is the provision of two full years of additional data and the inclusion of all known clubs which either formed in 1875 or are first referenced as playing games in that year. This aligns with the premise that football clubs are formed in a calendar year rather than within a particular season.⁴¹⁴ A significant challenge has been the difficulty in finding matches involving clubs in and around Glasgow. The local newspapers appear to have been slow to publish football results (for both codes) until much closer to the end of the period. It is known, for example, that the Summertown Club of Govan played 11 external matches during season 1873-74.⁴¹⁵ However, only two of these games appear to

⁴¹³ Aside from the research undertaken in recent years by Martin Westby, the Sheffield Home of Football organisation and Graham Curry (which are covered in this chapter) additional works include a chapter on Sheffield football in Tony Collins' *How Football Began*, Adrian Harvey's *Football, the first hundred years*, Keith Farnsworth's two volume *Sheffield football*, and, dating from 1962, Percy M. Young's *Football in Sheffield*.

⁴¹⁴ Whilst the official starting point of a club's formation can vary between the first recorded meeting (as with Queen's Park FC in 1867) and the first recorded game (as with Celtic FC in 1888), it is common practice that clubs assign themselves with a year of formation rather than a season. For example, with Celtic, it is a matter of fact that the first committee meeting took place in November 1887 while the first game took place in May 1888. It was club's decision to go with the latter event when seeking to mark their year of formation even though they could claim to have existed for most of season 1887-88.

⁴¹⁵ Alcock, C. W. ed. (1874) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 128.

have been recorded in the local press.⁴¹⁶ In addition to this, there are numerous examples of football clubs appearing in newspaper reports in the early months of 1876 which may well have been playing over the winter months of season 1875-76. However, as no record can be found for them existing in the early part of the season, they have been omitted from the study.

Approach for case study on Sheffield football up to 1875

The existing Sheffield study of clubs comprises two main parts. The first part relates to the initial groundbreaking study of Martin Westby which was published in his book, *A History of Sheffield Football, 1857-1889* (Westby, 2017). Westby found a total of 48 clubs in and around Sheffield between 1857 and 1874. It is important to note that Westby's study was not restricted to the existing city boundaries of Sheffield, with, for example, a club from the Derbyshire town of Dronfield being included (Dronfield FC). Westby's decision is understandable as the influence of a city, whether in a sporting sense or with respect to broader economic and social purposes, can often extend beyond its immediate municipal boundaries. Sheffield's football influence certainly went beyond the city limits but Westby appears to have been careful not to overextend the study from that of one which examines the city and surrounding area. In his book, Westby gives reference to the challenges associated with verifying the formation year of many of the earliest clubs. Formation years are often taken from later editions of the *Football Annual* and the scarcity of match reports inevitably meant that a corroborating source could not be found. This can be seen, for example, with the Pye Bank Club. Westby sources their year of formation (1872) from the *Football Annual* of 1879 but cannot find an early record of a match involving the club.⁴¹⁷ The earliest match involving the club that can be found by the author is February 1876.⁴¹⁸ This is an issue which can also be found in the study of Glasgow football.

The second part of the Sheffield study relates to the detailed research provided by the Sheffield Home of Football organisation (SHOF).⁴¹⁹ Building on the work of Westby, researchers connected to this organisation found a significant number of new clubs. In total, research undertaken in 2023 initially uncovered 130 clubs from within the city and surrounding area up to March 1875. This material was published in a mini-series of four

⁴¹⁶ Summertown's defeat to fellow Govan side Union Jack can be found in Anonymous (1874) *Glasgow Herald*, 20 January, p. 7, while their victory over the Belaroma Club can be found in Anonymous (1874) *North British Daily Mail*, 17 March, p. 7.

⁴¹⁷ See, Westby, M. (2017) *A history of Sheffield football, 1857–1889*. England: England's Oldest Football Clubs, p. 153.

⁴¹⁸ See, Anonymous (1876) *Sheffield Independent*, 8 December, 1876, p. 7.

YouTube videos in 2024.⁴²⁰ However, an additional eight clubs were subsequently discovered and a new total of 138 clubs was published alongside Westby's original discovery of 48 clubs on the SHOF website.⁴²¹ The Sheffield study is largely based on this data. There are, however, the following amendments: 1) Two additional clubs can be found for the period within the digital holdings of the British Newspaper Archive (which are not presently recorded on the SHOF website); the aforementioned Collegiate School Club and the Pitsmoor Juniors Club.⁴²² 2) There is evidence pointing to the existence of the Engineers Club in 1861⁴²³ (at the time of writing, the Engineers Club is dated to 1870 in the SHOF website⁴²⁴). The earlier year has therefore been used in this study. Factoring in these minor adjustments, the final figure of 188 clubs (based on the SHOF published tally of 186 clubs as well as the two additional clubs) will be used for the sake of comparison in this thesis.

Following on from the work of Westby, the enlarged study also looked for clubs beyond the city boundaries. Additional clubs were discovered in Dronfield as well as in the villages of Aston to the east of Sheffield's southern districts and Oughtibridge to the north west. Using Sheffield's High Street in the heart of the city centre as a centre point, it can be seen that the distance of the club furthest away can be found in the aforementioned village of Aston which lies approximately seven miles away, as the crow flies. As with the earlier work of Westby, this study was careful not to overextend into the wider region and was also careful to avoid clubs from the large neighbouring town of Rotherham, even though the centre of

⁴²⁰ See, Sheffield Home of Football (2024) *Sheffield, The First City of Football – Part 1*, [Online Video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2MDqha9vFQ> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. Sheffield Home of Football (2024) *Sheffield, The First City of Football – Part 2*, [Online Video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-k_8wYySc4A [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. Sheffield Home of Football (2024) *Sheffield, The First City of Football – Part 3*, [Online Video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubKYm69ncAw> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. Sheffield Home of Football (2024) *Sheffield, The First City of Football – Part 4*, [Online Video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_T5Sdlw90Y [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

⁴²¹ A complete list of the 186 clubs can be found at Wood, S. T. and Stocks, J. (2023) 'Football clubs from 1857 to 1875', *Sheffield Home of Football*. Available at: <https://sheffieldhomeoffootball.org/clubs/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

⁴²² See, Anonymous (1859) *Sheffield Daily News*, 14 May, 1859, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1862) *Sheffield Independent*, 24 November, p. 3.

⁴²³ The Engineers 'Club' played Pitsmoor FC in December 1861 (see, Anonymous (1861) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 December, p. 5). It should also be noted that an early reference can be found to a match involving the Artillery Volunteers (against the Engineers) in 1861 (see, Anonymous (1861) *Sheffield Independent*, 30 November, p. 10). However, whilst the players in this match are referenced as representing their respective 'corps', there is no evidence in the article that the Artillery team formed part of a football club. The SHOF website has the Artillery football club dating from 1873. See, Wood, S. T. and Stocks, J. (2023) 'Football clubs from 1857 to 1875', *Sheffield Home of Football*. Available at: <https://sheffieldhomeoffootball.org/clubs/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. A similar case can be found in Scotland with the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders 'team' and their football match with the Edinburgh University Football Club in 1851 (see, A Spectator (1851) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 February, p. 6). The earliest year where there is evidence of the 93rd Highlanders having a regimental football club is 1873 (see, Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 19 February, p. 6).

⁴²⁴ The list can be found at Wood, S. T. and Stocks, J. (2023) 'Football clubs from 1857 to 1875', *Sheffield Home of Football*. Available at: <https://sheffieldhomeoffootball.org/clubs/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

Rotherham is closer to Sheffield's city centre than the village of Aston. An illustration of the reach of the Sheffield study can be found in Figure 4.1.



Figure 4.1. Sheffield football map detailing outlying areas

One notable challenge, is matching the Glasgow/Sheffield comparison precisely in terms of date. The work undertaken by Westby could not find any clubs in 1875; meanwhile the published research from SHOF only goes up to March 1875. This presents an issue with respect to a like for like study with Glasgow as the data for the latter city, as mentioned earlier, covers the full calendar year. In order to establish a fairer comparison, the author has undertaken to extend the study of the Sheffield clubs up to the end of 1875. Careful attention has been given to remaining within the geographic parameters set by Westby and SHOF. This has resulted in a third iteration of clubs being added to the work of Westby and SHOF. The author has found an additional 22 clubs which are listed in Table 4.1 (see Appendix 8). This group of clubs reaches out as far as the village of Swallownest, beside Aston, and avoids Rotherham and communities lying beyond this town such as the village of Rawmarsh (to the north of Rotherham) where a club, Rawmarsh FC, is noted as becoming a member of the Sheffield Association in 1875.⁴²⁵ This club, like that of Renishaw FC in Rotherham or Penistone FC (from the Yorkshire town bearing the same name) would qualify for a feature within a wider regional study but not within a city based study.

Approach for case study on Glasgow football up to 1875

The study on Glasgow football, in a similar way to that of Sheffield, has attempted to restrict the reach of involved clubs to within a rational distance from the centre of Glasgow. Sheffield and Glasgow contrasted as urban centres during this period in respect of population size, geographical scope and industrial output, to the size and character of their respective conurbations. However, it is important that each study follows a similar

⁴²⁵ See, Anonymous (1875) *Athletic News*, 16 October, p. 6.

methodology in determining clubs in each city's radius. An illustration of the reach of the Glasgow study can be found in Figure 4.2.

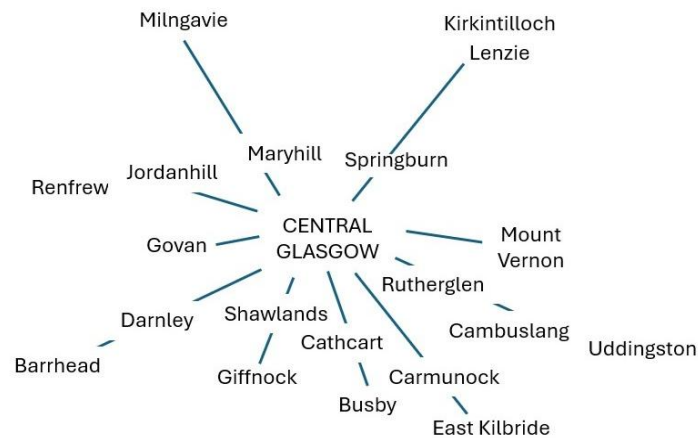


Figure 4.2. Glasgow football map detailing outlying areas

In a similar way to that of Sheffield, the High Street (where it joins Glasgow Cross) in the heart of Glasgow's city centre has been used to measure the distance, as the crow flies, out to the locations of communities connected to the city that hosted football clubs. The furthest away communities within the Glasgow study are the small town of Barrhead in Renfrewshire and the agricultural village of East Kilbride in Lanarkshire. The first named community had football clubs in existence from 1874. The local railway station which provided a direct service into Glasgow can be found to be just inside the seven-mile limit, as the crow flies, from Glasgow's High Street. East Kilbride village, situated beside the local train station is also located just inside the seven-mile distance. The train service serving East Kilbride, at the time of the local clubs' formation in 1871, passed through Busby and Giffnock before terminating at Glasgow's Southside station. Further west, the large town of Paisley which had several clubs playing to association and rugby rules (and in some cases playing to both codes) sits right on the edge of the seven-mile distance from Glasgow's High Street but has been discounted on the grounds that it is a suitably large and distinctive urban centre, like that of Rotherham within the Sheffield study.

Looking beyond the seven-mile distance, numerous communities can be found to surround Glasgow. Many of these urban settlements had their own association or rugby football clubs by 1875. Indeed, it can be seen that within the formative years of the association game in Glasgow, Queen's Park FC ventured out into Lanarkshire to play the Hamilton Gymnasium and Airdrie clubs as well as East Kilbride FC. The first and second named communities formed part of a wider ring of villages and towns that surrounded the western, southern and eastern approaches into Glasgow. Other neighbouring communities with clubs include

Linwood, Neilston, Blantyre, Drumpellier and Coatbridge.⁴²⁶ Furthermore, the excellent train links enabled visits to villages and towns in the Vale of Leven district and Ayrshire.⁴²⁷ Not to be outdone, Glasgow's rugby football clubs regularly travelled eastwards to Edinburgh for matches⁴²⁸ and westwards out to Paisley, Greenock and Helensburgh.⁴²⁹ As will be seen later in this chapter, all of these communities had rail links into the city. They also hosted clubs which regularly played against Glasgow clubs. However, for the purpose of matching up with the Sheffield study, the author has restricted the reach of the Glasgow football map to the parameters established by Westby and SHOF. A future area of research, beyond the scope of this thesis, will be to map out the large collection of clubs that existed across the west of Scotland region as well as analysing the national picture by mapping out the spread of the association game as it pushed out into other parts of Scotland. It is known, for example, that by the end of 1875 the association game could be found as far afield as Dundee.⁴³⁰

A final point relates to the exclusion of some football combinations from within the Glasgow study of football clubs. Some examples are provided. The first reference relates to a football match played between 'Whistle' and 'Bell' in April 1875.⁴³¹ This appears to have been arranged as a one-off match and without any additional information to draw upon they have

⁴²⁶ Linwood FC (see, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 29 March, p. 2). Glenkilloch FC, Neilston (see, Dick, W. ed. (1877) *Scottish football annual, 1877-78*. Glasgow: Mackay & Kirkwood, p. 105). Thornhill FC, Blantyre (see, Dick, W. ed. (1876) *Scottish football annual, 1876-77*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 68). Drumpellier FC (see, Anonymous (1874) *Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser*, 31 October, p. 3). Coatbridge FC (see, Anonymous (1875) *Glasgow Herald*, 26 October, p. 7).

⁴²⁷ Glasgow side Callander FC travelled through to Alexandria on 9 August, 1873 to play Vale of Leven while Queen's Park headed into Ayrshire on 6 December, 1873 to face Kilmarnock FC (see, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 11 August, p. 5, and, Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 8 December, p. 6).

⁴²⁸ By way of example, the West of Scotland Club travelled through to Edinburgh on 25 November, 1867 to play Merchistonians while the Glasgow Academical Club headed east on 11 December, 1869 to face Edinburgh side Craigmount FC (see, Anonymous (1867) *Glasgow Herald*, 2 December, p. 4, and, Anonymous (1869) *Scotsman*, 13 December, p. 7).

⁴²⁹ The Southern Club visited Paisley on 25 October, 1873 to play Paisley FC, while Partickhill FC travelled to Greenock on 20 December, 1873 to face Greenock FC and Crosshill FC headed to Helensburgh to play local side Helensburgh FC on 18 November, 1871 (see, Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 27 October, p. 7, Anonymous (1873) *Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette*, 22 December, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1871) *Glasgow Herald*, 21 November, p. 5).

⁴³⁰ St Clement's Football Club of Dundee is recorded as being formed in 1875 in the 1877-78 *Scottish Football Annual* (see, Dick, W. ed. (1877) *Scottish football annual, 1877-78*. Glasgow: Mackay & Kirkwood, p. 109). Their first recorded game was against the Alexandra Athletic Club of Glasgow at Baxter Park, Dundee on 1 January, 1876. Although the article covering the game makes reference to the "Dundee Association Club", in a later match against the second eleven of Glasgow's Queen's Park FC (played on 12 February, 1876), St Clement's FC is referenced by name and is acknowledged as being the local side that played in the original game. For more information, see, Anonymous (1876) *Glasgow Herald*, 3 January, p. 6, and, Anonymous (1876) *Dundee Courier*, 14 February, p. 3.

⁴³¹ See, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 12 April, p. 6.

not been included in the study.⁴³² The next two examples relate to football activity connected to factories. Whilst the personnel employed in many factories were actively involved in factory clubs, the Smith & Wellstood Factory of Glasgow has been excluded as it relied upon a scratch team made up of employees who were members of external football clubs for their annual match with Grasshoppers FC of Bonnybridge.⁴³³ In addition, a match involving department teams from the company Neilson & Co. has been discounted as it does not appear to involve clubs, but rather was a match between factory departments.⁴³⁴

Section 2 – Comparisons between Sheffield and Glasgow

Presentation and analysis of the data

The full list of clubs relating to the Glasgow study can be found in the author's *Scottish Football Origins* website.⁴³⁵ The number of clubs that have been unearthed within the Glasgow study amounts to 254. The largest group of clubs were those linked to association rules; a total of 227 clubs can be found within the geographical limits of the study. Of this number, nine clubs played to both of the dominant codes. The rugby game also benefited from these dual code clubs; whilst 21 clubs played exclusively to rugby rules, the number increases to 30 when these additional clubs are added. Finally, there is a much smaller grouping of just six clubs who either played to their own rules or whose rules are currently unknown. This includes the original Glasgow University Football Club which can be dated to 1851. The overall figure of 254 compares with the Sheffield study which to date has unearthed 210 clubs. A comparison of football clubs from both studies can be seen in Figure 4.3. This table is based on a simple count of clubs in and around both cities up to the end of 1875. For both studies, some of the clubs may have been short lived and of course it is impossible to know how comprehensive both lists are. Additional clubs may be added to the count for either study as more newspapers are digitised and become accessible for research.

An obvious difference between the two football centres relates to the progression of the clubs over the span of the timeframe. Glasgow, for example, has a longer timeline with respect to the existence of football clubs due to the fact that the original university football

⁴³² It has to be said that the unusualness of a name (as it may appear from a present day perspective) should not, on its own, preclude inclusion. This can be seen, for example, with a team called 'Rainbow' which (like that of Whistle and Bell) is recorded playing in a match in 1875. However, a wider search reveals that Rainbow was a club from Thornliebank which was still playing matches in 1876 and 1877. See, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 12 April, p. 6, Anonymous (1876) *North British Daily Mail*, 27 March, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1877) *North British Daily Mail*, 4 April, p. 6.

⁴³³ Anonymous (1875) *Falkirk Herald*, 21 October, p. 2.

⁴³⁴ Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 30 November, p. 7.

⁴³⁵ See, McBrearty, R. (2026) 'Glasgow Football Study', *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2026/01/05/glasgow-football-study/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

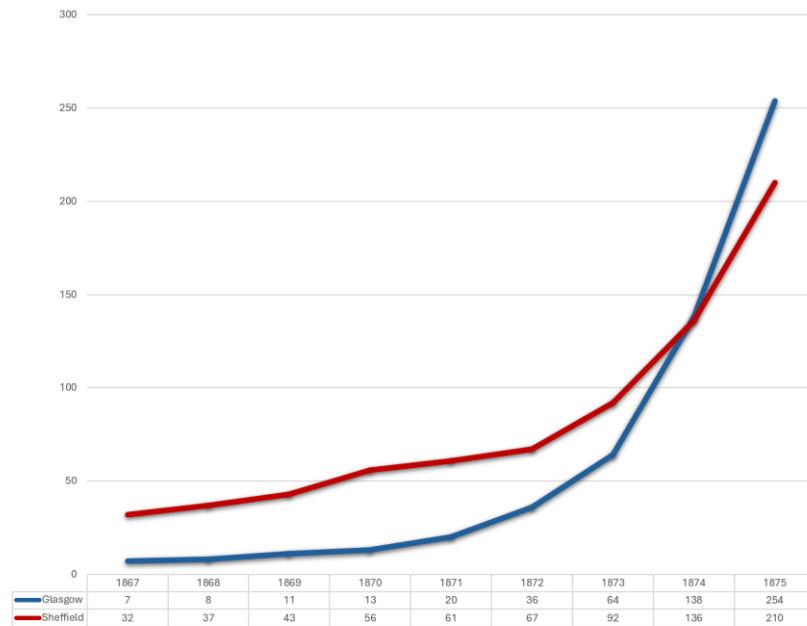


Figure 4.3: Tally of clubs recorded in and around Glasgow (irrespective of playing code), compared with tally of clubs recorded in and around Sheffield, 1867–1875

club already existed as early as 1851. However, at present only two additional clubs, Windsor FC and Brownfield FC, have been found for the 1850s period. The Paisley Football and Shinty Club (1855) is not counted as it falls outside of this immediate mapping project. A large number of the association clubs came relatively late on within the timeframe of the study and this adds to the argument which supports a key finding of this thesis of a surge or explosion in activity leading on from the staging of the first official international football match under association rules in November 1872.

