Introduction

This article seeks to respond to Tony Collins’ article on ‘Early Football and the Emergence of Modern Soccer’ between 1840 and 1880, published in *The International Journal of the History of Sport*,1 in which he asks some important questions of the so-called ‘Revisionist’ side in what has become known as the ‘Origins of Football’ debate. For example, his questioning of the significance of Sheffield as a pre-genitor to the London based Football Association, formed in 1863, in which he moves appreciatively away from his original position that maintained ‘Sheffield FC had considerable influence on early football in England’.2 Nevertheless, as part of his interrogation he has raised some serious issues particularly surrounding the involvement of the public schools and public schoolboys in the history of the development of football in Sheffield and the similarity of the ‘Laws of Football played at Rugby School rules’ to those of Sheffield rules.3

His critique about public school influence on Sheffield rules is, however, irrelevant to my overall case about the origins of football in the nineteenth century which has argued, in a series of published articles,4 that a broad, tenacious and visible footballing culture based upon small-sided games existed in Britain between 1818 and 1860, outside of any influence from the public schools or public schoolboys as football developed across the country and across the century. This would have been a process of innovation, being a matter of development rather than invention.5 That is not to say football was a particularly popular game, certainly not compared to the last quarter of the nineteenth century after codification of the Association game with a central input from public schoolboys, and its subsequent diffusion to the Northern cotton towns in Lancashire in the 1870s with the ensuing development of the Football League and the professionalization of Association football in the 1880s.

Nor does Collins’ examination of the written rules of Rugby and Sheffield have any significance on my central thesis which owes nothing to a debate about what rules were played or who influenced whom. Frankly, that sterile debate is one I don’t want to participate in and thereby seek to absolve myself from Tony Collins’ charge of being part of a flawed academia that has committed an ‘overestimation of the importance of written rules’.6 In fact, I agree that picking over rules of different forms of football in the present day to explain football’s development in the nineteenth century is unhelpful and is immaterial in explaining the appeal of soccer or rugby in different parts of the country. Somewhat ironically, after the charge of overestimating the importance of written rules, Collins then goes on to spend the next four and a half pages of his text in examining ‘Sheffield Rules Football’ and comparing it with the rules of Rugby.7 It may be, however, that Tony Collins is right and Sheffield rules were influenced both by Rugby and Eton. It may also be, though, that all rules during this period, including Rugby, Eton and Sheffield rules, were just variations or adaptations of other forms of football extant across the country where rules included both kicking and handling, which, in turn, had derived from local variants of folk football which included small-sided games as well as the better known instances of mass football.8 Indeed, it may be that when Eton and Rugby produced the first written rules of football they may have simply been formalisations of games already being played in wider society with which public schoolboys of the early nineteenth century would have been familiar.9 I suspect that the small-sided games that existed across the century were more similar to association football, as it came to be codified, than many of the games played at public schools. These may have been more influenced by mass folk football, although this is only conjecture, as local rules for games of football may have been the dominant driver. Certainly, folk football had been played in the street in Rugby in the eighteenth
century with the Constable’s book of 31 December 1743/4 reading ‘Pd Baxter for Crying no football play in ye street, 2d’, and, presumably, these would have influenced Rugby’s code of football. The argument seems fated with an infinite regress. By mid-century it does seem, though, that small-sided games had quite simple rules. Indeed, writing in February, 1862, George Forrest says that although the rules of football ‘seem to be entirely arbitrary, depending on local regulations of the spot where the game is played’, the only expense of the game consisted of the purchasing of two balls, four long sticks, two short ones, and a bladder now and then. The two balls are requisite in order that, should an accident happen to the one in play, the reserve ball may at once be substituted, and the game continued, while the wounded ball is being repaired by a non-player.\(^1\)

The Rugby system though, Forrest thinks, ‘employed a set of rules remarkable for their number and complexity, employing more technical terms and even more difficult to comprehend, than the rules of billiards’. This was also the complaint in Melbourne in 1859 when a group met to form what became the Melbourne and, later, Victorian rules. According to William Hammersley, at that meeting, Tom Wills, an old Rugbean suggested using Rugby rules, ‘but nobody understood them except himself, and the usual result was: adjourn to the Parade Hotel Close by, and think the matter over’.\(^2\) This resonates with Adrian Harvey’s view on the claim of early football historians that the upsurge in football playing in the 1870s was as a result of the dissemination of printed rule books and the work of so-called ‘missionaries’ to teach the game to the working classes. Given, though, that that the various public school codes were effectively incomprehensible to outsiders, Harvey argues that ‘it is consequently extremely unlikely that the printed versions would have had any appreciable impact on the wider population’.\(^3\) Tellingly, for those working class participants in a game called ‘football’, that has been identified as taking place between 1818-1859 mainly in small-sided games on church, works’ or school outings, at rural fetes, galas or celebrations or as street or casual football, written rules would have been immaterial as many of the players would have been illiterate.\(^4\) The 1870 Education Act was still to be passed and its impact in the world of football would only be felt a decade later with working class and lower-middle class involvement in the formation and administration of football clubs, particularly in the hot-bed of association football in the 1870s and 80s, the Bolton-Darwen-Blackburn triangle in Lancashire.\(^5\) Be that as it may, this article seeks to maintain and enhance the so-called ‘revisionist’ view of the origins of football in the nineteenth century.

### Early football and the Revisionists

In his article Collins claims that the ‘revisionist’ school of football historians, led by Adrian Harvey and including myself and Roy Hay, think that ‘the public schools played little or no role in the emergence of modern soccer and working – and middle class men were the authentic pioneers of the game’.\(^6\) Obviously I cannot answer for Roy Hay, or even Adrian Harvey, although those two historians clearly and unequivocally state that ‘it needs to be made very clear that the authors’, (Roy Hay, Adrian Harvey and Mel Smith) in their article about ‘Football before Codification’, have ‘never suggested that the public school people should be written out of the story of football before, during or after codification’.\(^7\) They cannot be clearer but, seemingly, Tony Collins chooses to ignore the testament of those authors. I find his claim about my own research equally perplexing as, in that published research, I state, quiet unambiguously, in one of the recent articles quoted by Collins that my aim was to
add extensive original material, from other nineteenth century newspaper sources, to that already presented by Goulstone and Harvey, extending and supporting the revisionist argument surrounding the origins of modern football, including the involvement of others who were not public schoolboys. It must be clearly stated though that the object of the article is not to write public schools or public schoolboys out of history, or their important role in the development of football particularly surrounding codification of the game, but to re-balance the argument by outlining the involvement of other sources of the origins of football that were played long before and after the two principal varieties of the game, rugby and association football, were formally established. 18

It is difficult to understand how Tony Collins then squares my stated position, and that of Roy Hay, Adrian Harvey and Mel Smith, with his assertion that we think public schools and public schoolboys played little or no role in the emergence of modern soccer given their codification of Association football. Perhaps, though, it may be that he has simply overlooked my stated position on this important issue despite it being additionally repeated in my latest article on the ‘Origins’. 19 Furthermore, his inaccuracy with regard to my position on the influence of public school and public schoolboys on the origins of football is not his only oversight but also seemingly extends to the central thrust of my research which suggests that a broad and persistent footballing culture was extant in England in the period 1818-1859. 20 In this article I will seek to defend, and expand on, my published articles that have outlined such a ‘tenacious and visible footballing culture than previously thought in mid-century Britain’. 21 This claim of a footballing culture was based upon extensive empirical evidence gleaned in the main from nineteenth century newspapers made possible through their digitisation by the British Newspaper Library and available online. Concomitantly, this article will also seek to answer his charges of that I commit ‘the same methodological errors’ as Eric Dunning and Graham Curry in their defence of what has come to be known as the ‘orthodox’ view of football’s history, namely, ‘an ahistoric view of culture and continuity, and a tendency to view the past through the lens of the present’. 22