The Sheffield game, although initially starting off slowly in the aftermath of the formation of the Sheffield Club in 1857 (with just two additional clubs being recorded by 1860) starts to pick up in 1861 with six clubs being formed in that year. By the end of the decade a tally of 43 clubs could be counted. This compares with 11 clubs being recorded up to 1869 within the Glasgow study with just three of those (Queen's Park FC, Drummond FC and Thistle FC) being linked to the emerging association game. At the other end of the period, whilst Sheffield continues to see strong growth in terms of the number of clubs, Glasgow experiences a significant surge, particularly for the association game. This can be seen with Figure 4.4 which removes the clubs from the Glasgow study who either played exclusively to the rugby code, played to their own rules, or whose rules are currently not known. This leaves 227 clubs linked to the association code within the Glasgow study which can be compared with the 210 Sheffield clubs. From viewing this graph, the inclusion of the year 1875 is crucial in shaping the findings of this chapter, since it is when Glasgow's count of clubs linked to association rules overtook Sheffield.

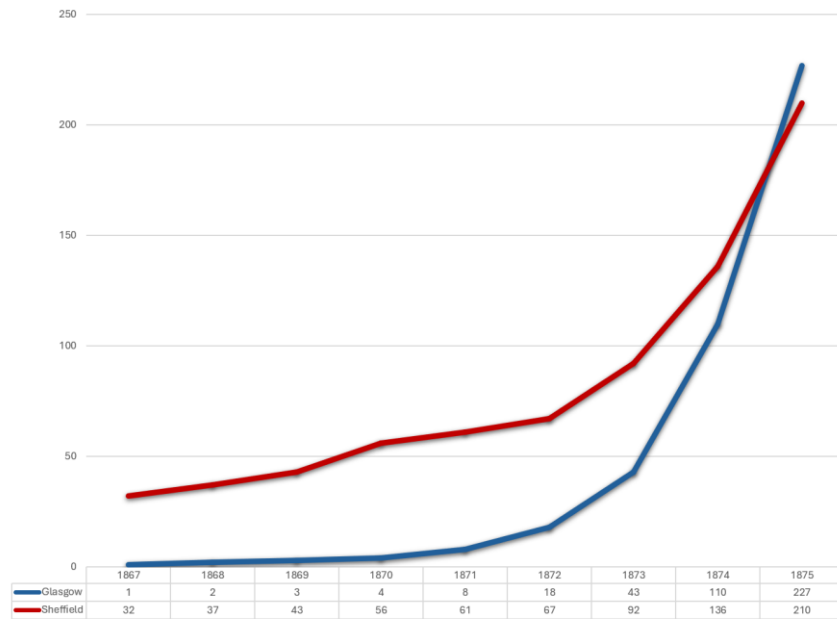


Figure 4.4: Tally of clubs recorded in and around Glasgow (linked to association football), compared with tally of clubs recorded in and around Sheffield, 1867–1875

Of particular significance is the experience of both cities over the course of the last three years of this era (1873–1875). Figure 4.5 highlights the surge in club formation. Overall, both cities experienced growth. In 1873 Sheffield and Glasgow were equal in terms of the number of new clubs forming. The following year the overall growth in the number of new clubs had swung in favour of Glasgow by a margin of 23 and in 1875 the gap had significantly increased to 43. It has to be said though, that the overall numbers for Sheffield demonstrate long-term sustained growth. This points to a buoyant sporting environment in the city and its

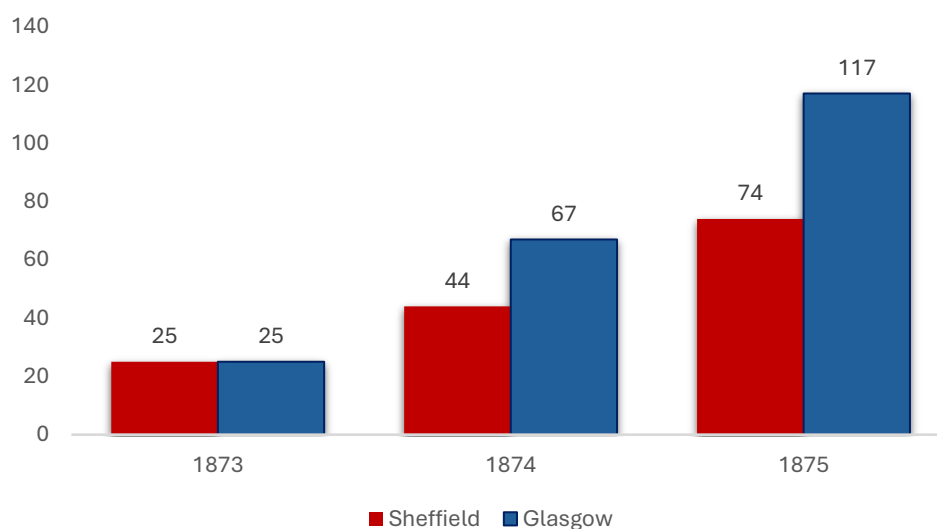


Figure 4.5: Comparison of new association football clubs formed in Glasgow and surrounding area with that of new football clubs in Sheffield and surrounding area, 1873–1875

immediate surrounding area. Indeed, for Sheffield the total of 74 clubs which formed in 1875 is notable when placed beside the 136 clubs which appear to have been established in the 18 year period running from 1857 to 1874. The 1875 figure represents an impressive growth of 54 percent when compared with the accumulated total from the previous 18 years. Yet, the surge in 1875 is eclipsed by Glasgow which had 117 additional clubs playing to the association code in that year compared with the 110 clubs which can be traced to the eight-year period between 1867 and 1874. This represents a percentage increase of 106. These figures confirm the significant rise of the association game in Glasgow and its environs in the aftermath of the first official international match of November 1872. Additionally, they demonstrate that a sizeable increase in club numbers was not unique to Glasgow. A large increase was clearly being experienced in and around the Yorkshire city. Indeed, it could even be said that the experience of both cities, although seismic in scale, was indicative of a wider trend which would see a notable increase in clubs in other parts of the UK.⁴³⁶

Section 3 – Contextualising the development of Glasgow’s football subculture

Introduction

The development of a major football subculture in Glasgow by the mid-1870s can be attributed to a range of factors beyond the obvious appeal of the sport itself. This section and the following one will examine some of the principal reasons, sporting and non-sporting, which help to explain why Glasgow emerged as the UK’s foremost centre for association football during the 1870s. An important starting point will be to investigate aspects of the broader socio-economic, cultural and political characteristics of the city. Having done this, a closer analysis will be undertaken as to how these traits combined to foster and support the rapid growth of association football clubs. In addition, a formal definition of the notion of a football subculture will be defined and explored.

Glasgow: characteristics and cultural associations

Glasgow, across the entirety of the nineteenth century, experienced significant and sustained growth; the relevant population statistics closest to the starting point and end point of the period under investigation, show a dramatic increase from 147,043 in 1821 to 459,081 by 1871.⁴³⁷ However, the expansion extended beyond mere demography. Morris, for example, argues that “Glasgow’s growth must be seen in terms of space as well as population and wealth” (Morris, 1990: p. 75). Industrial expansion was a major factor. Atherton, for example, cites “the early supremacy of textiles and associated chemical

⁴³⁶ Certainly Matthew Taylor argues that “from the mid-1870s football’s popularity in Britain grew rapidly”. See, Taylor, M. (2008) *The association game: a history of British football*. Abingdon: Routledge, p. 39.

⁴³⁷ The statistics for 1821 and 1871 relate to the respective census returns for the municipal city of Glasgow. See, Nicol, J. (1891) *Economic statistics of the city of Glasgow, 1885-1891*. Glasgow: James Macelhose & Sons., p. 20.

manufactures, through metallurgy, engineering and shipbuilding” which stimulated long-term “industrial expansion” and “revolutionised the traditional layout of Glasgow which had been centred for centuries on Glasgow Cross” (Atherton, 1991: p. 19). In some respects the experience of Glasgow could be found in major urban centres elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Morris, for example, argues in a general sense, that the “speed and fundamental change” of “commercial and industrial organisation” in British cities “upset many established social relationships and cast doubt upon the appropriateness of established values and identities”. He goes on to state that the growth of cities “...allowed social identities to develop around the diversity of the town. These identities often became the basis of formal and informal organization” (Morris, 1986: p. 2).

When it comes to an examination of urban history between 1830 and 1914, Harvie and Walker make some valid points when analysing the subject of ‘community and culture’. For example, they argue that urban history studies “benefit from the idea of the city as a ‘process’ rather than as merely a ‘site’” (Harvey and Walker, 1990: p. 341). In addition, they recognise the period (1830-1914) as a time of unprecedented mobility for a significant proportion of Scotland’s population. In turn, they claim that the significant “degree of mobility” had “important implications for popular culture and the nature of ‘community’ in the Scotland of our period”. These implications are defined as an increase in “the level of cultural interaction between the city and the small town, between urban and rural Scotland within the cities themselves” (Harvie and Walker, 1990: pp. 342-343). These cultural interactions can certainly be found through the association game; Queen’s Park FC, for example, left their local neighbourhood on the southern edge of Glasgow to visit the agricultural village of East Kilbride to play against the local club in 1872. Beyond the obvious sporting connection which linked the two groups of men, another connection was the volunteer movement; prominent members of the East Kilbride Club were also members of the 103rd Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers.⁴³⁸ Indeed, the meeting to form the club in 1871 was called by Major Graham of Limekilns who was the commanding officer within the local volunteer unit. Members of the Queen’s Park Club also had connections to the volunteer movement; leading players Harry McNeil, Joseph Taylor, and William McKinnon were all members of the 3rd Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers Corps⁴³⁹ which, of course, would form its own football club in 1872.

Although the origins of the volunteer movement can be traced back to the late eighteenth century, it was reestablished in 1859 in the wake of a threat of invasion from France.⁴⁴⁰ By

⁴³⁸ The author’s 2021 paper on football in Glasgow provides evidence of the direct connections between East Kilbride FC and the 103rd Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers. See, McBrearty, R. (2021) ‘Glasgow before the explosion: the role of migration and immigration in the development of football sub cultures in the city prior to 1873’, *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2021/08/26/glasgow-before-the-explosion-the-role-of-migration-and-immigration-in-the-development-of-football-cultures-in-the-city-prior-to-1873/> [Accessed: February 4, 2026].

⁴³⁹ See, Anonymous (1903) *Scottish Referee*, 5 January, p. 2.

⁴⁴⁰ For more information see, Campbell, S. (2011) ‘Defence and defensibility: The material culture of the volunteer movement in Scotland, 1794-1815,’ *Review of Scottish Culture*, 23, pp. 72–93, and, Grierson, J. M. (1909) *Records of the Scottish volunteer force, 1859-1908*. Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons.

the time of the early 1870s, the volunteers were a notable feature of Glasgow's popular culture. Fraser and Nenadic are both clear about the middle-class domination of the leadership of these military units (Fraser, 1990: p. 246, Nenadic, 1996: p. 290) although Fraser concedes that the movement "brought together different social classes in devotion to a single cause" (Fraser, 1990: p. 247). According to Nenadic, the volunteer movement provides "an especially good illustration of the importance of work in the creation of male social networks" (Nenadic, 1996: p. 289). Indeed, the initial development of the local volunteer corps centred around the specialisms of distinctive trades and professions. For instance, within the volunteer movement, officers "associated with iron-making and engineering firms" formed companies quite distinct from those "engaged in commercial and professional occupations", who in turn, were separate from "officers involved in the grocery and food trades" (Nenadic, 1996, pp. 290-291).

The 3rd Lanark RV Club (Third Lanark AC 1872-1967) was the most famous and successful of the Glasgow football clubs linked to military organisations. However, the known list of clubs for the Glasgow area up to 1875 includes the 1st Lanark RV Club (Burnbank), the 4th Renfrew RV Club (Pollok), the 10th Dumbarton RV Club (Kirkintilloch), the 21st Fusiliers Club (Maryhill), the 23rd Renfrew RV Club (Cathcart) and, from 1874, the 105th Lanark RV Club (who established their own association club).⁴⁴¹ Added to this, the 5th Lanark Rifle Volunteers had a football club from as early as December 1872 although their playing rules are currently unknown.⁴⁴² The volunteer movement was in effect a large network reaching out across Glasgow and beyond, which involved thousands of men. Fraser's view is that above and beyond the physical exertion of the drills, camps and shooting contests, the purpose of the volunteers "was about social duty, social status and social contracts" (Fraser, 1990: p. 247). The volunteer movement also, in part, exhibited another major characteristic of the city; migration. As early as 1861 individual kilted highland companies could be found within the 4th Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteer Corps. However, in 1868 a dedicated kilted highland corps, the 105th Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers, was formed. This volunteer unit, comprising 12 companies, was also known as the 'Glasgow Highlanders'.

Migration was a major aspect of Glasgow's growth as a city and it is therefore no surprise that it would be associated with organisations connected to leisure, including the volunteer regiments and football clubs. When introducing the notion of 'Place-culture', Harvie and Walker argue that whilst, "mass urbanisation was a recent phenomenon, many carried over into their new urban domicile loyalties and habits associated with their earlier Place". These examples of "non-urbanism" could be seen through the "formation of regional societies, clan societies, and former pupils' groups, or the tendency of this or that church to be linked with a region external to the urban area" (Harvie and Walker, 1990: p. 342). The author's study of Glasgow's migrant societies between 1850 and 1872 unearthed 33 separate

⁴⁴¹ For references to each of these clubs visit, McBrearty, R. (2026) 'Glasgow Football Study', *Scottish Football Origins*. Available at: <https://scottishfootballorigins.org/2026/01/05/glasgow-football-study/> [Accessed: February 4, 2026].

⁴⁴² See, Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 21 December, p. 1.

organisations representing different areas of Scotland (McBrearty, 2021). As well as the two large but more generalised groups (Glasgow Celtic Society and Glasgow Highland Society) a tranche of district groups (covering areas such as ‘Dumfriesshire’, ‘Lothians’ and ‘Caithness-shire’) existed, as well as an additional set of migrant societies which represented specific towns (like ‘Callander’ and ‘Inverness’). This collection of Glasgow migrant societies, in a geographic sense, represented most areas of Scotland. With a large and diverse migrant population, it is perhaps no surprise that Place-culture and Identity-culture could already be found within the city’s emerging association game of the late 1860s and would continue long after 1875; from the late 1860s to the 1890s, clubs like Drummond FC (Perthshire), Callander FC, Celtic FC, Duntocher Harp FC and Glasgow Perthshire FC represented migrant communities based in the city.⁴⁴³

The unprecedented rise in population inevitably resulted in serious overcrowding within the city’s historic centre. As a result, Glasgow would be ravaged by cholera epidemics in 1848 and 1854. These major issues demanded direct intervention from the civic leadership in an attempt to improve the health of the general population. Arguably two of the biggest achievements of the burgh authorities were the opening of the Loch Katrine reservoir in 1859 (which piped fresh water supplies into the city) and the institution of the Glasgow Improvement Trust in 1866 (which replaced slum housing with better quality tenement accommodation). Another important achievement of civic Glasgow was the purchase and development of land in different parts of the expanding city for municipal parks. Maver indeed argues that,

...councillors were anxious to halt the deleterious impact of industrialization, and restore a sense of social equilibrium to the community. Accordingly, the health-giving qualities of parks and open spaces came to represent a declaration of civic intent, and served as a means of reinforcing the self-promoted image of councillors as custodians of community well-being (Maver, 1998: p. 346)

As the city expanded, the public parks would provide much needed space for recreation and a section of this chapter will examine the influence of two of the main public parks, the historic Glasgow Green and the more modern Queen’s Park, in providing much needed environments for organised sporting activity.

As this chapter will illustrate, notions of identity and community in and around Scotland’s largest city could be found within the emerging association game at street and local neighbourhood level. The links between football clubs and local streets and districts in and around Glasgow will be covered in some detail later in this chapter but the notion of local pride in community appears to have been widespread, judging by the numbers. It could also be found in a more elevated position at burgh level, with the staging of the fourth annual festival of Govan Football Club in 1878. The event was actively supported by “ex-Bailies Marr and Hutcheson” who shared a platform with Peter Reid, the club’s honorary president, as well as several leading lights from Glasgow’s

⁴⁴³ Glasgow Perthshire and Duntocher Harp appear as opponents in 1892 (see, Anonymous (1892) *Glasgow Evening Post*, 2 December, p. 6.

association football scene. Reid was manager of the Govan Dye Works. The club, separately, placed an advertisement in the *Scottish Football Annual* which stressed the success of the club committee in securing a “Ground in the centre of the Burgh, which has been improved and put in capital order”.⁴⁴⁴ Likewise, other clubs directly connected with local civic leaders, politicians and members of the landed classes through patronage. As briefly touched upon in Chapter 3, the Alexandra Athletic Club secured the patronage of Robert Boyle, the 6th Earl of Glasgow. Other patrons included the Radical MP Robert Dalglish and the influential ‘sporting’ landowner, Colonel Buchanan of Drumpellier. Another example was the Southern Football Club which, on being formed in 1872, secured the patronage of Henry Austin Bruce, a senior Liberal Party politician who was the MP for Renfrewshire. As Home Secretary between 1868 and 1873, Bruce was one of Britain’s most powerful politicians.⁴⁴⁵

Regarding football’s popularity as a recreation, a final, though less dominant area of cultural connectivity was the temperance movement, which had a significant presence in Glasgow. Maver indeed argues that “Glasgow proved to be fertile ground for spreading the teetotal gospel”, in part due to the spirit shops being “too glaring a presence within the community” and in part because “the drinks trade was not sufficiently well organised to counter the temperance onslaught” (Maver, 1996: p. 459). Whilst the temperance movement was popular within Glasgow’s middle-class social strata, Knox argues that from “the Chartist period onwards, working-class political leaders were linked to temperance societies” (Knox, 1990: p. 152). With such strong backing within the city it is perhaps little surprise that “anti-drink was part of a strategy of moral improvement” (Knox, 1990: p. 153). Fraser argues that “social control” aimed at the working class out of a fear of “unregulated popular pursuits” meant that “social reform groups were at the forefront of providing alternative leisure activities” (Fraser, 1990: p. 251). As has been mentioned in Chapter 2, temperance organisations like the Glasgow Abstainer’s Union were keen to promote healthy outdoor recreation. Popular outdoor sports including football were also important when planning summer excursions. For instance, an advert placed in the *Glasgow Herald* by the Glasgow Abstainers’ Union in 1863 advertising an excursion to Fereneze Braes, near Barrhead, conveyed the added incentive that “Foot-Balls and Hand-Balls will be provided”.⁴⁴⁶

A notable example of football activity linked to the temperance movement can be found in the excursion of the Gorbals Juvenile Abstainers to the Barskimming estate in Ayrshire in 1852.⁴⁴⁷ An estimated 1,500 children were conveyed to the destination in an operation that

⁴⁴⁴ See, Dick, W. ed. (1878) *Scottish football annual, 1878-79*. Glasgow: W. Weatherstone and Son, p. 114.