In fact, it is actually Tony Collins who commits one of those ‘methodological errors’ he charges others with, as he demands we view the past through the lens of the present by rejecting large numbers of reported small-sided games of football as an ‘informal leisure practice or folk custom’ and by so doing seeks to rely solely on what might be termed ‘formal matches’, as though early to mid-century football games were of a similar form to those of today, and are the only measure of a footballing culture. Significantly, many small-sided games were reported in the press across the nation at the time as ‘football’ or ‘foot-ball’ and not some ‘informal leisure practice or folk custom’. These are labels accredited to those small-sided games by Tony Collins, viewing them through his 21st century conceptual spectacles. Reliance on seeking only formal games that are to count as ‘football’ is an approach I have been self-critical of in print, 23 as well as critical of John Goulstone and Adrian Harvey whilst acknowledging their difficulties in relying, in the main, on one source for football research - Bell’s Life in London. 24 With his exclusion of anything other than ‘legal, organised matches’ 25 to count as evidence of a footballing culture Collins is then able to claim that the ‘revisionist’ attempts to quantify the extent of the ‘football culture’ that they claim existed in the first decades of Victorian Britain have also proven to be problematic. 26 Tony Collins’ logic is similar to the proposition that there are a hundred rabbits in a room - so how many rabbits have we got? Well ninety-eight of them are black and two are white, and you can’t count black ones because I say
so, so we only have two rabbits. Hopefully, the discerning reader, from the evidence below, will agree we have one hundred rabbits.

Tony Collins also argues in his article that ‘the mistaken understanding of the importance of Sheffield football is at the core of the arguments of those who would describe themselves as the ‘revisionists’’. Unfortunately, for Collins, this is simply mistaken with regard to my research. My quest was the same as a number of historians who aimed to address an on-going problem in the historiography of football which, as Adrian Harvey noted, had troubled a number of scholars in the ‘Origins’ debate, that concerned the alleged ‘disappearance of football in the wider community between 1830 and 1860 not least because of the rapid expansion in the game amongst the working and middle classes in the 1870s’. Indeed, Gavin Kitching notes that Adrian Harvey’s own account moves abruptly from discussion of the popular, pub-based football teams of the 1830s to a chapter on the distinctly upper-middle class Sheffield Association football clubs of the 1850s and 1860s. Moreover, from the late 1850s on, all forms of plebeian team football disappear from his account entirely, until the rise of semi-professional and professional football (both soccer and rugby) in the 1880s and 1890s. They disappear from his account, but did they disappear in reality?

The answer to Gavin Kitching’s question is a resounding, no, predicated on the evidence published in my previous papers covering the period 1818 to 1859. Additional material is included below with regard to 1860 to further substantiate the answer in the negative. Despite this, on this very point, Curry and Dunning argue that the evidence of a footballing culture outside of the public schools and public schoolboys in this period is ‘sparse and ultimately misleading’ and, as a consequence, ‘there is little need for any major realignment in the standard histories of the game’. Now, although I disagree with Curry and Dunning on this point, I consider them to be ‘serious historians’, giving a lie to Collins’ argument that ‘all serious historians accept that games of varying degrees of formality continued to be played in the first half of the nineteenth century and residual knowledge of football survived among the working classes in parallel with the growth of the game in the public schools’. Furthermore, Collins’ position is close to the fallacy of positive proof that seeks to turn mass opinion into a method of verification. Just because ‘all serious historians agree’ doesn’t make it necessarily true. Indeed, the fallacy of prevalent proof commonly takes the form of deference to the historiographical majority. The second problem for his argument is that the only reference given in his article to support his assertion, somewhat surprisingly, is Tony Collins himself. Indeed, without evidence of a footballing culture between 1830 and 1870 then ‘we have something precious close to the ‘football vacuum’ of the older ‘pre-revisionist’ history’. No such ‘vacuum’ existed as previous papers and additional material below evidence. My quest for evidence for such a footballing culture between 1830 and 1870 was stimulated initially by research into Turton Football Club, a club formed in the little village to the north of Bolton in December, 1871. The standard history suggested that the club had been formed by two returning public schoolboys, J.C. and Robert Kay, who brought with them the rules of Harrow football. This then conforms to what came to be known as the ‘social diffusionist model’, that is, the notion that football was diffused to the working classes by public schoolboys who couldn’t establish old boy’s teams as they had returned to live and work in their respective communities which simply could not support a football team made up of players of their own social class as their numbers were too small. Consequently, these returning public schoolboys would gather round them
the village tenantry, the squire’s boy, the blacksmith’s ‘prentice, and the school master, and in one of the Manor fields, there would be transplanted the old game under new conditions. Certainly two of the oldest clubs in Lancashire, Turton and Darwen, do not seem to have departed too far from this pattern. 36