⁴⁴⁵ Robert Dalglish was a Glasgow MP from 1857 to 1874. See, UK Parliament (2026) *Historic Hansard*. Available at: <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/people/mr-robert-dalglish/index.html> [Accessed: 24 August, 2026]. Henry Austin Bruce was MP for Renfrewshire from 1869 to 1873. See, Cragoe, M. (2023) ‘Bruce, Henry Austin, first Baron Aberdare (1815-1895), politician’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available at: <https://www-oxforddnb-com.ezproxy-s1.stir.ac.uk/display/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-3732> [Accessed: 24 August, 2026].

⁴⁴⁶ Anonymous (1863) *Glasgow Herald*, 25 July, p. 8.

⁴⁴⁷ Anonymous (1852) *North British Daily Mail*, 7 June, p. 2.

required two trains and a total of 37 carriages. “Football and other exhilarating sports” are mentioned as part of the activities laid out on the estate lawn. Although specific details are not given with respect to the games, the complexity of the planning that would have been required to successfully manage such a large scale excursion suggests that the provision of sports would have also been carefully planned and set out. The operational scale of the excursion is certainly akin to the undertaking planned by the British League of Juvenile Abstainers to Hopetoun House in 1852.⁴⁴⁸ The complexity of these large-scale multi-sport events is also demonstrated in the Dundee Band of Hope excursion to Lord Kinnaird’s Rossie Priory estate in 1859.⁴⁴⁹ It is highly unlikely, therefore, in the case of the excursion to Barskimming, that a large number of urban youths would have been marshalled to a country estate and allowed to participate in an unruly mob football event.

Within the emerging association game in Glasgow, some links to the temperance movement are circumstantial, such as the meeting which instituted the Scottish Football Association being held in a temperance hotel in March 1873.⁴⁵⁰ Other links are anecdotal, including the evidence relating to the birth of Queen’s Park FC in 1867. A traditional account of the formation of the club relates to the founders taking part in a football game with local members of the Young Men’s Christian Association (Robinson, 1920: p. 36). The YMCA were actively involved in the temperance movement.⁴⁵¹

However, the influence of the anti-drink crusade should not be exaggerated. Certainly, if the following account from December 1875 is anything to go by, then the temperance movement had a limited impact on football club members within the association game,

There is scarcely a club of any standing which has not its rendezvous, generally some public-house which they patronise, and where after the game is over its members meet and discuss that afternoon’s match. The manner in which the evening is spent amidst song and sentiment, flavoured with drink and tobacco smoke, may be guessed, but the ruinous results can never be fully known.⁴⁵²

Football, therefore, was not monopolised by any one group or movement and enjoyed a much broader appeal. Whether it be drill meetings at the volunteer hall or meetings of a different kind at the public house, it is clear that young male Glaswegians were well

⁴⁴⁸ For more on this see Chapter 1.

⁴⁴⁹ Descriptions of the numerous activities laid on, which include various types of swings, rope ladders, jumping bars, somersault ropes, climbing poles and see-saws, include reference to “numerous groups far and near” playing at football and cricket. See, Anonymous (1859) *Dundee People’s Journal*, 3 September, p. 3.

⁴⁵⁰ See, Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 17 March, p. 2.

⁴⁵¹ The YMCA’s links to the temperance movement complemented their broader commitment towards promoting physical activity. The connection can, for example, be found in lectures hosted by the organisation; in 1862 in his lecture to the Glasgow Young Men’s Christian Association, Rev. William Landels of London stated that “Another matter that was necessary for the proper training of the body was temperance in drink”. See, Anonymous (1862) *Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser*, 25 October, p. 2.

⁴⁵² See, A Football Player (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 22 December, p. 4.

connected with their peers and the rapid rise of association football would benefit from these existing cultural associations. The outcome was a dramatic increase in the number of football clubs across the city leading to the formation of a football subculture within a remarkably short space of time. The next section breaks new ground by providing for the first time a definition for informal and formal football subcultures.

Defining a ‘football subculture’

The literature review identified the need for a definition of ‘football subculture’. For the purpose of this analysis (with respect to identifying informal football subcultures), the author has settled upon a starting point of ten or more clubs occurring as a cluster within the geographical proximity of a city or district. Moreover, the relevant clubs should be connected to each other through playing games, based upon loosely connected, if not identical, playing rules. Based on the existing research it can be argued that an informal subculture was in place in Sheffield by 1862 with a notable tally of 19 clubs recorded in the city, which if not playing to the same rules, appear to have been able to find compromise when playing against each other.⁴⁵³ In global terms, this position is only preceded by Melbourne where as early as 1860, at least 13 clubs had formed in the city.⁴⁵⁴ A common set of playing rules was also framed in that year.⁴⁵⁵ Indeed, the growing prominence of the football scene in Melbourne is evident the following year with the institution of the Caledonian Challenge Cup (the earliest known challenge cup competition for football clubs of any code).⁴⁵⁶ If the respective positions of Melbourne in 1860 and Sheffield in 1862 mark the establishment of informal football subcultures, then the evidence would suggest that

⁴⁵³ It would be wrong to assume that there was uniformity in playing rules in Sheffield football prior to 1867. The early clubs had their own rules and a degree of compromise was needed when clubs played each other, such as when Sheffield FC played Hallam in 1861 (see, Anonymous (1861) *Nottingham Journal*, 31 December, p. 4). Excerpts from the Sheffield Club’s notebook of match reports, 22 February, 1863 – 16 January, 1866 (quoted in the Sotheby’s auction catalogue) note changes made to rules which were necessary when playing other teams. For example, the match against “Garrison” on 9 May, 1863 “allowed striking and throwing the ball” while the match against the Norton Club was “Played... to the old rules”. See, Sotheby’s (2011) *Lot 10, Sheffield Football Club*. Available at: <https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2011/english-literature-history-childrens-books-illustrations-l11404/lot.10.html> [Accessed: February 4, 2026].

⁴⁵⁴ The 13 Melbourne based clubs (1858–1860) include the Church of England Grammar School Club, Brighton Club, Coast Club and the Emerald Hill and Prahan Club (for more information see, Anonymous (1858) *Melbourne Argus*, 17 August, p. 5, Anonymous (1859) *Melbourne Argus*, 8 June, p. 8, Anonymous (1859) *Bell’s Life in Victoria and Sporting Chronicle*, 25 June, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1859) *Bell’s Life in Victoria and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 August, p. 4).

⁴⁵⁵ The following nine clubs met to revise the playing rules in 1860; Melbourne, St Kilda, South Yarra, Richmond, Scotch College, University, Williamstown, Collingwood and Boroondara (see, Anonymous (1860) *Melbourne Argus*, 29 May, p. 5).

⁴⁵⁶ For an early record of the Caledonian Challenge Cup, see, Anonymous (1861) *Melbourne Argus*, 12 December, p. 8.

Glasgow had attained this position towards the end of 1872 (with an overall tally of 18 clubs coalescing around the association code through the influence of Queen's Park FC).⁴⁵⁷

A direct comparison between Glasgow and Sheffield reveals four phases of development which, when completed, resulted in the establishment of a more formalised collective of clubs under the auspices of a governing body. For Sheffield the progression took around five years, running from 1862 to 1867. For Glasgow, the change was quicker, spanning just a year (1872-1873). The four stages were as follows: 1) The point at which a sufficient number of clubs were established within the city to constitute an informal subculture. As already mentioned, 1862 appears to be a relevant year for Sheffield with 1872 being an appropriate year for Glasgow. 2) The next level of development was the commencement of representative games. This happens with Sheffield in 1866 when a game is arranged against London.⁴⁵⁸ In Glasgow, this milestone is reached with the first official international match towards the end of 1872. 3) The point at which the establishment of a ruling body is required⁴⁵⁹ (formed out of a necessity to provide administrative support, ensure the uniformity of playing rules and provide a degree of governance for the clubs). 4) To a lesser extent,⁴⁶⁰ the establishment of a multi-club competition which indicated an added level of development.⁴⁶¹ In 1867, Sheffield could claim to have a governing body for football while the city hosted a cup tournament (the Youdan Cup). From the latest research, the Sheffield area had a general club count of 32 (1857–1867),⁴⁶² while the newly formed Sheffield Association could claim to have 14 member clubs.⁴⁶³ Glasgow had achieved a similar position by 1873 with the formation of the Scottish Football Association and Scottish Cup competition. From out of a general club count of 42 (1867–1873), the new association had

⁴⁵⁷ The tally of clubs for Sheffield, Melbourne and Glasgow all fall below 10 if the count for the previous year is used. Sheffield (1861) and Melbourne (1859) have a count of nine clubs, while Glasgow (1871) has a count of eight.

⁴⁵⁸ While the London side was made up of players from different clubs, the Sheffield players all came from Sheffield FC. This has some parallels with the selection of the Scotland national team of 1872. As has already been mentioned, all 11 players were members of the Queen's Park Club.

⁴⁵⁹ While the Scottish FA had overall responsibility for the national game, it took control of the Glasgow select team up until the creation of the Glasgow FA in 1883.

⁴⁶⁰ The creation of multi-club tournaments, in their own right, cannot be considered as an essential form of measurement when it comes to the early development of football subcultures as such competitions were rare within the rugby game. Tony Collins does argue, however, that the reluctance of the Rugby Football Union to institute a national cup competition "...was a decision that would play no small part in rugby's reversal of fortune". See, Curry, T. (2015) *How football began: A global history of how the world's football codes were born*. London: Routledge, p. 39.

⁴⁶¹ While the Scottish Cup was established as a national competition, it was dominated in the early years (in terms of the number of participating clubs) by Glasgow and the west of Scotland.

⁴⁶² As with Glasgow, the Sheffield club count, in itself, does not tell us how many clubs were actually operating in a given year (some may indeed have ceased to exist) but is an indicator of general development.

⁴⁶³ A count of member clubs is useful in gauging the relative strength of governing bodies but they do not provide a definitive indication as to the number of clubs within a city / district. Some clubs opted against affiliating with a governing authority while others were refused admission. The membership figure for the Sheffield Association is taken from Anonymous (1867) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 March, p. 9.

16 member clubs registered to play in the Scottish Cup, 12 of which fell within the Glasgow area.⁴⁶⁴ While there are some similarities in the progression of both cities towards a formalised football subculture, one notable difference is the timeframe; Sheffield is earlier in establishing both the informal and formal subcultures but this is achieved over a five year period while Glasgow's experience takes place later but is much more rapid, moving from an informal subculture, arising from common location, background, and pursuits as discussed above, to a formal arrangement within a year. The staging of the first international match in November 1872 clearly had an impact in the growth of clubs and the importance of the match has long been acknowledged by historians.⁴⁶⁵ The resultant 'surge' came on the back of the establishment of a governing body, the creation of a national cup competition and the excitement which was generated around international football. However, as has been demonstrated, for this surge to have happened within a short space of time, meant that there had to already be a sufficient body of youths and young men within the general population who had practical experience of playing football – if not specifically to the association code, then more broadly to traditional forms of organised play; in short the 'old Scotch style of football', as described in the *Scotsman* newspaper in the aftermath of the exhibition match in Edinburgh in 1873.⁴⁶⁶

The impact of the rail network

An associated development which merits special consideration with respect to the growth of football clubs in Glasgow is the impact of the rail network. John Airey's railway map of Scotland provides a detailed illustration of the advanced railway network which proliferated the west of Scotland region by 1875 (Figure 4.6). The complexity of the network was in part down to the competing interests of rival railway companies,⁴⁶⁷ as well as due to the specific

⁴⁶⁴ While two additional clubs, Oxford FC and Helensburgh FC, paid subscription fees for season 1873-74, the payments were made retrospectively (in July 1874) and the clubs most likely joined the association towards the end of the season (i.e. in 1874) rather than in 1873. Indeed, Helensburgh FC is listed in the *Scottish Football Annual* of 1876-77 as being founded in 1874. See, Scottish Football Association (1873-1886) *Cash Book*. *Scottish Football Association Archive*, ACC.9017/257. Glasgow: Scottish Football Museum. Also, Dick, W. ed. (1876) *Scottish football annual, 1876-77*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 70.

⁴⁶⁵ For example, writing in 1905, William Unite Jones states that, "The match gave a great stimulus to the game in Scotland" (see, Jones, W. U. (1905) *International Football*. In: Gibson, A. and Pickford, W. eds. *Association football and the men who made it*, Vol. 4. London: Caxton Publishing Company, p. 104). More recently, this viewpoint has been shared by Matthew McDowell and Tony Collins (see, McDowell, M. L. (2010) *The origins, patronage and culture of association football in the west of Scotland, c.1865-1902*. PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, p. 9, and, Collins, T. (2019) *How football began: a global history of how the world's football codes were born*. London: Routledge, p. 48).

⁴⁶⁶ Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 29 December, p. 7.m

⁴⁶⁷ The three main companies with a vested interest in Glasgow and the west of Scotland were the North British Railway (established in 1844), the Caledonian Railway (formed in 1845) and the Glasgow and South Western Railway (established in 1850 out of an amalgamation of two smaller railway companies).

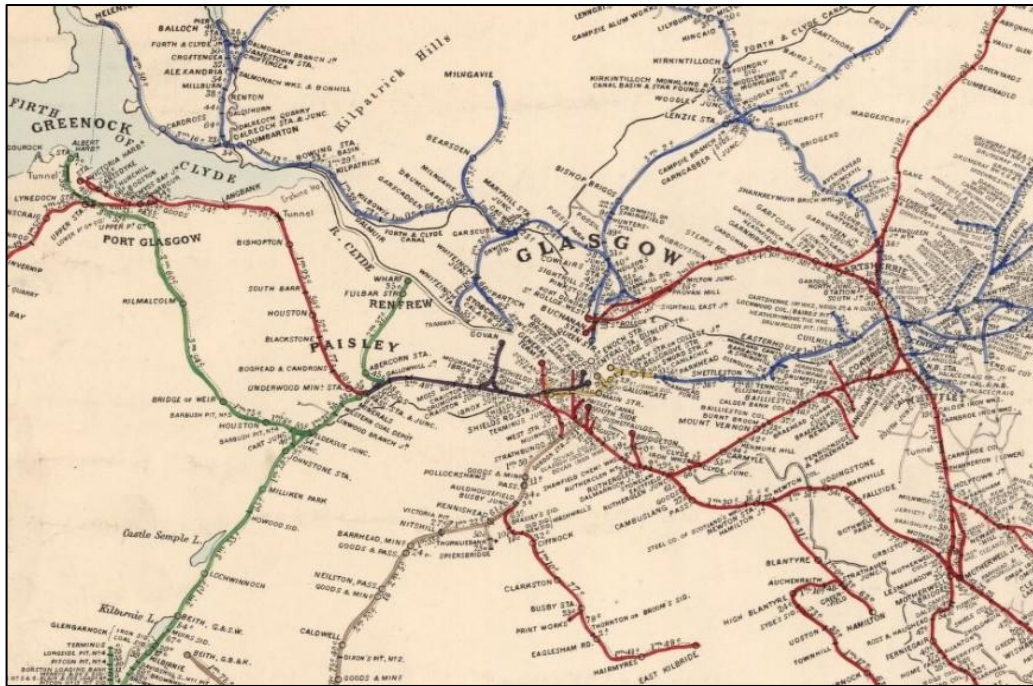


Figure 4.6: Airey's Railway Map of Scotland, 1875 (featuring Glasgow and the west of Scotland region). Airey's map shows Glasgow's encirclement by a complex system of railway lines which by the end of the period provided impressive connectivity throughout much of the west of Scotland region and beyond. Within the city itself, the principle railway termini were South Side, Bridge Street, Buchanan Street and Queen's Street. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

economic and industrial demands of the region; many of the early lines were built to connect raw materials and goods such as coal and iron with markets, both domestic and international. Increasingly, however, the railway network was extended and improved to accommodate passenger traffic. Numerous extensions were added to the trunk lines to further support the transportation of goods and passengers. From 1858 an additional line at Dumbarton, connected the local communities within the Vale of Leven district up as far as Balloch to the rail network. To the north of the city, the Glasgow and Milngavie Railway Junction, which opened in 1863, linked the small towns of Milngavie and Bearsden with Queen's Street station via the main Glasgow, Dumbarton and Helensburgh line. Another extension, to the south of the city, was the Busby Railway, which by 1868 had connected the mainly rural communities of East Kilbride, Busby and Giffnock, with Glasgow's Southside station (via the Glasgow, Barrhead and Neilston Direct Railway).

To the southeast, Motherwell and Hamilton would be connected to Southside station from 1849 via the Clydesdale Junction Railway. This particular line would run through Rutherglen, Cambuslang and Uddingston before splitting into two lines and proceeding on to Motherwell and Hamilton. Directly to the east of Glasgow, railway development had come at an early period in the Monklands area of Lanarkshire. This activity initially focussed on providing market access to the scattered groups of ironworks and coalmines. However, a major development for passenger transport came as early as 1849 when the Caledonian Railway

connected Coatbridge to Buchanan Street station. By 1871 the rival North British Railway opened its own Coatbridge line which provided access into the centre of Glasgow at College station (later closed and replaced by High Street station). Overall, the extensive network of train lines and stations was essential in supporting the transit of football club members and, increasingly, football supporters as the association game gained popularity within Glasgow and the west of Scotland. The fixture lists and match reports that appear in local newspapers in the latter months of 1875 provide examples of the distances that association football clubs were prepared to travel for friendly matches. This includes Kilbirnie Ladeside's visit to Glasgow in October 1875 to play Union FC of Queen's Park.⁴⁶⁸ The following month Partick FC travelled into Ayrshire for a match involving the Ayr Eglinton Club,⁴⁶⁹ while Alexandra Athletic ventured out from Glasgow's east end to play Lennox FC in Dumbarton.⁴⁷⁰

With hundreds of teams materialising within a comparatively short space of time, the railways played a vital role in facilitating transit to and from games. However, Glasgow's transport system was not the reason for the formation of the clubs. The association game was aided by existing organisations and networks and the next section will look at that area in more detail.

Non-football networks

In addition to the volunteer and temperance movements, a broad array of formal and informal networks was vital in supporting such a large increase in clubs across Glasgow. The Scottish Football Association, although an important and symbolic authority for the game in Scotland, did not have formal links with all of the association clubs within its jurisdiction. Even by 1875, when the first *Scottish Football Annual* was published, the number of clubs from the Glasgow area in membership of the association (when compared with the general tally of clubs between 1867 and 1875) equates to just 13 percent of the total number.⁴⁷¹ This is noteworthy because the *Scottish Football Annual* published correspondence addresses for the match secretaries of member clubs which enabled those clubs to arrange fixtures with each other.