Unfortunately for this thesis, it is the lower middle class schoolmaster, W.T. Dixon, who seems to have been the driving force behind the establishment of the football club and was certainly the central figure in bringing Association football to Turton and south-east Lancashire rather than the local elite. 37 Tony Mason, however, speculates that the formation of Turton football club formalised ‘what had clearly been an existing playing relationship’ with 48 members paying a shilling each to join. Indeed, it would be incredulous if 48 locals, probably the entire male population of the village of a football playing age, just signed up to a game unknown to them that had just been introduced by returning public schoolboys (and pay for the privilege) as ‘dominant paradigm’ historians would have us believe. Theirs would have been merely an adaptation of the ongoing football culture, extant across the century, in a developmental process that would have been quite seamless. In fact it would have been as one commentator remarks ‘no big deal’. 38 Players in Turton easily adapted to playing association football from 1875 onwards as well as using Harrow rules against Darwen in their first match in 1872, a team who later joined the ‘rugger ranks’ before also signing up to association football from around 1878. It was not an uncommon occurrence for teams to play different codes on different occasions, or even on the same occasion, switching between handling games and non-handling versions on the same afternoon. 39 Historians may have been ‘taken back’ by switching codes regularly but this may simply have been perfectly normal throughout the early and mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, it has been noted of Turton that ‘previous to this time the villagers had indulged in a leather-punching pastime, ungoverned by any code or rules or organisation’. 40 Furthermore, it has been claimed that matches were ‘being played as early as 1856 beneath the shadow of the old church where Turton F.C. later played’. 41 Certainly, a match had taken place in Turton as early as 1830 42 which was a return fixture from a match held on ‘Collop Monday’ (the day before Shrove Tuesday) at Round Barn near Edgworth (a mile up the road from Turton), when the competing teams had each fielded twenty players and played for £2 10s (£2.50) a side with the stakes being ‘lodged in the hands of the landlord of the Round Barn Public House’. 43 It was reported that ‘most matches took place on a Monday after they had “downed their beams” on a Saturday’ being able to do so as they were all,

with the exception of two or three, hand-loom weavers, and it mattered not to them if they practised football three days a week, and then wove almost day and night the rest. It was a common thing for the ball to be “upped” at Livesey Fold at 12 o’clock noon, and never stop until dark, this day after day, six days to the week, and many times until 12 at night during full moon.44

Interestingly, the teams of twenty players each had ‘five back lyers, two side players, and 13 in players, with one “trundler in”, and no umpire or referee’. The report of the ferocity of the game may indicate why football was not a particularly popular sport at this time.

When all were ready the 13 in-players on each side stood in the middle of the field, shoulder to shoulder, in a straight line, facing 13 of their opponents, and about 2 yards of space between each row. The ball was trundled in between them, and then commenced in many cases what would not now be called a football match, but some of the grossest brutality, for it mattered not if one man met an opponent where or how he hit him, as sooner a few men were disabled he better. 45
The game was made even fiercer in some matches when players wore an iron clog on their right foot and a shoe on the left. As regards scoring in the game, apparently a line was drawn 15 yards from the fence at each end of the field (the space between the line and the fence being called the ass-hole) and the ball could not be “upped” nearer the fence than this line. A player could catch the ball, run with, throw it to his mates, or set it on the ground and kick it, but must not kick it out of his hand. A game was not won until one side had “upped” it twice, that is, kicked the ball over his opponent’s fence form anywhere not less than 15 yards off, twice out of three times; if the game was not won they would go on until dark to settle it.

These rules seem a long way off anything that would be seen as Rugby or Association football of today but it is highly probable that working class men and boys who first switched from the sort of games described above to those codified games would not have experienced the alteration as much of a drastic change at all. After all, it is also worth remembering that games of Association and Rugby football of the mid-1860s would have not resembled either form of the game that exists today. But, as Gavin Kitching has noted, ‘they would already have been used to playing in equal-sized teams, on demarcated playing areas with fixed or marked goals or scoring areas and they would have also abided by some sort of rules’. Football matches all had three elements – handling, carrying and kicking – elements that all football participants across the century would have been familiar with in differing amounts although the described game seems more akin to rugby than soccer. What is fascinating is that by the late 1870s there was a mixture of local preference for soccer or rugby football, particularly in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Tony Collins charges the ‘revisionists’ with not being able to explain ‘why rugby was more popular than soccer in many areas, especially Yorkshire where it kept the Sheffield game to its eponymous city and hinterland’. Unfortunately, he then doesn’t give an explanation himself. Indeed, one of the first scholars to address the importance of rugby and football ‘zones’ was Dave Russell, and his analysis remains an important insight into the spread of these variants of football. He argued that ‘by the mid-1870s two separate games were clearly emerging’ and further noted that, ‘soccer had its origins and its initial strongholds in an area centred on Bolton, Darwen and Blackburn’, stressing the importance of Turton F.C. in diffusing the game. Russell’s research clearly shows the cluster of Association clubs in the Bolton-Darwen-Blackburn area, and also shows that the founders of the Lancashire Rugby Football Union in 1881 are clearly centred on the Manchester area, with outposts at Rochdale, Oldham, Littleborough and their surrounding districts, with outliers at Liverpool and Preston. Furthermore, Russell identifies ‘transitional’ areas that were originally rugby-oriented, but quickly changed over to Association by a process that could be identified as ‘contagious diffusion’. So, for example, in the Preston-Burnley corridor, Padiham adopted Association rules in 1879, and most nearby clubs followed shortly afterwards, such as Preston North End (1879-80) and Burnley (1882-3). Additionally, Russell contended that ‘the shift from rugby to soccer in Preston and Burnley clearly owed something to the success in F.A. and Lancashire cup ties of soccer sides in nearby Blackburn and Darwen’. He went on to stress the importance of ‘cultural boundaries’, in that ‘certain areas, whether because of topography, urban structure, economic base or more likely a marriage of all three, enjoyed clearly defined cultural patterns and identities’. Arguably, such a ‘cultural boundary’ existed encompassing the East Lancashire cotton district through economic and social links between similar communities, and that this created the ideal circumstances for the contagious diffusion of an innovation, in this case, playing football according to the codified rules of the Football Association. Although Manchester was in the traditional county of Lancashire, and as ‘Cottonopolis’, was the nominal
centre of the Lancashire cotton district, it was perhaps because of its more varied economy, its cultural makeup and areas of increased deprivation that made it untypical of Lancashire at this time, in similar fashion to Liverpool. In this way, Manchester, then, did not appear to have the same interrelated cultural and social connections that the more closely-linked textile towns of East Lancashire did, although parts of the city were rather similar to these communities. This could help explain why Manchester’s rugby football traditions carried on for as long as they did, before they too were overwhelmed by the spread of Association football proper from East Lancashire.

It is worthy of note at this point that the man centrally responsible for association football’s introduction, expansion and advancement in Lancashire was not a public schoolboy but a lower middle-class schoolmaster, William Thomas Dixon. Indeed, it has been argued that the changing class structure from 1870 onwards with an emerging lower middle-class with their social and cultural capital in the form of ‘formal educational qualifications acquired by school teachers and more informal qualifications attained by clerks and book-keepers and their inter-generational transmission’ was one key in understanding the development of association football in north-west England. Social capital, in the form of a developing respectability and the political and social networks and connections made by sections of the lower middle class, may also be another.

**Football and Cultural Continuity**

Two outstanding sports historians were perceptive, prophetic and prescient when it came to the historiography of football - Hugh Cunningham and Richard Holt. The former, writing in 1980, noted that ‘the more casual practice of kicking a ball around, a practice much closer to the modern game of football, survived’ and that ‘this kind of football precisely because it was so casual, was unlikely to leave behind it many records; that however is no indication that it was rare’. Accordingly, Cunningham offered little ‘evidence’ for this football as records were sparse. For, Tony Collins’ Cunningham’s views would, however, have to be disregarded as the historian cannot assume ‘anything about events for which there is no evidence’. At the beginning of this passage Collins, with a rhetorician’s skill, cleverly uses the apophasis ‘leaving aside whether a historian can assume anything’ and, of course, he really means ‘do not leave it aside’ but reject it as anything without ‘evidence’ is to be disregarded. I consider myself to be an empirical historian but Collins is surely verging on the empiricist with his implication, standing nearly alone as a naive realist. Clearly, there can be few historians who accept that there must be a given meaning to historical events even with evidence and sometimes, more importantly, without evidence. And even if we may all agree at the event-level that something happened at a particular time and place in the past, its significance and its meaning as we describe it, is provided by the historian. Meaning is not intrinsic in the event or non-event itself but mediated through the historian’s account of it. In reality, the challenge is to make a distinction between fact and fiction as we configure our historical narratives, acknowledging the impact of words, phrases, expressions and images as well as rhetoric and style. This provides not only a formal challenge to traditional empiricism, but forces historians to acknowledge that we are endlessly making moral and political choices as we describe past ‘reality’. Importantly, something like Steven Lukes’ ‘third dimension of power’ would be unintelligible to a naive realist like Collins, locked, seemingly, into a logical positivist ontology and epistemology. Tony Collins would probably dispute the suggestion that he is a naive realist but he seems to steadfastly ignore the attempts by historians to wrestle with the problem of how to express and characterise what is believed to be an
existing culture of football from the fragmentary and opaque sources (although these are becoming increasing less so) available to them for the early nineteenth century.