The cricket scene in and around Glasgow provided additional support as it was already well connected. It is therefore understandable that football clubs linked to cricket had an advantage when it came to organising fixtures.⁴⁷² This situation was far from unique to Glasgow as close links existed in Sheffield and London between the summer sport of cricket

⁴⁶⁸ Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 18 October, p. 3.

⁴⁶⁹ Anonymous (1875) *Ayr Observer*, 23 November, p. 2.

⁴⁷⁰ Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 29 November, p. 3.

⁴⁷¹ The *Scottish Football Annual* of 1875 has 29 member clubs listed for the area covered by the Glasgow study (Figure 4.4), while the general tally of clubs (1867–1875) is 227.

⁴⁷² Even though they were not members of the Scottish Football Association, Violet FC of Kinning Park and Ailsa FC of Pollokshields were able to organise a football game in October 1875. Both were offshoots of cricket clubs which had played cricket just a few months earlier in August 1875. See, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 11 October, p. 3, and, Anonymous (1875) *Glasgow Herald*, 3 August, p. 7.

and the winter sport of football.⁴⁷³ Indeed it serves to highlight the important role of cricket in the rise of football as a winter game within the United Kingdom.

As touched upon earlier, factors surrounding identity are important when exploring links between migration and football. Clearly clubs like Callander FC represented communities distant to the city of Glasgow. However, it is also very likely that within the city, local districts and even streets were the basis for club names. Mapping regular but non club football to the evolution of clubs is difficult to provide definitively without independent verification.

However, piecing circumstantial evidence together is helpful in this respect. It is of course speculation to link the local boys who created controversy when playing football games on the garden plot between Clairmont Terrace and Clairmont Gardens in 1868⁴⁷⁴ with the establishment of the association club Clairmont FC in 1874.⁴⁷⁵ However, there is a documented connection between club names and the names of local streets and districts within Glasgow.

Many of the examples relate to distinct communities and districts in and around Glasgow like Bellahouston, Craigton, Dennistoun, Govan, Langside, Pollokshields, Shawlands, Thornliebank, and Whiteinch. There are also numerous examples of club names which appear to be linked to particular streets. A quick perusal of the list of clubs throws up names like Allison FC from Govanhill (Allison Street), Armadale FC from Dennistoun (Armadale Street), Derby FC from Kelvingrove (Derby Street), Langshot FC from Plantation (Langshot Street), Matilda FC from Pollokshields (Matilda Road), and Oxford FC from Laurieston (Oxford Street). The existence of these clubs (as well as many others which are not included here) provide some substance to Holt's notion surrounding football and community. In particular, "the way that football was able to sustain traditions of cohesion, territoriality and festivity both at the neighbourhood level and in the new and wider world of the mature industrial city" (Holt, 1986: p. 9).

Section 4 – The principal factors behind Glasgow's 'football explosion'

Building upon the previous section which identified the support that the association game received from non-football networks, it is now time to examine the importance of football as a recreation in and around Glasgow during the early to mid-1870s. Section 4 analyses the factors which combined to propel association football to the forefront of the city's sporting

⁴⁷³ Adrian Harvey, writing about Sheffield football during the 1860s, states that "...the most common organisations from which clubs emerged were cricket clubs", while, in London, a reference to the opening match of the 1867-68 football season for the Wanderers Club (against Clapham Cricket Club) asserts that "...the ball once set in motion will no doubt be kept merrily rolling through the winter months, until compelled to retire before the invading forces of the all-powerful King of Summer Sports". See, Harvey, A. (2005) *Football: the first hundred years: the untold story*. London: Routledge, p. 110, and, Anonymous (1867) *The Sportsman*, 28 September, 1867, p. 4.

⁴⁷⁴ Anonymous (1868) *North British Daily Mail*, 14 April, p. 2.

⁴⁷⁵ Anonymous (1874) *Glasgow Herald*, 23 November, p. 7.

scene. As will be seen, whilst it is tempting to commence at the starting point of the 'explosion' in the early 1870s, it is important to understand the place of football as an activity in the city in previous decades.

The 'powder keg' behind the 'explosion'

It is clear that Glasgow and the counties immediately surrounding the city were the location of a major football subculture by the mid-1870s. Moreover, this phenomenon appears to have happened within an astonishingly short space of time. An examination of organised football activity for the period running from the 1850s up to 1872 is an important starting point when trying to understand how this was possible. Such a task has been hitherto neglected since the only published study of football in Glasgow (relating to the third quarter of the nineteenth century) argues that very few recorded matches took place prior to 1874.⁴⁷⁶ On the contrary, it will be shown that football was an important recreational activity throughout the third quarter of the nineteenth century, leading the author, in his unpublished paper on football in Glasgow, to conclude that,

If the official international match signalled the lighting of the touch paper to create a football explosion, then there had to already be a large powder keg waiting to be ignited (McBrearty, 2021).

Since, as has been argued in this thesis, organised football can refer to activity outside of football clubs, then evidence of organised activity can be found in the events planned by religious and educational groups as well as by the temperance movement. With respect to the subject of working-class participation in football, significant levels of working-class involvement can be found in and around Glasgow throughout the 1850s and 1860s. The Factory Act of 1850, which sanctioned a 2pm close of factories on a Saturday, created opportunity on Saturday afternoons for factory workers within the city to enjoy a variety of sports. So much so, that one commentator, writing in 1854, could say the following about sporting activities on the Kings Park in Glasgow Green,

Cricket, rounders and foot-ball, the sports most popular here, are now practised as extensively as at any former period. On Saturday afternoons, when the mills and public works are stopped, King's Park presents a most cheerful and animating spectacle, with its numerous groups of youthful operatives, after the toils of the week, all earnestly engaged in these healthful and exciting games (MacDonald, 1854: p. 26).

Rather than being a rarity, football in 1854 is portrayed as a thriving activity, alongside other sports, on the city's oldest public park. Moreover, the description is not of an unruly 'mob' game, but rather presents a scene of individual 'groups' participating in the different sports.

⁴⁷⁶ Curry, G. (2020) *The making of association football: two decades which created the modern game*. Newcastle-Upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, p. 138.

Beyond Glasgow Green, additional examples of participation in sport can also be found. Clearly the centre of Glasgow, densely packed with tenements, could not adequately facilitate sports like football⁴⁷⁷ but the following account from 1845 describes activity on the outskirts of the city,

Away to the north, almost as far as the eye could reach, the coast, or rather the country, was clear of buildings, and between the South Woodside Road and the Great Western Road there was a common, broken up into heights and hollows, where lads and lasses roamed or sat in the summer evenings, and where games of various kinds, such as cricket, foot-ball, and quoits, were carried on.⁴⁷⁸

The location of this common can be found in Figure 4.7 below.



Figure 4.7: Ordnance Survey Map detailing the Woodlands district of Glasgow from a survey taken in 1858. The open area of land between South Woodlands Road and Great Western Road is referenced as a location for football games back in 1845. It would later become a more formal setting for football matches when the Burnbank sports ground was developed in this area. Burnbank was used by Glasgow Academical FC and Rangers FC. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

⁴⁷⁷ An article in the *Scottish Guardian* covers this subject in some detail, highlighting the city's dramatic transition from one which originally hosted a "semi-rural population" to one which was home to "almost half a million inhabitants... immured within a huge region of stone and lime, that is overhung and darkened by a lurid sky...". See Anonymous (1850) *Scottish Guardian*, 10 May, p. 2,

⁴⁷⁸ Article titled 'Building Extensions and Changes in the West End' — this part of the article refers to 1845 — '25 years ago'. See, Anonymous (1870) *Glasgow Herald*, 10 December, p. 3.

There is evidence of numerous references to football activity linked to Glasgow-based organisations across the entire decade of the 1850s. This includes activity involving schools, sabbath schools, poorhouses, and temperance organisations as well as matches revolving around the workplace.⁴⁷⁹ An important point which can be made with respect to the proliferation of football as an outdoor recreation is that it was widely seen as a means of tackling problems surrounding poor health. This view, for example, was expressed by Dr George Buchanan of the Andersonian University (later Strathclyde University) in a lecture on anatomy and physiology, in 1851,

Most of you have your attention occupied day after day in the same manner, so that your conversation and your very thoughts are apt to be tinged with your business. Hence the frequent expression - "He smacks of the shop". Let me assure you, that the only way to overcome this is to vary your occupation - in summer, by such athletic exercises as suit your taste, rowing, swimming, riding, bowling, foot-ball in the Green, cricket in Kinning Park.⁴⁸⁰

As has been briefly touched upon in Chapter 1, with the example of the excursion of Glasgow's Barony Poorhouse in 1853, the importance of outdoor recreation extended to children who were fully acquainted with urban squalor and social deprivation. Such children were categorised by philanthropist and educationalist David Stow as the 'sunken class'.⁴⁸¹ For example, the annual report of 1859 for the Glasgow Refuge for Boys (an institution established to reform petty criminals aged between 10 and 15) stated that,

One class of the boys is now employed in out-door work on a farm at some distance, and more active exercise and amusements (football, etc) are encouraged throughout the school, with very good effects.⁴⁸²

This type of physical activity was remarked as a feature of the refuge into the 1860s. The report from 1862, for example, proclaimed that the "...playground is daily an exciting scene

⁴⁷⁹ By way of example, for schools, see, the visit of Barony Parish School to Milton Bank, near Bishopbriggs in 1857 (Anonymous (1857) *North British Daily Mail*, 9 July, p. 2). For sabbath schools see, the Queen's Birthday celebrations involving St John's Sabbath School in Glasgow in 1853 (Anonymous (1853) *Glasgow Constitutional*, 28 May, p. 3). For poorhouses, see the excursion involving children from Barnhill Poorhouse to Wemyss Bay in 1855 (Anonymous (1855) *Glasgow Courier*, 23 June, p. 2). For temperance organisations, see the Bridgeton Total Abstinence Society's visit to Dechmont Hill, near Cambuslang in 1853 (Anonymous (1853) *Glasgow Constitutional*, 18 May, p. 2). For the workplace, see the excursion of the Glasgow-based employees of Mr F. C. Buttle (clothiers, furnishers and outfitters) to his country house at Carfin in Lanarkshire in 1854 (Anonymous (1854) *North British Daily Mail*, 23 May, p. 2).

⁴⁸⁰ Anonymous (1851) *North British Daily Mail*, 8 November, p. 4.

⁴⁸¹ Stow wrote, "For the sunken class there has been provided a certain variety and amount of machinery, viz., prisons, penitentiaries, a bridewell, a night asylum, two houses of refuge, and a ragged or industrial school..." See, Stow, D. (1859) *The training system of education*. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, p. 65.

⁴⁸² Anonymous (1860) *Caledonian Mercury*, 19 July, p. 3.

of youthful sport and recreation. Foot-ball, shinty, bowls, cricket, dragon flying, and other games in their season, are eagerly engaged in".⁴⁸³

A final area to highlight is the role of Glasgow University. Curry's view of football at the university appears to be limited to "mob / folk football" (Curry, 2020: p. 121). However, as mentioned in the literature review, Hutchinson points to "two traditions" (Hutchinson, 2008: p. 550). The daily occurrence of a looser mass participation game was certainly a notable aspect of student life and suggests therefore that football was an important recreational activity for a large body of the students. This would have involved students from skilled working-class families as well as from the middle-classes.⁴⁸⁴ However, this particular example of football activity only represents part of the story.

As previously discussed, the university had a football club from at least 1851 while 'regular' matches involving 'picked sides' are described by Murray alongside the mass participation games (Murray, 1927: p. 442). Further accounts have suggested that matches took place during the 1850s involving faculty teams on Saturdays and the university fielded teams against the Lancashire Militia on two occasions in 1855.⁴⁸⁵ Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that the university supported wider football activity. In the summer of 1850, the university opened up its grounds to the public. The opening ceremony attracted 20,000 spectators, including '2,000 teetotallers' and the band of the 21st Regiment of Foot.⁴⁸⁶ An article in the *Edinburgh News and Literary Chronicle* on 'Outdoor Amusements' which advocated additional recreational spaces in Edinburgh, had the following to say about the events in Glasgow,

We would suggest, then, that in addition to bowling-greens, there should be space allotted for quoiting, foot-ball, and other amusements. An experiment of this nature is now being tried in Glasgow, and during the six weeks it has been in operation has, we believe, met with great success. The grounds, which are situated at the back of the College, are open day and evening at a small charge, and are frequented by great numbers of the working-classes.⁴⁸⁷

Beyond the university, as has already been outlined, evidence of football clubs can be found from the late 1850s through to 1865⁴⁸⁸ (the latter year marking the formal arrival of club rugby in the city). The rugby game arrived in Glasgow with the formation of West of Scotland FC in 1865 and Glasgow Academicals in 1866. The rugby code, however, would not appeal to

⁴⁸³ Anonymous (1862) *Glasgow Courier*, 20 February, p. 2.

⁴⁸⁴ With respect to Scottish universities in general, T. C. Smout calculated that 23 percent of the intake of Arts students in the early 1860s were from working-class backgrounds. See, Smout, T. C. (1997) *A century of the Scottish people, 1830–1950*. London: Fontana Press, p. 217.

⁴⁸⁵ See, Anonymous (1860) *Dunfermline Press*, 27 March, p. 4, Anonymous (1855) *North British Daily Mail*, 15 March, p. 2, and, Anonymous (1855) *North British Daily Mail*, 30 March, p. 2.

⁴⁸⁶ See, Boney, A. D. (1988) *The lost gardens of Glasgow University*. London: Christopher Helm, p. 275.

⁴⁸⁷ Anonymous (1850) *Edinburgh News and Literary Chronicle*, 13 July, 1850, p. 5.

⁴⁸⁸ The Brownfield and Windsor clubs can be found in 1859 while St Andrew FC existed in 1865.

the wider Glasgow populace as much as the association code which became established as the dominant sport within the city by 1873.

The egalitarian nature of Glasgow football

The sharp increase of association clubs in Glasgow between 1873 and 1875 created an eclectic network. As organisations, these clubs varied significantly in terms of their overall size and stature. This was important; as a result, the association game in Glasgow appealed to a much broader demographic and was not therefore limited to well-connected and wealthy young men. Beyond Queen's Park FC, clubs like Clydesdale and 3rd Lanark RV were sufficiently resourced and organised even by the early 1870s⁴⁸⁹ to be considered leading clubs but they were surrounded by a plethora of smaller clubs. On the other hand, Rangers FC, which would become a giant of Scottish football, started off in more humble circumstances. Formed on Fleshers Haugh at Glasgow Green in 1872 by a small group of four youths (from lower middle-class and skilled working-class families), the club was not established enough in its formative years to compete at the top end of the game in Glasgow. The Rangers Club, therefore, did not elect to join the Scottish Football Association in 1873 and did not compete in the inaugural Scottish Cup competition, although they did register for the competition in season 1874-75.

In an era before league football, there was no structured mechanism of promotion and relegation to enable clubs to find their own level with respect to other teams. However, many of the clubs appear to have quickly discovered their standing within the game and selected their opponents accordingly. It was, after all, in no one's interests for one sided games to be a regular occurrence. A good example of the clubs finding their level can be seen with the formation of 'junior' clubs. These clubs may have been at a lower level in terms of size and resources but they were not categorised separately at this point from the larger and better resourced clubs. The first of these clubs was the Queen's Park Junior Club which formed in 1870.⁴⁹⁰ Although this club had some connections with the 'senior' Queen's Park Club, they were in fact separate entities and the junior side indeed competed in the same Scottish Cup competition as their more established namesake.

Other junior clubs followed including Oxford Juniors in 1874, and Barrhead Juniors, Darnley Juniors, and Rangers Juniors in 1875.⁴⁹¹ In addition, the better resourced clubs with larger

⁴⁸⁹ Clydesdale FC were an offshoot of the long established Clydesdale Cricket Club (formed in 1848) and provided the Scottish Football Association with its first president in 1873, while the 3rd Lanark RV Club was attached to the influential 3rd Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers.

⁴⁹⁰ See, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1876) *Football annual*, London: Ward, Lock & Tyler, p. 118.

⁴⁹¹ See, Anonymous (1874) *Glasgow Herald*, 10 November, p. 7, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 27 December, p. 3, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 5 May, p. 6, and, Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 16 March, p. 6.

memberships started to run second eleven (2nd XI) teams.⁴⁹² Whilst these teams often played against each other, the reduced strength and quality of some of the smaller and less resourced clubs is demonstrated by the fact they were often paired against the second eleven of bigger clubs. This can, for instance, be seen with the match between the Havelock Football Club and the second eleven of the Western Football Club in December 1873. Despite fielding a second string team, the Western Club still ran out comfortable 3-0 winners.⁴⁹³ Some of the smaller clubs even played against school football clubs, as with the case of the match involving Matilda FC and the Pollokshields Academy Club in November 1875.⁴⁹⁴

As the association game developed, the clear distinction between the different types of clubs became more evident. As early as 1877 a West of Scotland Football Association was established in Glasgow, made up “almost entirely of lads who play in the public parks”.⁴⁹⁵ The numerous clubs in membership of this regional body (the association had 48 clubs registered for its cup competition) had no connection with the “parent organisation”.⁴⁹⁶ The junior clubs would eventually coalesce around their own governing body, the Scottish Junior FA, in 1886, and participate in their own national tournament – the Scottish Junior Cup. With the senior game turning professional in 1893, amateur and juvenile associations would be created for recreational football, with a national association also being established for schools football.⁴⁹⁷

Glasgow Green and Southside Park – locations of continuity and reinvention

Whilst the association game would be widely played across parts of Glasgow and areas surrounding the city, Glasgow Green and the Southside Park (Queen’s Park Recreation Ground) were unquestionably the two busiest and most important spaces for hosting games by the 1870s. Figure 4.8 shows the layout of Glasgow Green in 1858, just a few years after

⁴⁹² Not surprisingly, Queen’s Park FC were the first club to run a 2nd XI team in 1872 (the earliest known match is recorded in Anonymous (1872) *Glasgow Herald*, 25 March, p. 5). However, numerous others could be found by 1875, including Bellahouston FC (Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 22 February, p. 6), Blythswood FC (Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 1 December, p. 5), Eastern FC (Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 29 September, p. 3), Granby FC (Anonymous (1874) *Glasgow Herald*, 17 November, p. 7), Lancefield FC (Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 5 October, p. 6), Northern FC (Anonymous (1874) *Glasgow Herald*, 17 November, p. 7), Oxford Juniors FC (Anonymous (1874) *North British Daily Mail*, 16 November, p. 6), and, South Western FC (Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 19 October, p. 6).

⁴⁹³ Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 29 December, p. 6.

⁴⁹⁴ Anonymous (1875) *North British Daily Mail*, 29 November, p. 3.

⁴⁹⁵ The organisation was initially referred to as the Public Park Football Association but changed its name to West of Scotland Football Association (see, Anonymous (1877) *North British Daily Mail*, 1 October, p. 4, and, Anonymous (1878) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 4 February, p. 4).

⁴⁹⁶ Anonymous (1878) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 4 February, p. 4.

⁴⁹⁷ The Scottish Juvenile FA was instituted in 1899 and was followed by the Scottish School’s FA in 1903 and the Scottish Amateur FA in 1909.

MacDonald's reference to the popularity of football as a Saturday afternoon recreation for mill and factory operatives (MacDonald, 1854: p. 26).



Figure 4.8: Detail of Glasgow Green, showing Flesher's Haugh and King's Park, from the Ordnance Survey map of 1858 (published 1865). Traditional football matches were a feature of the park long before the introduction of the two dominant codes. When the association game started to take off in the city, 'the Green' was one of the principal locations for the early clubs to play their games. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

By the mid-1870s, Glasgow Green would become a bustling focal point for football on Saturday afternoons for fully fledged clubs. As has already been mentioned, the 'Green' was traditionally a popular place for football matches, as it was for other sports.⁴⁹⁸ Examples exist in relation to traditional football activity. For instance, when J. B. Connell arrived in Glasgow (around 1862), he organised football games in the park with the boundaries being "from Geordie Geddes's house to Montieth Row".⁴⁹⁹ As mentioned in Chapter 2, he was also prominent in the formation of the Thistle Football Club later in the decade. In 1863 boys connected to St Aloysius Catholic College are recorded playing a game of football on the green, having first obtained permission from Glasgow Roman Catholic Bishop, John Gray.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹⁸ See, Bilsborough, P. (1983) *The development of sport in Glasgow, 1850–1914*. MLitt Thesis, University of Stirling, p. 1. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/1893/1864> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026].

⁴⁹⁹ See, Anonymous (1914) *Scottish Referee*, 29 June, p. 5.

⁵⁰⁰ Anonymous (1863) *Glasgow Free Press*, 14 February, p. 11.

In 1866, migrants from Orkney are referenced participating in a traditional New Year's Day game on the park.⁵⁰¹ Early clubs linked to the emerging association game like the aforementioned Thistle FC (1868), Rangers FC, Callander FC and Eastern FC (all 1872) were based at Glasgow Green. They were joined by countless other clubs over the course of the 1870s. As a recreational space, Glasgow Green can be seen to span the traditional and the modern eras of organised football activity in the city.

In contrast, to the south, Queen's Park was created much later as a space for amenities and was linked to the large scale programme of urbanisation which was planned to the south of the city from the 1850s. The land was first purchased by Glasgow City Council with architect Joseph Paxton being commissioned in 1860 to design the layout of the new park. It opened in 1862 and football appears to have been organised as an activity on the park even before the formation of Queen's Park FC in 1867. There is, for example, evidence that another football club was using the park almost a full year earlier; an advert placed in the *Glasgow Herald* in July 1866 made an appeal for "young men to join the club in South Side Park".⁵⁰² Added to this, the origins story behind Queen's Park FC connects football activity on the park with a local branch of the YMCA. As mentioned previously, youths from that organisation are purported to have played a game with the future members of Queen's Park.⁵⁰³ The early matches which pitted Queen's Park against Thistle FC (1868) and Hamilton Gymnasium (1869), were played under a hybrid version of the FA's Laws of the Game and in many respects included traditional rules such as the fair catch and a loose system of offside.⁵⁰⁴ They can therefore be linked to more traditional forms of organised football.

It is noteworthy that within a relatively short timeframe, a process of change commenced which would transform the game. As late as September 1870, the club was playing a 10-a-side fixture on Southside Park against Airdrie FC, in a game which included touch downs.⁵⁰⁵ By the time of the first international match in November 1872, the club was at the forefront of the development of modern association football, creating a style of play which was moulded around the three man offside rule. Continuity was very much a part of the process; the club remained a constant during this period of change and many of the early players were still involved. Moreover, essential aspects of the game remained, which no doubt

⁵⁰¹ Anonymous (1866) *Orcadian*, 16 January, p. 2.

⁵⁰² Anonymous (1866) *Glasgow Herald*, 18 July, p. 1.

⁵⁰³ For an account of the football game which took place between local members of the YMCA and the eventual founders of the Queen's Park Football Club, see, Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd., p. 9.

⁵⁰⁴ In Queen's Park FC's 'Rules of the Field' offside only applied 15 yards from either goal when a two man rule came into effect. This enabled an expansive game with players unhindered from positioning themselves over large areas of the playing field. The offside rule is referenced in Verse XV of H. N. Smith's poem which commemorated the game, "...Have a sound fear of being near by fifteen yards or so; their own goal-line, for I opine if there the best of kicks is thine, thou'rt neither friend nor foe! But if their men are nearer still, or e'en the ball – kick as you will". See, Anonymous (1870) *Glasgow Evening Post*, 2 November, p. 2.

⁵⁰⁵ See, Anonymous (1870) *Glasgow Herald*, 22 September, p. 5.

would have satisfied the *Scotsman* reporter with respect to seeing elements of the ‘old Scotch style’ in its new form.⁵⁰⁶

Simply put, association football was a game where the ball was primarily kicked and not carried. However, the development of the Scottish Football Association and Scottish Cup competition heralded a new era for the embryonic association game in Scotland. The opening of Hampden Park, Scotland’s first dedicated association football ground, in October 1873 (just in time for the first round of the inaugural Scottish Cup tournament) was an additional physical symbol marking the rapid rise of the new game. By 1873, a modern game for a modern age was emerging.

Glasgow football and the ‘passing game’

If the ‘old Scotch style of football’ was a feature of traditional versions of organised football activity, then Glasgow’s emerging footballing subculture was built upon the short passing game, and this development heralds the beginning of the introduction of modern football within the city. While the staging of the first international match under association rules marks the starting point for the explosion (in terms of the uptake and spread of association football) then the fixture is also notable for being the first high profile match where the Queen’s Park Club’s systematic form of passing was introduced. Although this topic has been touched upon in Chapter 2, an additional assessment regarding the development of the Scottish short passing game is required in light of recent arguments presented in the journal article on the evolution of football passing in nineteenth century Britain.⁵⁰⁷

As alluded to in Chapter 2, the systematic approach pioneered by Queen’s Park FC was shaped by the three-man offside rule which formed a central pillar of association football from 1866 to 1925. Whilst Queen’s Park had created a hybrid version of the Football Association’s Laws of the Game in 1867, which included a more radical approach to offside,⁵⁰⁸ crucially the club adopted the FA’s Laws in full, from October 1870, including the three-man offside rule. It marked a significant change from the type of game that the club had originally played, demonstrating a shift from a traditional form of football activity to one which would pave the way for the development of modern football. This rule was vital with respect to the Queen’s Park Club changing its style of play from a loose form of game based in part around long punts forward, into one which was dominated by a combination of dribbling and short passing.

⁵⁰⁶ The original quote can be found in Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 29 December, p. 7.

⁵⁰⁷ See, Wilson, J. P., Stocks, J., Wood, S. T., and Clarke, J. (2025) The evolution of football passing in nineteenth-century Britain. *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 42(3), pp. 264–282.

⁵⁰⁸ As alluded to earlier, the club’s offside rule of 1867 “required at least two of his opponents between him and their own goal line, who must not be more than fifteen yards from the goal line”. This meant that offside did not come into force until a player was fifteen yards from his opponent’s goal line. See, Robinson, R. (1924) *History of the Queen’s Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. London: George W. May, p. 14.

Robinson lays out the reasons for the transformation in playing style; with few external matches to be had, even by 1872, an emphasis was placed on internal games,

The club, however, never neglected practice, and this practice was indulged in systematically. Sides were arranged – North v South of Eglinton Toll, Reds v Blues, Light v Heavy Weights, President’s Team v J. Smith’s Team (a series of six games), and Clerks v The Field, etc. In these games the dribbling and passing, which raised the Scottish game to the level of a fine art, were developed (Robinson, 1920: p. 36).

This approach marks a significant departure from the type of game that the Queen’s Park Club had been playing only a few months earlier. The earlier form of football was still carefully organised, with tactics and strategy being part of the game; player positions, for example, were already evident ahead of the match against Hamilton Gymnasium in 1869, when Robert Gardner, captain of Queen’s Park, issued a card to his players “indicating each man’s position on the field” (Robinson, 1920: pp. 15-16). It has to be said, though, that the idea of strategically placing players across different parts of the field was not a new development of the 1860s. It can be found in traditional games of an organised nature from an earlier period; for example, as briefly alluded to in Chapter 1, with the 93rd (Sutherland) Highlanders’ win over the Edinburgh University Football Club in 1851 and, in the same year, with the latter club’s victory over the Veterinary College Football Club.⁵⁰⁹

This brief outline of developments in Scotland contrasts with one of the key arguments put forward in J. P. Wilson et al. (2025) on the evolution of football passing in nineteenth century Britain. Whilst the article authors are correct in their view that “passing has been a core ingredient of many football codes and there would appear to be no original starting point for passing”, they go on to state that,

The earliest identified reports of passing in association football involved Sheffield teams in the 1860s, with the finesse of passing in Scottish teams emerging some years later (J. P. Wilson et al., 2025: p. 278).

This argument suggests a direct lineage within the association game between the Sheffield teams of the 1860s and the Scottish teams of the 1870s. The claim is premised on a match involving Sheffield and Hallam in 1861 and a match between Leeds and Sheffield Norfolk in 1865 which are presented as evidence of earlier examples of passing (J. P. Wilson et al., 2025: p. 265). However, neither of these examples relate to association football. As touched upon earlier, the first relates to a hybrid match played under “an amalgamated code of rules

⁵⁰⁹ In the first match, the article states that the players of the military side “with Lieutenant and Adjutant M’Donald as their chief, took their places coolly but with resolute determination, arranging themselves in a manner which displayed excellent training” (see, A Spectator (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 February, p. 6). In the second match it is observed that, “...The arrangement of the forces from the University was decidedly superior...” (see, L. O. P. (1851) *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 April, p. 6).

of the two clubs”.⁵¹⁰ It also predates the beginning of association football in 1863. As Curry states, with respect to Sheffield football prior to 1863, “...although football played in Sheffield resembled a proto-soccer variety, it was not association football” (Curry, 2020: p. 2). Moreover, the 14-a-side match of 1861 is described as a rough and violent game.⁵¹¹ The use of the term ‘longs’ (long punts forward) forms the basis of the argument put forward by the article’s contributors as to the existence of passing. The lack of offside and the possible adoption of the fair catch (which formed part of the playing rules of the Sheffield Club) would have encouraged long forward passing.

However, the style of game described by Murray in his chapter on football at Glasgow University during the late 1850s and early 1860s (with no offside and use of the fair catch), would have enabled a similar approach,⁵¹² although Murray points out that “no collaring or hacking was permitted and there was little rough play” (Murray, 1927: p. 444). The game of 1861 is a traditional form of organised football activity and needs to be categorised with similar games of the period. It can therefore be more closely compared with Murray’s account of football at Glasgow University.

The match between Leeds and Sheffield Norfolk in 1865 is also presented as an early example of passing in association football. This game, however, was not an association football match, nor was it a match played to Sheffield rules. The 14-a-side game was a rugby football contest as it was played “strictly to the rules at Rugby School”.⁵¹³ The reference to passing is interesting particularly when viewed alongside the strategies being adopted in rugby football matches at Loretto School around the same period (Tristram, 1911: p. 153). However, the evidence of passing in this particular match tells us more about how non-rugby clubs were forced to improvise when dealing with the strict offside rule in a rugby football match. It does not say anything about passing within the Sheffield rules game of the mid-1860s nor of passing within the association football game of London for the same period.

The FA Cup tie between Queen’s Park and Wanderers in March 1872 provides a telling description of the Queen’s Park style of play, suggesting that it had yet to develop into a systematic form of dribbling and short passing. *The Field* magazine, for example, makes the following comment,

Their style of play is very much after the fashion of Sheffield, as they dribble little, and usually convey the ball by a series of long kicks, combined with a judicious plan

⁵¹⁰ Anonymous (1861) *Nottingham Journal*, 31 December 31, p. 4.

⁵¹¹ The description of the players in the *Nottingham Journal* states that they “received severe injuries to their faces and other parts of their bodies”, while, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* suggests that “for the safety of the players, it would be indeed much better if a great deal of the tripping up, “hocking”, pushing with the hands and wild and indiscriminate kicking were avoided” (see, Anonymous (1861) *Nottingham Journal*, 31 December, p. 4, and, Anonymous (1862) *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 January, p. 6).

⁵¹² Harvey also makes this point when comparing Murray’s description of the traditional game at Glasgow University with the 1858 rules of Sheffield FC. See, Harvey, A. (2005) *Football: the first hundred years: the untold story*. London: Routledge, p. 98.

⁵¹³ Anonymous (1865) *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 June, p. 7.

of passing on, while their method of driving the ball with the head is precisely the same as that adopted in Sheffield.⁵¹⁴

This is a really useful observation which helps with the process of analysing the evolution of the playing style of the Queen's Park Club as it moved from a traditional style of game into an advanced systematic method. Alcock identifies the new philosophy that Queen's Park created when he states that; "It has been the combination of dribbling and passing that has made the Queen's Park and other Scotch elevens such splendid teams" (Alcock, 1883: p. 12). In a later publication, he goes as far as to attribute a pioneering role to the Glasgow club; "The Queen's Park team were the first to demonstrate the possibilities of combination. In the main they favoured a system of short passing..." (Alcock, 1906: p. 36). The description of play emanating from the game between Queen's Park and Wanderers suggests that the systematic style of dribbling and short passing was not yet in place. While there is reference to 'passing on' (playing the ball forward into areas of space), the use of dribbling was clearly limited and the club still relied heavily on long kicking.

In contrast to the tactics deployed against Wanderers, the short passing game was based around a combination of dribbling and close intra-player passing. There are numerous instances of intra-player passing commencing from the winter months of 1872 in association football matches. An early example of dribbling and passing can be found in Queen's Park's match with Granville on 19 October, 1872. Reporting on this match, the *North British Daily Mail* article states that "Wotherspoon ran the ball rapidly down the field and middled it to Rhind, who registered the third goal".⁵¹⁵ However, the five man passing move involving Queen's Park players in February 1873, which has been alluded to in a previous chapter and which refers to them "playing beautifully to each other's feet", provides a more conclusive account of the systematic style of play.⁵¹⁶ For Queen's Park's match with Kilmarnock on 6 December, 1873, the scoring of two of the goals provides examples of dribbling and passing. The first was "a beautifully taken goal; Messrs M'Neil, and W. Mackinnon taking the ball down by clever passing and repassing quite puzzling the stopping powers of the opposing backs". With the second, "Mr Broadfoot middled the ball very judiciously to Leckie, who not seeing a good advantage for himself, stopped the ball and passed it to Mr Weir, who lifted it over the opposing backs and put it cleverly under the tape".⁵¹⁷

The first international match of 1872 provides definitive evidence of a new philosophy that would shape the way that football was played. Whilst the phrase 'played well together' which appears in the *Glasgow Herald*,⁵¹⁸ [in the context of a description of Scotland's play in the first international match] does not in itself equate to intra-player passing, it does

⁵¹⁴ Anonymous (1872) *The Field*, 9 March, p. 17.

⁵¹⁵ See, Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 21 October, p. 7.

⁵¹⁶ The original source for the reference can be found in Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 17 February, p. 7.

⁵¹⁷ See, Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 8 December, p. 6.

⁵¹⁸ See, Anonymous (1872) *Glasgow Herald*, 2 December, p. 5.

corroborate with other descriptions from other sources. This can be seen, for example, with the *North British Daily Mail* article which provides a general observation (as opposed to a single reference) of the Scottish team being “adepts at passing the ball”.⁵¹⁹ An additional piece of corroboration comes from the recollection of Walter Arnott, who attended the match. Arnott recalls of watching “...the great Jamie Weir - the prince of dribblers – and his partner, by splendid combined play rushing down the wing and centring the ball with great accuracy right into the goal mouth” (Arnott, 1905: p. 22). Arnott’s account gives an insight into the strategic positioning of the six forwards who worked together in pairs. It can be seen, therefore, that the Scottish teams of the 1870s did not merely finesse passing, they revolutionised the way that association football was played; independently developing a systematic form of play which combined dribbling and short passing. Charles Alcock, indeed, referred to this philosophy of football as a ‘new idea’.⁵²⁰ This new idea was moulded around the playing rules of association football’s Laws of the Game.

The notion that has been presented in this section of the thesis of a radical transformation in the way that football was played very much connects with Tony Collins’ broader argument of football being “reinvented” during “the last third of the nineteenth century” (T. Collins, 2019: pp. 14-15). With this in mind, a degree of context is required for the *Scotsman* article of December 1873, which reports on the exhibition match under association rules (and makes a case for continuity between the association game and the ‘old Scotch style of football’). Importantly, the *Scotsman* article also alludes to some shortcomings in the playing styles of both teams; it begins by conceding that the rugby ground which hosted the match was less suitable for ‘dribbling’. It then goes on to state that,

A greater drawback... was probably the lack of knowledge of each other’s play..., consequent to the teams being chosen from different clubs. This was very obvious to all who witnessed the play of the Queen’s Park Club in the International Association match at Glasgow...⁵²¹

It can therefore be argued that, at a basic level, the method of play in association football could draw comparison with traditional versions of football play. However, the systematic approach pioneered by Queen’s Park during the early 1870s transformed the association game.

Summary

As discussed, one aim of this chapter has been to try and align two theories which, from a distance, appear to be at odds with each other. These relate to Holt’s early ideas surrounding the role of football as a form of continuity and Tony Collins’ more recent

⁵¹⁹ Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 2 December, p. 6.

⁵²⁰ Alcock, C. W. (1906) *Football: the association game*. London: G. Bell & Sons, p. 36.

⁵²¹ Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 29 December, p. 7.

argument with respect to football being reinvented. The conclusion formed by the author is that both factors can be found within the period under consideration. This chapter has connected these two theories by analysing the rapid development of association football in Glasgow up to the point when the city emerged as the largest football subculture in the United Kingdom. The analysis makes a case that 1873 can be considered as the year when the city first developed a formal subculture based around clubs. Its unprecedented growth over the following two years was nothing short of remarkable. The comparative case study of Sheffield has helped to provide some wider context. The Yorkshire city already had a thriving local football scene by 1867, when the Queen's Park Club was just starting to form in Glasgow. Significantly, Sheffield's own subculture continued to develop, experiencing high levels of growth in the years running from 1873 to 1875. In overtaking Sheffield by the end of 1875, Glasgow experienced a surge in football activity on a scale never before seen.

The reasons behind the surge in popularity for the association game in Glasgow are multifaceted. Firstly, the rapidly unfolding events over the winter months of 1872 and 1873 clearly were instrumental; starting with the staging of the first international match in November 1872 and culminating with the formation of the Scottish Football Association and institution of the Scottish Cup competition in March 1873. There were clearly additional factors at play with respect to the surge in popularity of the association game. The reliance on a range of existing networks and the underlying fact that football remained an important recreational activity are also part of this significant phenomenon. In addition, the well-developed railway system existing within and around the city was instrumental in facilitating the rapid development of the sport as the clubs began to form. Undoubtedly, Queen's Park FC was a pioneering influence within association football during a crucial period of development. Stretching beyond the Scottish game, the central role of Queen's Park in transforming the way that association football was played should be considered a paradigm shifting accomplishment within the general history of the world game.

Conclusion

This thesis has analysed and discussed the significance of the under researched subject of organised football in Scotland using a mixed methodological approach of micro-history, prosopography and discourse analysis based on extensive archival research. In doing so, it has demonstrated the scope and variety of organised football activity from the mid-1820s up to the mid-1870s, contributing new evidence to the origins of football debate. The wide-ranging research for this thesis, bringing together the broad contexts of industrialisation, migration, class and community, and identifying them as drivers which combined to shape the development and proliferation of organised football activity in Scotland has advanced an innovative approach to the field.

It has broken new ground by researching contemporary material relating to club development and social class composition of early football club members across Scotland. Furthermore, it has added a considerable level of detail to the general study into the development of association football across the British Isles by mapping out the significant expansion of that code of football in Glasgow and the west of Scotland from the late 1860s up to 1875. In doing so it has brought a wealth of new information relating to organised football in Scotland into the origins of football debate which previously had been viewed, in the main, from an Anglo-centric prism.

A fresh perspective with respect to viewing the subject has been underpinned by the compilation and analysis of social class composition and migration data relating to early association and rugby club members. The accumulation of data pertaining to the lives of early football club members in Scotland (between 1868 and 1873) has not been attempted before and the results have greatly added to our knowledge of the social class makeup of the early rugby and association club members. This particular timeframe was selected because it covers a crucial period when both codes evolved from informal networks (at the beginning) into formalised structures underpinned by the institution of governing bodies (by the end). The research has also cast light onto the subject of the impact of generational migration (by considering both individual club members and their parents) and it can be seen that for both codes the migratory experience was similar to the wider trends in Scotland for the period.

In addition to this the research has highlighted the importance of working-class participation in association football during the late 1860s and 1870s. In specific areas, the level of working-class involvement was more significant; whilst the general analysis of association club members found one third of the total to be from working-class backgrounds, the separate analysis of association club membership within the Vale of Leven district in Dunbartonshire between 1872 and 1875 found the figure to be considerably higher at 87 percent. This contrasts with the rugby game in Scotland, where the study into early club

membership between 1868 and 1873 found working-class representation to be negligible, at just three percent. This evidence which suggests that the association game was more egalitarian overall in terms of social class composition, is a key reason as to why the association code would emerge as the dominant sport in Scotland.

The detailed investigation into football activity in Glasgow and the wider west of Scotland region has for the first time identified the factors which were necessary to facilitate a surge in the number of association clubs from 1873 onwards. This builds upon the studies of academics including Curry who noted a significant rise in the number of games being played in Glasgow between 1874 and 1876 but could not provide an explanation as to why this had occurred (Curry, 2020: p. 138). Beyond ‘catalysts’ like the staging of the first official international match under association rules in 1872 and the beginning of the Scottish Cup competition the following year, factors such as the active support of the cricket fraternity and improvements in passenger transportation greatly aided the advance of the association game. However, a key argument made by this thesis has been to claim that when the surge in the number of football clubs in and around Glasgow materialised during the early 1870s, there already existed a community of youths and young men who were accustomed to playing football and were simply moving on to the next level of development in terms of formalised clubs and competitions. This familiarity with organised forms of football was down to games integral to the social activities of a diverse collection of organisations, ranging from local schools and religious orders, to military volunteer units, factories and the temperance movement.

Whilst many examples of unruly ‘mob’ games are to be found throughout the period, numerous examples of what can be considered to be ‘proto-soccer’ type games have been uncovered, providing evidence of uniforms, team colours, equipment and examples of basic tactics and team strategies. While there was no overarching uniformity in rules until much later in the period, and the early forms of games were largely ‘patchwork’ in nature, there is plenty of evidence of teams playing against each other. Significantly, this thesis has provided supporting evidence to show that ‘annual custom’ football games, far from being mass participation mob games, were often small sided, organised and even skilful contests.

Through analysing the evidence relating to organised football activity in Scotland, the thesis has successfully integrated the otherwise juxtaposing theories of Richard Holt and Tony Collins with respect to ‘continuity’ (Holt, 1986: p. 5) and ‘reinvention’ (T. Collins, 2019: pp. 14-15). The analysis suggests that both factors were in play during the early 1870s. The obvious example of the existence of both can be seen with, on the one hand, the comparison made in Edinburgh in 1873 between the association game and more traditional forms of football, and, on the other hand, the pioneering role of Queen’s Park FC in developing a systematic form of football. The observation which connected the association game to the ‘old Scotch style of football’ connects with Holt’s views on continuity. However, a significant argument put forward within this study using contemporary sources, has been

to present Queen's Park's systematic style of 'passing game' as a new philosophy which transformed the way that association football would be played. That view clearly aligns with Tony Collins' argument with respect to football being reinvented.

Looking at the earlier period, the thesis has successfully challenged the myth surrounding the supposed disappearance of football in Scotland during the early to mid-nineteenth century, as claimed in a number of sources.⁵²² The analysis has found that evidence of decline within a particular area was usually not comprehensive; football was often still played by youths and there were also examples of football activity returning to areas impacted by decline. Due to an increase in local legislation, the enforcement of restrictions on football games in public spaces had some impact across the period. However, there were lots of examples of games being actively supported with land being provided. These games were not only deemed to be socially acceptable, they were encouraged.

Research undertaken for this thesis has in addition provided a body of empirical evidence which has demonstrated the development of club football. The tabulation of football clubs in Scotland has for the first time provided solid evidence as to the development and spread of clubs from the 1820s through to 1873. Firstly, it has highlighted the early development of football clubs prior to the arrival of the two dominant codes. Secondly, by extending the timeframe of the national study up to the end of 1873, not only has the mapping project clearly highlighted the early success of the rugby game, both in terms of numbers and geographical spread but, crucially, it has also highlighted the numerical superiority of the association clubs across the west of Scotland region at the commencement of the 'surge'. The significance of this empirical evidence is that the research illustrates organised football has longer and deeper roots in Scotland than previously recognised in other football histories.

The thesis has most notably highlighted the early advances of organised football in Edinburgh from the mid-1820s to the mid-1850s (prior to the arrival of the rugby game in the city). In particular, confirmation of the existence of a second sporting organisation which organised football matches in the 1820s (the Foot-Ball Society) has been a significant find for such an early period. Building on the research of Harvey, Hutchinson and Mitchell (Harvey, 2005, Hutchinson, 2007, 2008, and Hutchinson and Mitchell, 2018), this thesis has collated evidence of organised football activity involving clubs and teams which included playing for wagers in the early 1840s, playing for silverware in the shape of the medallion 'prize' in the early 1850s and the framing of proto-soccer playing rules in 1854 which were provided to encourage working-class youths and young men from the same 'shop or establishment'⁵²³ to

⁵²² In particular, Anonymous (1875) *Foot-Ball*. In: Dick, W. ed. *Scottish football annual, 1875-76*. Glasgow: W. Weatherston & Son, pp. 7-10, and, Beveridge, W. W. (1899) *Scottish football: its early years*. In: Jackson, N. L. ed. *Association football*. London: George Newnes Limited, p. 225.

⁵²³ See, British League of Juvenile Abstainers (1848-1856) Miscellaneous printed papers produced by John Hope for the British League of Juvenile Abstainers. *John Hope Archive*, GD253/181/1. Edinburgh: National Records of Scotland.

form clubs and play football. The research has uncovered evidence of hybrid clubs which could be found in the city in the 1860s and early 1870s, long after the arrival of the dominant code of rugby football in the 1850s. Addressing the arguments of Adrian Harvey, Eric Dunning and Graham Curry, with respect to the emergence of football subcultures (Harvey, 2005, Curry and Dunning, 2015 and Curry, 2020), the thesis has established a basic set of criteria and in doing so has enabled a system for categorising informal and formal subcultures. This work has enabled a direct comparison to be made between football centres in different parts of the United Kingdom and internationally with respect to Glasgow, Sheffield and Melbourne. The criteria used in establishing a threshold, regarding the number of clubs, and factors surrounding the commonality in playing rules, provide a clearer baseline from which to investigate the history of the game.

Future research

There are a number of areas which would build upon the work of this thesis. Firstly, a continuation of the mapping survey relating to football clubs in Scotland would be of benefit with respect to understanding the overall scope and reach of organised football across the country. A starting point for future researchers would be to look at all association clubs which had formed in Scotland by the end of 1876 (the current evaluation does not achieve this). It would be important to extend this mapping study for the rugby clubs (again to the end of 1876). In completing this task, a thorough understanding of the respective levels of the development of both codes would be achieved, providing more than three years' worth of data from the formation of both governing bodies in March 1873. In addition to this, a prosopographical study of the social class composition of early rugby club members across the Borders region, similar to that achieved within this thesis for association club members in the Vale of Leven district, would be a valuable addition to the research that has already been undertaken. Such a task would help to establish the level of working-class involvement within the emerging rugby game in the Scottish Borders.

Finally, the legacy of the 'passing game', whilst being touched upon, could be significantly expanded. In particular, it would be useful to connect the research within this thesis with developments in the north of England from the late 1870s to the mid-1880s when Lancashire emerged as a major football centre and was arguably the leading influence with respect to the development of professionalism.⁵²⁴

⁵²⁴ Gibson and Pickford acknowledge the role of prominent Lancashire clubs like Darwen, Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers and Preston North End in the development of professionalism. See, Chapter VI, The triumph of democracy, pp. 71-80, and Chapter VII, The fight for legalised professionalism, pp. 81-93. In: Gibson, A. and Pickford, W. (1905) *Association football and the men who made it, Vol. 1*. London: Caxton Publishing Company. For a more recent in-depth assessment of the influence of Lancashire towns, see, Lewis, R. W. (1997) 'The genesis of professional football: Bolton-Blackburn-Darwen, the centre of innovation 1878-85', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 14(1), pp. 21-54.

It is anticipated that the detailed analysis provided by this thesis will bring Scotland firmly into the general academic debate surrounding the development of organised football from the early nineteenth century up to the mid-1870s. There is now evidence to explain Scotland's apparent miraculous journey during the early 1870s (certainly within the context of association football), from a country where little organised activity appears to have taken place, into one which within a few years, saw football develop into a national obsession with a style of game considered to be highly developed for the period. There is no doubt that wider influences relating to urbanisation, industrialisation and migration were instrumental in shaping the modern codes of football, but this thesis has also proven that there is a case to state that, certainly with respect to the central belt of Scotland, the association game took hold so quickly because it was in effect a "new version of the old sport".⁵²⁵

⁵²⁵ Holt, R. (1986) 'Working-class football and the city: the problem of continuity', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 3(1). p. 5.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Table 1.1. Evidence of football teams (including football clubs) and organised football activity: 1830–1859

Index of terms

Football Team by “Type”	Regularity of “Activity”
(A) = Army / Military	a = Annual game (fixed date)
(B) = Educational / Former Pupils	b = More than one game per year (fixed dates)
(C) = Migrant team	c = Staged game (one off)
(D) = Football Club	d = Regular activity
(E) = Football section of Sports Club	e = Occasional / infrequent games
(F) = Local / District / Parish teams	
(G) = Occupational identity	
(H) = Philanthropic activity / Charitable Society	
(I) = Athletic Sports / Games event	
(J) = Annual Custom	

1830 – 1859

Name / Location / Type

1830	1831	1832	1833	1834
(1) Foot-Ball Club / Edinburgh / (D) d (2) Philathletic Club / Edinburgh / (E) d	No recorded team activity	(3) 78th Highlanders / Perthshire / (A / C) d	No recorded team activity	No recorded team activity
1835	1836	1837	1838	1839
(4) Blair Drummond Estate team / Stirlingshire / (G) e (5) Deanston Cotton Mill team / Stirlingshire / (G) d	(6) 71st Highlanders first company team / Edinburgh / (A / C) e (7) 71st Highlanders second company team / Edinburgh / (A / C) e (8) Unmarried team / Dunkeld / (J) a (9) Married team / Dunkeld / (J) a	No recorded team activity	(10) Cargill football games / Perthshire / (F) a (11) South of the Tweed team / Scottish Borders / (F / I) a (12) North of the Tweed team / Scottish Borders / (F / I) a	No recorded team activity

1840	1841	1842	1843	1844
(13) Springkell Football Club / Dumfriesshire / (D / J) a	(14) Unmarried team / Kenmore / (J) a (15) Married team / Kenmore / (J) a (16) Chairmen team / Edinburgh / (G) e (17) Gentlemen's Servants team / Edinburgh / (G) e (18) Waiters team / Edinburgh / (G) e	(19) John Grant's team / Tomintoul / (I / J) a (20) Captain McGregor's team / Tomintoul / (I / J) a	No recorded team activity	(21) 92nd Highlanders football games / Perth / (A / C) d
1845	1846	1847	1848	1849
(22) Tradesmen's Football Club / Cupar / (D / G) c (23) Legal Writers' Football Club / Cupar / (D / G) c	(24) Hugh Davidson's team / Cantray Estate, Inverness-shire / (J) a (25) Captain Rose's team / Cantray Estate, Inverness-shire / (J) a	No recorded team activity	(26) Benedicts team / Prestonkirk / (J) a (27) Bachelors team / Prestonkirk / (J) a	(28) 93rd Highlanders / Dundee / (A / C / I) d
1850	1851	1852	1853	1854
(29) 27th Regiment / Stirling / (A / C / I) d (30) Montrose Academy / Angus / (B / I) c (31) Moneydie team / Perthshire / (F / J) a (32) Redgorton team / Perthshire / (F / J) a	(33) Irish migrant football games / Perth / (C) d (34) Veterinary College Football Club / Edinburgh / (B / D) e (35) Glasgow University Football Club / Glasgow / (B / D) e (36) St Andrews Gymnastic Club teams / Fife / (E) c	(42) British League of Juvenile Abstainers / West Lothian / (H) a	(43) Weavers team / Dunning / (G) c (44) Ploughmen team / Dunning / (G) c	(45) Stockbridge football games / Edinburgh / (H) d

	(37) Fordoun football team / Aberdeenshire / (F / I / J) a (38) Lawrence Kirk football team / Aberdeenshire / (F / I / J) a (39) Married team / Petty / (J) a (40) Unmarried team / Petty / (J) a (41) Edinburgh University Football Club / Edinburgh / (B / D) d			
1855	1856	1857	1858	1859
(46) Paisley Football and Shinty Club / Paisley / (D / F) d (47) Edinburgh Academy internal games / Edinburgh / (B) d (48) Lancashire Militia team / Glasgow / (A / C) d	(49) Pitcairngreen team / Perthshire / (F) c (50) Methven team / Perthshire / (F) c (51) Inverness Athletic Club / Inverness / (E) d (52) Lossiemouth football games / Morayshire / (I / J) a	(53) Edinburgh Academical Football Club / Edinburgh / (B / D) d (54) Edinburgh University [Rugby] Football Club / Edinburgh / (B / D) d (55) St Salvator's University Football Club / St Andrews / (B / D) d	(56) Royal High School team / Edinburgh / (B) d (57) Merchiston Castle team / Edinburgh / (B) d	(58) Kings College Shinty Club / Aberdeen / (B / E) c (59) Mr Hodge's School team / St Andrews / (B) c (60) Glasgow Celtic Society red team / Renfrewshire / (C / H) d (61) Glasgow Celtic Society blue team / Renfrewshire / (C / H) d (62) Captain Munro's team / Avoch / (I / J) a (63) Mr Mackenzie's team / Avoch / (I / J) a (64) Marischal College Foot-Ball Club / Aberdeen / (B / D) d

				(65) Brownfield Foot-Ball Club / Glasgow / (D / F) d (66) Windsor Foot-Ball Club / Glasgow / (D / F) d (67) Bankfoot games* / Perthshire / (F / J) b (68) Medicine Faculty team* / Glasgow / (B) d (69) Arts Faculty team* / Glasgow / (B) d
* Pre 1860 reference but exact year unknown				

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- (18) Anonymous (1841) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 25 April, p. 4.
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- (23) Anonymous (1845) *Fife Herald*, 13 March, p. 3.
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- (32) Anonymous (1850) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 17 January, p. 3.
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- (36) Anonymous (1851) *Fife Herald*, 14 August, p. 3.
- (37) Anonymous (1851) *Aberdeen Journal*, 15 January, p. 5.
- (38) Anonymous (1851) *Aberdeen Journal*, 15 January, p. 5.
- (39) Anonymous (1851) *Inverness Courier*, 9 January, p. 6.
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Note: Internal games were being organised by the Academy from at least 1855. The first match against another school appears to have been in 1859. See, Anonymous (1859). *Fifeshire Journal*, 24 November, p. 5.
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- (63) Anonymous (1859). *Inverness Courier*, 6 January, p. 6.
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- (67) Baxter, P. (1898) *Football in Perthshire: past and present*. Perth: T. Hunter, pp. 52–53.
- (68) Anonymous (1860). *Dunfermline Press*, 27 March, p. 4.
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Appendix 2

Table 1.2. Evidence of football clubs: 1830–1859

1830 - 1834	1835 - 1839	1840 - 1844
(1) The Foot-Ball Club, Edinburgh, 1830*	No clubs referenced	(2) Springkell FC, Dumfriesshire, c.1840*
1845 - 1849	1850 - 1854	1855 - 1859
(3) Legal Writers FC, Cupar, 1845 (4) Tradesmen's FC, Cupar, 1845	(5) Edinburgh University FC, 1851 (6) Veterinary College FC, Edinburgh, 1851 (7) Glasgow University FC, 1851	(8) Paisley Football and Shinty Club, 1855 (9) Edinburgh Academical FC, 1857 (10) Edinburgh University [Rugby] FC, 1857 (11) St Salvator's University FC, St Andrews, 1858 (12) Marischal College FC, Aberdeen, 1859 (13) Brownfield FC, Glasgow, 1859 (14) Windsor FC, Glasgow, 1859
* The Foot-Ball Club was founded in 1824 but for the purpose of Table 1.2, which covers the period 1830 to 1859, it is referenced from 1830. * Whilst the Springkell Club's formation year of c.1840 is not formally recorded until 1870, there is evidence of organised football activity stretching back into the 1840s taking place each New Year (under the patronage of the estate owner).		

Sources...

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- (2)** Alcock, C. W., ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 61.
- (3)** Anonymous (1845) *Fife Herald*, 13 March, p. 3.
- (4)** Anonymous (1845) *Fife Herald*, 13 March, p. 3.
- (5)** A Spectator (1851) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 2 February, p. 6.
- (6)** L. O. P. (1851) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 April, p. 6.
- (7)** L. O. P. (1851) *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 6 April, p. 6.
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- (12)** Anonymous (1859) *Aberdeen Herald and General Advertiser*, 22 January, p. 5.
- (13)** Anonymous (1859) *Glasgow Herald*, 23 August, p. 3.
- (14)** Anonymous (1859) *Glasgow Herald*, 23 August, p. 3.

Appendix 3

**Table 2.1. Evidence of football teams (excluding football clubs)
and organised football activity: 1860–1873**

Index of terms

Football Team by “Type”	Regularity of “Activity”
(A) = Army / Military	a = Annual game (fixed date)
(B) = Educational / Former Pupils	b = More than one game per year (fixed dates)
(C) = Migrant team	c = Staged game (one off)
(D) = Football section of Sports Club	d = Regular activity
(E) = Local / District / Parish teams	e = Occasional / infrequent games
(F) = Occupational identity	
(G) = Philanthropic activity / Charitable Society	
(H) = Athletic Sports / Games event	
(I) = Annual Custom	

1860 – 1873

Name / Location / Type

1860	1861	1862	1863	1864
(1) British League of Juvenile Abstainers / West Lothian / (G) a (2) Merchiston Castle School / Edinburgh / (B) d (3) Edinburgh Academy School / Edinburgh / (B) d (4) Avoch New Year meeting / Ross-shire / (H / I) a	(5) Greenock Highlanders 1st Company / Greenock / (A / C / H / I) a (6) Greenock Highlanders 2nd Company / Greenock / (A / C / H / I) a	(7) Unmarried team / Callander / (I) a (8) Married team / Callander / (I) a (9) Alva team / Clackmannanshire / (E) c (10) Tillicoultry team / Clackmannanshire / (E) c (11) Mr Murray’s team / Lanark / (I) a (12) Mr Malcolm’s team / Lanark / (I) a (13) Loretto School internal games / East Lothian / (B) d	No recorded team activity	No recorded team activity

1865	1866	1867	1868	1869
(14) Abercairny team / Perthshire / (E / I) a (15) Inchbrakie team / Perthshire / (E / I) a (16) College team / Crieff / (B) c (17) Academy team / Crieff / (B) c (18) Town team / Glasgow / (E) c	No recorded team activity	No recorded team activity	No recorded team activity	(19) Captain Elliot's team / Selkirk / (F) c (20) Captain Cunningham's team / Selkirk / (F) c (21) Elgin Academy team / Elgin / (B) c (22) Dumfries Academy team / Dumfries-shire / (B) c (23) Weston House team / Elgin / (B) c (24) Starboard watch team / Rosneath / (A) c (25) Port watch team / Rosneath, / (A) c
1870	1871	1872	1873	
(26) Inverness Reformatory School team / Inverness / (B / G) c (27) Tain Ragged School team / Ross-shire / (B / G) c (28) 105th Lanark RV team / Stirling / (A / C) d (29) 93rd Highlanders team / Stirling / (A / C) d (30) Montrose town scratch team / Angus / (E) c	(40) Sergeant Macintyre's team / Inverness / (A / H) c (41) Corporal Henderson's team / Inverness / (A / H) c (42) South of Rannoch team / Perthshire / (E / I) a (43) North of Rannoch team / Perthshire / (E / I) a (44) Aberfoyle football game / Stirlingshire / (E) c	(45) Unmarried men / Innerwick / (H / I) a (46) Married men / Innerwick / (H / I) a (47) Kilmarnock Cricket Club team / Kilmarnock / (D) c (48) Pitlochry team / Perthshire / (E) c (49) Aldgirnaig team / Perthshire / (E) c (50) Upper School team / Lerwick / (B) c (51) Lower School team / Lerwick /	(55) Moffat football tournament / Moffat / (H / I) a (56) Alexandria Tramps team / Alexandria / (E) c (57) Bonhill Tramps team / Bonhill / (E) c (58) Boarding House team / St Andrews / (B) c (59) Residenters team / St Andrews / (B) c (60) Garrison team / Ayr / (A) c	

(31) St John's School team / Montrose, Angus / (B) c (32) Dorward's Seminary School team / Montrose / (B) c (33) Blue Team / Wigtown / (I) a (34) Red Team / Wigtown / (I) a (35) Legal Clerks' team / Banff / (F) c (36) Bank Clerks' team / Banff / (F) c (37) Sibbit's team / Duns / (B) d (38) Cunningham's team / Duns / (B) d (39) St Andrew's former residents team / Glasgow / (C) c		(B) c (52) Arbroath football teams / Arbroath / (E) c (53) Mr Stewart's team / Pitlochry / (E) c (54) Mr Conacher's team / Moulin / (E) c	(61) Mr Baillie's Boarders team / Edinburgh / (B) e (62) Dr Bryce's Boarders team / Edinburgh / (B) c	
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Sources...

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- (3)** *The Edinburgh Academical Football Club centenary history* (1958) Edinburgh: Edinburgh Academical Football Club, pp. 19-20.
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- (6)** Anonymous (1861) *Greenock Advertiser*, 3 January, p. 2.
- (7)** Anonymous (1862) *Stirling Journal*, 17 January, p. 5.
- (8)** Anonymous (1862) *Stirling Journal*, 17 January, p. 5.
- (9)** Anonymous (1862) *Dunfermline Press*, 10 September, p. 2.
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- (11)** Anonymous (1862) *Glasgow Herald*, 6 January, p. 7.
- (12)** Anonymous (1862) *Glasgow Herald*, 6 January, p. 7.
- (13)** Tristram, H. B. (1911) *Loretto school, past and present*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, pp. 86-87. Note: H. H. Almond, who arrived at Loretto in 1862, added football and other sports to the school programme.
- (14)** Anonymous (1865) *Strathearn Herald*, 21 January, p. 3.

- (15) Anonymous (1865) *Strathearn Herald*, 21 January, p. 3.
- (16) Anonymous (1865) *Strathearn Herald*, 16 December, p. 3.
- (17) Anonymous (1865) *Strathearn Herald*, 16 December, p. 3.
- (18) Anonymous (1865) *Glasgow Herald*, 14 April, p. 5.
- (19) Anonymous (1869) *Southern Reporter*, 23 December, p. 2.
- (20) Anonymous (1869) *Southern Reporter*, 23 December, p. 2.
- (21) Anonymous (1869) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 2 April, p. 5.
- (22) Allan, David A; *Dumfriesshire Football Memories*. Dumfries: The Author, p. 2. Note: Allan quotes the *Dumfries and Galloway Standard and Advertiser* of December 1869 which covers the formation of Dumfries FC. The Dumfries Academy team were the new club's first opponents.
- (23) Anonymous (1869) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 2 April, p. 5.
- (24) Anonymous (1869) *Glasgow Herald*, 6 December, p. 5.
- (25) Anonymous (1869) *Glasgow Herald*, 6 December, p. 5.
- (26) Anonymous (1870) *Dundee Courier*, 27 June, p. 3.
- (27) Anonymous (1870) *Dundee Courier*, 27 June, p. 3.
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- (29) Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 9 April, p. 7.
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- (31) Anonymous (1870) *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*, 13 May, p. 4.
- (32) Anonymous (1870) *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*, 13 May, p. 4.
- (33) Anonymous (1870) *Galloway Advertiser and Wigtownshire Free Press*, 6 January, p. 4.
- (34) Anonymous (1870) *Galloway Advertiser and Wigtownshire Free Press*, 6 January, p. 4.
- (35) Anonymous (1870) *Banffshire Reporter*, 23 September, p. 2.
- (36) Anonymous (1870) *Banffshire Reporter*, 23 September, p. 2.
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- (38) Anonymous (1870) *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 29 November, p. 5.
- (39) Anonymous (1870) *North British Daily Mail*, 21 November, p. 3.
- (40) Anonymous (1871) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 16 June, p. 6.
- (41) Anonymous (1871) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 16 June, p. 6.
- (42) Anonymous (1871) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 19 January, p. 3.
- (43) Anonymous (1871) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 19 January, p. 3.
- (44) Anonymous (1872) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 4 January, p. 3.
- (45) Anonymous (1872) *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 23 January, p. 6.
- (46) Anonymous (1872) *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 23 January, p. 6.
- (47) Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 9 December, p. 7.
- (48) Anonymous (1872) *Perthshire Journal and Constitutional*, 31 January, p. 3.
- (49) Anonymous (1872) *Perthshire Journal and Constitutional*, 31 January, p. 3.
- (50) Anonymous (1872) *Shetland Times*, 11 November, p. 3.
- (51) Anonymous (1872) *Shetland Times*, 11 November, p. 3.
- (52) Anonymous (1872) *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*, 2 February, p. 7.
- (53) Anonymous (1872) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 18 January, p. 3.
- (54) Anonymous (1872) *Perthshire Advertiser*, 18 January, p. 3.
- (55) Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 3 January, p. 3.
- (56) Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 12 May, p. 3.
- (57) Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 12 May, p. 3.
- (58) Anonymous (1873) *St Andrews Gazette*, 15 March, p. 2.
- (59) Anonymous (1873) *St Andrews Gazette*, 15 March, p. 2.
- (60) Anonymous (1873) *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 10 May, p. 5.
- (61) Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 15 December, p. 7.
- (62) Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 15 December, p. 7.

Appendix 4

Table 2.2. Football clubs with unspecified codes: 1865–1873

1865	1866	1867
(1) Moray House FC, Edinburgh (2) Castle Terrace FC, Edinburgh (3) St Andrew FC, Glasgow (4) Glasgow University FC [1]*	No clubs referenced	(5) Quarter FC, Lanarkshire
1868	1869	1870
No clubs referenced	No clubs referenced	(6) Inverness FC [1]* (7) Blue Bonnet FC, Edinburgh (8) Sciennes Hill Athletic Club, Edinburgh
1871	1872	1873
(9) Strathnairn FC, Inverness-shire (10) Stratherrick FC, Inverness-shire (11) Millbank House FC, Nairn (12) Thistle FC, Edinburgh	(13) St John's Club, Alloa (14) Stanley House FC, Bridge of Allan (15) Wideawakes FC, Arbroath (16) 5th Lanark RV FC, Glasgow (17) Rob Roy FC, Dumfries (18) Free Templars FC, Dumfries (19) Dunfermline FC	(20) Breadalbane FC, Edinburgh (21) Holyrood FC, Dundee (22) Southern FC, Edinburgh (23) 52 nd Lanark RV FC, Hamilton
* The original Glasgow University Club can be referenced back to 1851. The club appears to be well established in 1865 - they play a Town v Gown match in April and hold a general meeting in December. * There are two clubs listed as Inverness FC for the period. The first was formed in 1870 and the nature of the playing rules is unknown. The second, which formed in 1871, played to the rugby code and therefore appears in Table 2.4 (the list for clubs linked to rugby football).		

Sources...

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(2) Castle Terrace FC (1864). Anonymous (1869) *Scotsman*, 23 March, p. 7.
(3) St Andrew FC (1865). Anonymous (1865) *Glasgow Herald*, 24 November, p. 1.
(4) Glasgow University FC [1] (1865). Anonymous (1865) *Glasgow Herald*, 14 April, p. 5.
(5) Quarter FC (1867). *Naismith's Hamilton Directory for 1878-79*. Hamilton, p. 128.
(6) Inverness FC [1] (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Inverness Advertiser*, 12 April, p. 3.
(7) Blue Bonnet Athletic Club (1870) *Anonymous* (1870) *Scotsman*, 13 June, p. 7.
(8) Sciennes Hill Athletic Club (1870). *Anonymous* (1870) *Scotsman*, 13 June, p. 7.
(9) Strathnairn FC (1871). Anonymous (1872) *Inverness Courier*, 11 January, p. 5.
(10) Stratherrick FC (1871). Anonymous (1872) *Inverness Courier*, 19 January, p. 5.
(11) Millbank House FC (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Aberdeen Journal*, 6 December, p. 4.
(12) Thistle FC (1871). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1876) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 116.

- (13) **St John's Club** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Alloa Advertiser*, 7 December, p. 3.
 (14) **Stanley House FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Alloa Advertiser*, 7 December, p. 3.
 (15) **Wideawakes FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *The Arbroath Guide*, 6 April, p. 2.
 (16) **5th Lanark RV Club** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 21 December, p. 1.
 (17) **Rob Roy FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 7 February, p. 12.
 (18) **Free Templars FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 7 February, p. 12.
 (19) **Dunfermline FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dunfermline Journal*, 21 December, p. 1.
 (20) **Breadalbane FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 25 March, p. 1.
 (21) **Holyrood FC** (1873). Anonymous (1872) *Dundee People's Journal*, 13 September, p. 2.
 (22) **Southern FC** (1873). Anonymous (1882) *Scottish Athletic Annual*, 22 December, p. 10.
 (23) **52nd Lanark RV FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Hamilton Advertiser*, 20 December, p. 3.

Appendix 5

Table 2.3. Football clubs linked to rugby and association football: 1868-1873

1868	1869	1870
(1) Ayr FC (2) Kilmarnock FC	(3) Ayr Academy FC (4) Dumfries FC	(5) Paisley FC
1871	1872	1873
No clubs referenced	(6) Southern Cricket & Football Club, Glasgow	(7) Derby FC, Glasgow (8) Western FC [2], Glasgow

Sources...

- (1) **Ayr FC** (1868). Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd, pp. 29-30. Note: Robinson quotes from the original minutes of Queen's Park FC.
 (2) **Kilmarnock FC** (1869). Anonymous (1869) *Kilmarnock Standard*, 2 January, p. 2. Note: the reference in the newspaper is an advertisement for a meeting of the club. This suggests that the club may have already existed in 1868 but without any documented information, the first known reference has been used to determine year of formation.
 (3) **Ayr Academy FC** (1869). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1874) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 126. Kilmarnock Football Club (1872 – 1879) Minute Book, March 13, 1873. *Kilmarnock Football Club Archive*, uncatalogued. Ayrshire: Kilmarnock Football Club.
 (4) **Dumfries FC** (1869). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 60.
 (5) **Paisley FC** (1870). *Watson's directory for Paisley for the year 1880-81*. (1880) Paisley: Paisley Herald, p. 274, and, Anonymous (1874) *Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette*, 4 April, p. 4.
 (6) **Southern Cricket & Football Club** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 25 March, p. 3.
 (7) **Derby FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 23 December, p. 7.
 (8) **Western FC [2]** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 27 October, p. 6.

Appendix 6

Table 2.4. Football clubs linked to rugby football: 1860–1873

1860	1861	1862
(1) Edinburgh Academical FC* (2) Edinburgh University FC* (3) St Salvator's University FC, St Andrews*	No clubs referenced	No clubs referenced
1863	1864	1865
No clubs referenced	No clubs referenced	(4) West of Scotland FC, Glasgow (5) Merchistonian FC, Edinburgh
1866	1867	1868
(6) Glasgow Academical FC	(7) Edinburgh Academy FC (8) Merchiston Castle School FC, Edinburgh (9) Abbey Park FC, St Andrews (10) Montrose Academy FC (11) Madras College FC, St Andrews	(12) St Andrews Wanderers FC, Edinburgh (13) Blairlodge School FC, Polmont (14) Loretto School FC, Musselburgh (15) Royal High School FP FC, Edinburgh (16) Dollar FC (17) Alloa FC (18) Craigmount School FC, Edinburgh (19) Roland's Rooms FC, Edinburgh (20) Dreghorn School FC, Edinburgh
1869	1870	1871
(21) Aberdeen University FC (22) Broughty Ferry FC (23) Montrose Asylum FC (24) Glasgow University [Rugby] FC (25) Western FC [1], Glasgow (26) Edinburgh University Athletic Club (27) Royal High School FC, Edinburgh	(28) St Leonard's FC, St Andrews (29) Edinburgh Institution PP FC (30) Trades School FC, Montrose (31) Mr Begbie's FP FC, Edinburgh (32) Dumfries Rangers FC (33) Glasgow Academy FC (34) Edinburgh Institution FP FC (35) Scott FC, Edinburgh (36) Clackmannan County FC (37) Ardrossan FC (38) Ardrossan Castle FC	(39) Trinity College FC, Glenalmond (40) Cromdale School FC, Strathspey (41) Carlton FC, Edinburgh (42) Inverness FC [2] (43) Dundee FC (44) Dollar Institution FC (45) Crosshill FC, Glasgow (46) Grantown Free Church School FC, Strathspey (47) Dalhousie FC, Broughty Ferry (48) Langholm FC (49) Helensburgh FC (50) Montrose FC

		(51) Rothesay Academy FC (52) 90th Regiment Club, Ayr (53) Greenock Academy FC (54) Collegiate School FC, Greenock (55) St Andrews Rovers FC,* Glasgow (56) Regent Park FC, Glasgow (57) Seaton House FC, St Andrews
1872	1873	
(58) Heriot's Hospital FC, Edinburgh (59) Arbroath FC (60) Abertay FC, Broughty Ferry (61) Pollokshields FC, Glasgow (62) Nest Academy FC, Jedburgh (63) Circus Place Private Class FC, Edinburgh (64) Daniel Stewart's Institution FC, Edinburgh (65) Wellfield Academy FC, Duns (66) Canonmills House FC, Edinburgh (67) Highfield Academy FC, Melrose (68) Stirling High School FC (69) Bridge of Allan Academy FC (70) Collegiate School FP FC, Edinburgh (71) George Watson College FC* (72) Kinnoull FC, Perth (73) Fettes College FC, Edinburgh (74) Park School FC, Glasgow (75) Queen's Park Rovers FC, Glasgow (76) Warriston FC, Edinburgh (77) Aberdeen FC (78) Larchfield Academy FC, Helensburgh (79) Chanonry House FC, Aberdeen (80) Dundee Junior FC* (81) Arbroath High School FC (82) Ayr Thistle FC* (83) Collegiate School PP FC, Edinburgh (84) Partickhill FC, Glasgow	(90) 93 rd Highlanders FC*, Edinburgh (91) Excelsior FC, Arbroath (92) Royal Academy FC, Inverness (93) Stonehaven FC (94) Black Isle Wasps FC, Fortrose (95) Portobello FC, Edinburgh (96) Perth FC (97) Greenock Wanderers FC (98) Edinburgh Institution Boating FC (99) Belmont FC, Glasgow (100) Lansdowne FC, Glasgow (101) Tayside FC, Dundee (102) Westerkirk FC (103) Morningside FC, Edinburgh (104) Artisan FC, Broughty Ferry (105) Kirkcaldy FC (106) Red Cross FC, Dundee (107) Aberdeen Grammar School FC (108) Aberdeen Gymnastic Club (109) Greenock FC (110) Dundee East End FC (111) Gilbertfield House FC, Hamilton (112) Newport FC, Fife (113) Stirling FC (114) Hawick FC* (115) Monifieth FC	

(85) Morgan's Hospital School FC, Dundee (86) St Vincent FC, Glasgow (87) Arbroath St Thomas FC (88) Dumfries Clerks FC (89) Rovers FC, Dumfries		
* The Edinburgh Academical, Edinburgh University and St Salvador University clubs predate 1860 but are referenced from 1860 in the table for the purpose of the study. * George Watson College FC is also referenced as Watsonians FC. * Dundee Junior FC changes name to Dundee United FC in November 1873. * The 93 rd Highlanders' Club are based in Edinburgh in 1873. * Ayr Thistle do not adopt Association rules until 1874. * St Andrews 'Rovers' originated as 'Wanderers' but altered its title after the first match. * Although the initial meeting to establish a football club in Hawick can be traced to October 16, 1872, Hawick FC was formally established under rugby rules in 1873 and the latter year is officially recognised by the club.		

Sources...

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- (2) Edinburgh University FC (1860).** Formed in 1857. See, Anonymous (1858) *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 19 January, p. 2. Note: article refers to match played in December 1857.
- (3) St Salvador FC (1860).** Founded in 1858. See, Alcock, C. W. ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 61. Note: St Andrews University claims 1858 rather than 1857 as the year of formation.
- (4) West of Scotland FC (1865).** Stuart, C. D. (1965) *West of Scotland Football Club, 1865-1965*. Glasgow: The Author, p. 1.
- (5) Merchistonian FC (1865).** Livingstone, R. ed. (1881) *Scottish football annual, 1881-82*. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 165.
- (6) Glasgow Academical FC (1866).** Glasgow Academical Club (1866-1878) Minute Book. Glasgow Academy Archive, TGA/GAC/2. Glasgow: Glasgow Academy.
- (7) Edinburgh Academy FC (1867)** Anonymous (1867) *Illustrated Sporting and Theatrical News*, 2 March, p. 138. Note: Although Edinburgh Academy had teams dating back to the 1850s and was playing external games by 1859, an argument can be made, as with other schools, that a formalised club developed later in the 1860s. By 1867 the Academy are running more than one team.
- (8) Merchiston Castle School FC (1867).** Anonymous (1867) *Illustrated Sporting and Theatrical News*, 2 March, p. 138. Note: although the school was playing external games from 1858, as with other schools, it can be argued that that a formalised club developed later in the 1860s. By 1867 Merchiston are running more than one team. They are also recorded as a club in Alcock, C. W. (1869) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 61.
- (9) Abbey Park FC (1867).** Anonymous (1867) *Dundee Advertiser*, 11 March, p. 4.
- (10) Montrose Academy FC (1867).** Anonymous (1867) *Dundee Courier*, 21 September, p. 4.
- (11) Madras College FC (1867).** Anonymous (1867) *Fifeshire Journal*, 24 October, p. 6.
- (12) St Andrews Wanderers FC (1868).** Smith, H. (1994) *Golf isn't the only game you know; the story of Madras College Former Pupils' Rugby Football Club*. St Andrews: Quick Print, p. 5.
- (13) Blairlodge School FC (1868).** Thorburn, A.M.C. (1980) *History of Scottish rugby*. London: Johnston and Bacon, p. 14.
- (14) Loretto School FC (1868).** Thorburn, A.M.C. (1980) *History of Scottish rugby*. London: Johnston and Bacon, p. 14. They are also recorded as a club in Alcock, C. W. (1869) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 60.
- (15) Royal High School FP FC (1868).** Ross, William (1949) *Royal High School*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, p. 73.
- (16) Dollar FC (1868).** Anonymous (1868) *Alloa Advertiser*, 7 November, p. 4.
- (17) Alloa FC (1868).** Anonymous (1868) *Alloa Advertiser*, 7 November, p. 4.
- (18) Craigmount School FC (1868).** Thorburn, A.M.C. (1980) *History of Scottish rugby*. London: Johnston and Bacon, p. 14.
- (19) Roland's Rooms FC (1868).** Anonymous (1868) *Scotsman*, 3 February, p. 8.
- (20) Dreghorn School FC (1868).** Thorburn, A. (1980) *History of Scottish rugby*. London: Johnston & Bacon, p. 14.

- (21) **Aberdeen University FC** 1869. Anonymous (1869) *Dundee Courier*, 11 January, p. 3.
- (22) **Broughty Ferry FC** (1869). Anonymous (1869) *Dundee Courier*, 3 November, pp. 2-3.
- (23) **Montrose Asylum FC** (1869). Anonymous (1869). *Dundee Advertiser*, 12 January, p. 4.
- (24) **Glasgow University [Rugby] FC** (1869) Glasgow University Sports Association (2026) *Rugby (Men's) homepage*. Available at: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/sport/whatson/club/rugbymen/> [Accessed: 4 February, 2026]. Note: A game is played in January 1870 (see, Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 11 January, p. 7).
- (25) **Western FC [1]** (1869). Stuart, C. D. (1965) *West of Scotland Football Club, 1865-1965*. Glasgow: The Author, p. 4.
- (26) **Edinburgh University Athletic Club** (1869). Anonymous (1869) *Supplement to The Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 30 November, p. 1.
- (27) **Royal High School FC** (1869). Anonymous (1869) *Scotsman*, 13 December, p. 7. Note: Although the Royal High School had teams dating back to the 1850s and was playing external games by 1858, an argument can be made, as with other schools, that a formalised club developed later in the 1860s. By 1869 the Royal High School are running more than one team.
- (28) **St Leonard's FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Fife Herald*, 13 January, p. 3.
- (29) **Edinburgh Institution PP FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 10 January, p. 7.
- (30) **Trades School FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*, 11 Feb., p. 4.
- (31) **Mr Begbie's FP FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 17 January, p. 7.
- (32) **Dumfries Rangers FC** (1870). Livingstone, R. ed. (1881) *Scottish football annual, 1881-82*. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 164. Note: this club joins the Scottish Football Union in 1876.
- (33) **Glasgow Academy FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 11 January, p. 7.
- (34) **Edinburgh Institution FP FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Scotsman*, 21 November, p. 7.
- (35) **Scott FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870). *Scotsman*, 12 December, p. 7.
- (36) **Clackmannan County FC** (1870). Livingstone, R. ed. (1881) *Scottish football annual, 1881-82*. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 163.
- (37) **Ardrossan FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 1 October, p. 4.
- (38) **Ardrossan Castle FC** (1870). Anonymous (1870) *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald*, 1 October, p. 4.
- (39) **Trinity College FC** (1871). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1871) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 74. Note: the year of formation in this annual is given as 1836 but the college was not founded until 1847. Winchester rules were attempted during the early years but there were not enough pupils for formal games to take hold and the rugby code came in at a later period.
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- (41) **Carlton FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Scotsman*, 21 November, p. 7.
- (42) **Inverness FC [2]** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Inverness Advertiser*, 20 Oct, p. 2.
- (43) **Dundee FC** (1871). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1872) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 73.
- (44) **Dollar Institution FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Alloa Advertiser*, 2 December, p. 3.
- (45) **Crosshill FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Glasgow Herald*, 21 November, p. 5.
- (46) **Grantown Free Church School FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Elgin Courant and Morayshire Advertiser*, 10 March, p. 11.
- (47) **Dalhousie FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Dundee Courier*, 21 October, p. 3.
- (48) **Langholm FC** (1871). Langholm R.F.C. 1871 – 1971, p. 1.
- (49) **Helensburgh FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Glasgow Herald*, 21 November, p. 5.
- (50) **Montrose FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Dundee Courier*, 3 April, p. 4.
- (51) **Rothsay Academy FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Glasgow Herald*, 20 October, p. 6.
- (52) **90th Regiment Club** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *North British Daily Mail*, 18 December, p. 6.
- (53) **Greenock Academy FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Greenock Telegraph*, 18 December, p. 3.
- (54) **Collegiate School FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Greenock Telegraph*, 18 December, p. 3.
- (55) **St Andrews Rovers FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *North British Daily Mail*, 20 February, p. 6, and 6 November, p. 3.
- (56) **Regent Park FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Glasgow Herald*, 15 November, p. 3.
- (57) **Seaton House FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *St Andrews Gazette and Fifeshire News*, 11 March, p. 2.
- (58) **Heriot's Hospital FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 11 March, p. 7.
- (59) **Arbroath FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dundee Courier*, 8 April, p. 3.
- (60) **Abertay FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dundee Courier*, 8 April, p. 3.
- (61) **Pollokshields FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 2 December, p. 6.
- (62) **Nest Academy FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Southern Reporter*, 7 November, p. 2.
- (63) **Circus Place Private Classes FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872). *Scotsman*, 4 November, p. 6.

- (64) **Daniel Stewart's Institution FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872). *Scotsman*, 2 December, p. 7.
- (65) **Wellfield Academy FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Berwickshire News and General Advertiser*, 6 February, p. 4.
- (66) **Canonmills House FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 2 December, p. 7.
- (67) **Highfield Academy FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 4 November, p. 6.
- (68) **Stirling High School FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Falkirk Herald*, 14 March, p. 3.
- (69) **Bridge of Allan Academy FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Falkirk Herald*, 14 March, p. 3.
- (70) **Collegiate School FP FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 22 January, p. 7.
- (71) **George Watson College FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 4 November, p. 6. Note: this club is also referred to as Watsonians FC. See, Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 11 March, p. 7.
- (72) **Kinnoull FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review*, 11 October, p. 7.
- (73) **Fettes College FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 28 October, p. 6.
- (74) **Park School FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 21 December, p. 6.
- (75) **Queen's Park Rovers** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 25 December, p. 2. Note: This article advertises a fixture against Southern to be played on January 1, 1873.
- (76) **Warriston FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 28 October, p. 7.
- (77) **Aberdeen FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Aberdeen Journal*, 20 November, p. 6.
- (78) **Larchfield Academy FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Glasgow Herald*, 19 November, p. 6.
- (79) **Chanonry House FC** (1872). Anonymous (1873) *Aberdeen Journal*, 29 October, p. 5. Note: see also, Anonymous (1872) *Aberdeen Journal*, 11 December, p. 3.
- (80) **Dundee Junior FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dundee Courier*, 8 April, p. 3. Note: club becomes Dundee United in 1873. See, Anonymous (1872) *Dundee Courier*, 27 November, p. 2.
- (81) **Arbroath High School FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dundee Courier*, 16 March, p. 2.
- (82) **Ayr Thistle FC** (1872). Alcock, C. W. (1875) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 117. Dick, W. ed. (1876) *Scottish football annual, 1876-77*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 74. Note: while they are listed as being association football clubs in both annuals, Ayr Thistle did not adopt the Association code until 1874.
- (83) **Collegiate School PPs FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Scotsman*, 2 December, p. 7.
- (84) **Partickhill FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 2 December, p. 6.
- (85) **Morgan's Hospital School FC** (1872). First report of the royal commissioners appointed to inquire into the endowed schools and hospitals (Scotland). Edinburgh: Murray & Gibb, 1873, p. 696.
- (86) **St Vincent FC** (1872). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1877) *Football annual*. London, p. 136.
- (87) **Arbroath St Thomas FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Arbroath Guide*, 17 February, p. 2.
- (88) **Dumfries Clerks' FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 2 October, p. 12.
- (89) **Rovers FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard & Advertiser*, 12 December, p. 6.
- (90) **93rd Highlanders FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 19 February, p. 6.
- (91) **Excelsior FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Arbroath Guide*, 1 November, p. 2.
- (92) **Royal Academy FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Saturday Inverness Advertiser*, 1 February, p. 2.
- (93) **Stonehaven FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Stonehaven Journal*, 20 November, p. 3. Note: there is reference to a football club being suggested in 1871 (see, Anonymous (1871) *Stonehaven Journal*, 23 November, p. 3). However, the club does not appear until 1873.
- (94) **Black Isle Wasps FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Inverness Advertiser*, 11 Jan., p. 2.
- (95) **Portobello FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 1 December, p. 7.
- (96) **Perth FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Dundee Courier*, 3 April, p. 2.
- (97) **Greenock Wanderers FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Greenock Telegraph and Clyde Shipping Gazette*, 4 November, p. 1.
- (98) **Edinburgh Institution Boating FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 13 October, p. 6.
- (99) **Belmont FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 11 November, p. 7.
- (100) **Lansdowne FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *North British Daily Mail*, 28 Oct., p. 7.
- (101) **Tayside FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Dundee People's Journal*, 27 December, p. 6.
- (102) **Westerkirk FC** (1873). *Langholm R.F.C. 1871 – 1971*. Langholm: Langholm R.F.C., p. 3.
- (103) **Morningside FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 22 December, p. 7.
- (104) **Artisan FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Scotsman*, 22 December, p. 7.
- (105) **Kirkcaldy FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Fifeshire Advertiser*, 27 September, p. 3.
- (106) **Red Cross FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Fife Herald*, 11 December, p. 2.
- (107) **Aberdeen Grammar School FC** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Aberdeen Journal*, 16 April, p. 8.
- (108) **Aberdeen Gymnastic Club** (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Aberdeen Journal*, 19 November, p. 5.

(109) Greenock FC (1873). Forster, J. L. M. (1974) *The first hundred years: Greenock Wanderers 1873–1973*. Greenock: Greenock Wanderers, p. 10.

(110) Dundee East End FC (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Dundee Courier*, 17 March, p. 3.

(111) Gilbertfield House FC (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Glasgow Herald*, 25 November, p. 6.

(112) Newport FC (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Dundee Courier*, 17 March, p. 3.

(113) Stirling FC (1873). Anonymous (1874) *Stirling Observer*, 3 January, p. 3.

(114) Hawick FC (1873). Edgar, James (1923) *Fifty years' football in Hawick 1873–1923*. Hawick, p. 7.

(115) Monifieth FC (1873). Anonymous (1873) *Dundee People's Journal*, 15 November, p. 6.

Appendix 7

Table 2.5. Football clubs linked to association football: 1866–1873

1866	1867	1868
(1) Kinmount FC, Dumfriesshire (2) Hamilton Gymnasium Club*	(3) Queen's Park FC, Glasgow (4) Annan FC	(5) Thistle FC, Glasgow (6) Airdrie FC
1869	1870	1871
(7) Drummond FC, Glasgow	(8) Queen's Park Juniors FC, Glasgow (9) Springkell FC*, Dumfriesshire	(10) Dumbreck FC, Glasgow (11) East Kilbride FC (12) Stonefield FC, Glasgow (13) Granville FC, Glasgow
1872	1873	
(14) Deaf & Dumb FC, Glasgow (15) Vale of Leven FC, Alexandria (16) Eastern FC, Glasgow (17) 3rd Lanark RV FC, Glasgow (18) Queen of the South Wanderers FC, Dumfries (19) Rangers FC, Glasgow (20) Rosslyn FC, Govan (21) Alclutha FC, Dumbarton (22) Clyde FC, Glasgow (23) Clydesdale FC, Glasgow (24) Callander FC, Glasgow (25) Rovers FC, Glasgow (26) Dumbarton FC (27) Rothesay FC	(28) Clydebank FC, Rutherglen (29) Renton FC, Dunbartonshire (30) Ibrox FC, Glasgow (31) Portland FC, Kilmarnock (32) Govan FC (33) St Andrews FC, Kilmarnock (34) Thistle FC, Renton (35) Star of Leven FC, Alexandria (36) 23rd Renfrew RV FC, Cathcart (37) Vale of Leven Rovers FC, Alexandria (38) Standard FC, Glasgow (39) Lennox FC, Dumbarton (40) Battlefield FC, Glasgow (41) Celtic FC, Glasgow (42) Oxford FC, Glasgow (43) Havelock FC, Glasgow (44) Summertown FC, Glasgow (45) Parkgrove FC, Glasgow (46) Mauchline FC (47) Busby FC (48) Argyle FC, Glasgow (49) Cambuslang FC (50) Woodbank FC, Glasgow (51) 1st Lanark RV FC, Glasgow (52) Glasgow Wanderers FC (53) West End Wanderers FC, Glasgow (54) Blythswood FC, Glasgow (55) Alexandra Athletic Club, Glasgow (56) Union FC, Glasgow (57) Marchtown FC, Glasgow (58) 21 st Fusiliers Club, Glasgow (59) Vale of Leven Youths FC, Alexandria	

	(60) Heatherbell FC, Dumbarton (61) Jamestown FC (62) Blue Bell FC, Alexandria (63) Star of the Vale FC, Alexandria (64) Rising Star FC, Jamestown (65) Hawthorn FC, Dumbarton (66) East End FC, Dumbarton (67) Lorn Youths FC, Alexandria	
* Hamilton Gymnasium was playing football from its formation year of 1866 but it is unclear if it was playing to a version of the Association rules at that point. They played Queen's Park under a hybrid version of Association rules in 1869. * The Springkell Club appears to predate 1866 and is listed in Table 1.2 in Chapter 1. However, the club is first referenced as playing to the association code in the <i>Football Annual</i> of 1870.		

Sources...

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- (2) Hamilton Gymnasium Club** (1866). Anonymous (1866) *Hamilton Advertiser*, 12 May, p. 2.
- (3) Queen's Park FC** (1867) Queen's Park Football Club (1867 -1877) Cash Book. *Queen's Park Football Club Archive*, QP.E454. Glasgow: Scottish Football Museum.
- (4) Annan FC** (1867). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1868) *John Lillywhite's Football annual*. London: John Lillywhite, p. 81.
- (5) Thistle FC** (1868). Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 30.
- (6) Airdrie FC** (1868). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1876) *Football annual*. London: Ward, Lock & Tyler, p. 115.
- (7) Drummond FC** (1869). Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 36.
- (8) Queen's Park Juniors FC** (1870). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1876) *Football annual*. London: Ward, Lock & Tyler, p. 118.
- (9) Springkell FC** (1870). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1870) *Football annual*. London: Sportsman, p. 61. Note: they are listed as playing to the Association code in 1870 but in the same section claim a formation year of 1840.
- (10) Dumbreck FC** (1871). Dick, W. ed. (1876) *Scottish football annual, 1876-77*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 58.
- (11) East Kilbride FC** (1871). Anonymous (1871) *Hamilton Advertiser*, 16 December, p. 2.
- (12) Stonefield FC** (1871). Dick, W. ed. (1877) *Scottish football annual, 1877-78*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 92.
- (13) Granville FC** (1871). Robinson, R. (1920) *History of the Queen's Park Football Club, 1867-1917*. Glasgow: Hay Nisbet & Co. Ltd, p. 36.
- (14) Deaf & Dumb FC** (1872). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1874) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 127.
- (15) Vale of Leven FC** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *North British Daily Mail*, 23 August, p. 3.
- (16) Eastern FC** (1872). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1873) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 93.
- (17) 3rd Lanark RV Club** (1872). Anonymous (1872) *Glasgow Herald*, December 20, 1872, p. 7.
- (18) Queen of the South Wanderers FC** (1872). Fleming, J. S. ed. (1880) *Scottish football annual, 1880-81*. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 57, and Coutts, J. J. (1882) Football in the Southern Counties. In: *McDowall, J. K. ed. Scottish football annual, 1882-83*. Glasgow: W. Weatherston & Son, p. 120. Note: *the Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, reports on a 10th anniversary event celebrating the club's formation which links to season 1872-73. See, Anonymous (1883) *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 10 February, p. 4,
- (19) Rangers FC** (1872). Dick, W. ed. (1876) *Scottish football annual, 1876-77*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 64.
- (20) Rosslyn FC** (1872). Dick, W. ed. (1877) *Scottish football annual, 1877-78*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 91.
- (21) Alclutha FC** (1872). Dick, W. ed. (1876) *Scottish football annual, 1876-77*. Glasgow: Mackay and Kirkwood, p. 68.
- (22) Clyde FC** (1872). 'True Blue' (1881) The Rangers FC. In: Livingstone, R. ed. *Scottish football annual, 1881-82*. Glasgow: Gillespie Brothers, p. 69. Note: Rangers' second opponent in summer of 1872.
- (23) Clydesdale FC** (1872). Alcock, C. W. ed. (1873) *Football annual*. London: Virtue, p. 93.
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Appendix 8

Table 4.1. List of new Sheffield clubs: April 1875 - December 1875 (alphabetical order)

(1) Adelene FC	(2) Atlantic Star FC	(3) Castle FC
(4) Cemetery Star FC	(5) Clevedon FC	(6) Darnall FC
(7) Eclipse FC	(8) Fir Mount FC	(9) Heeley Old Ball FC
(10) Mappin and Webb's FC	(11) Nether Juveniles FC	(12) Normanton FC
(13) Park National FC	(14) Rising Star FC	(15) Rutland FC
(16) Swallownest FC	(17) Temperance Star FC	(18) United Volunteers FC
(19) Wadsley FC	(20) Wesley College FC	(21) Woodhouse Mills FC*
(22) 19 th Regiment FC		

Sources...

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 (12) **Normanton FC**. Anonymous (1875) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 7 December, p. 6.
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 (20) **Wesley College FC**. Anonymous (1875) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 27 October, p. 4.
 (21) **Woodhouse Mills FC**. Anonymous (1875) *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 16 November, p. 6.
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