Alongside Cunningham, Richard Holt also had similar foresight in the early 1980s when he questioned whether we should see football as a ‘cultural continuity, especially as far as the traditions of male youth are concerned’, across the nineteenth century. Indeed, accepting his idea of cultural continuity may explain Association football’s relatively swift adoption post-1863 as it was more like the small-sided games already being played in various forms and to various rules across the country. That is not to say that social continuity requires no explanation with only change needing clarification or elucidation. Indeed, the fallacy of presumptive continuity and the fallacy of presumptive change are equally indefensible and are the most difficult forms of bias to eradicate from ones’ work. Given my research, however, it is entirely plausible to argue that ‘right across the country , ‘mixed’ handling and kicking forms of traditional team football simply mutated into either (what we would now call) soccer or into (what we would now call) rugby as the nineteenth century wore on.

In addition, Holt went on to argue that ‘perhaps we have taken on board too eagerly the heroic accounts of the public school men, who founded the Football Association in 1863’. Indeed some historians did, and continue to do so. Furthermore, he also called for ‘study at the local and rural level over the nineteenth century as a whole using the local press from its inception’ to contribute towards ‘a meticulous ethnography of the mid-Victorian urban working class’. My research has attempted to follow Holt’s cry by focussing on local newspaper reports that have uncovered a tenacious, widespread and visible footballing culture in 1860, outside of any influence whatsoever of public schools or public schoolboys. In so-doing, it adds to the ongoing, accumulating and compelling case for a major realignment of the history of the game that revisionists have called for, contributing to the continuing demise and, now seemingly inescapable, death of the ‘orthodox’ history of football. Tony Collins’ article now seems to be attempting to tread a neutral path between ‘revisionist’ and ‘orthodox’ accounts that seems as fanciful as attempting to find a neutral path between fact and fiction. In reality, his original position, as outlined in his outstanding history of the origins of Rugby league football, is a near model of what can be considered the current revisionist position. In that work, he writes that

‘…. evidence highlights the degree to which continuities and survivals of pre-industrial practices coexisted alongside urban, industrial culture, It may well be that this residual consciousness of older forms of football was one of the reasons for the alacrity with which organised rugby and association football were taken up by the working classes in the latter part of the century’.

It was more than ‘residual consciousness’ but widespread playing that gave them knowledge of football although the evidence used by Collins to substantiate his argument is meagre, comprising claims from a book published in 1945 that asserts football was ‘played in the 1840s in villages near Huddersfield and Leeds’, whilst also noting that the 1842 Royal Commission on Children in Mines and Manufacturing ‘found that football was played widely in the West Riding coal fields’. From this meagre evidence Collins then claims ‘it is clear that in the mid-nineteenth century knowledge of football survived among the working classes in parallel with the development and growing influence of public school-derived football’. More than knowledge of football survived, the playing of football survived. This widespread playing of the game of football is evidenced in a number of my papers and additional evidence from 1860 below further cements that position.
Football, not ‘informal leisure practices or folk customs’, in 1860

In previous papers I have attempted to address the problem Harvey first identified concerned with the alleged disappearance of football in the wider community between 1830 and 1860. This section continues in the same trajectory and uses the same source material as previous articles but covers the date 1860, just prior to the date that is generally accepted to be that of the formation of the Football Association and the codification of the Association game in 1863. Evidence from the previous papers, together with this research, then help explain the growing popularity of that newly-codified Association game, a popularity based upon relatively small-sided games that were evidently still being played across mid-century in a variety of forms, usually alongside other sports, and mainly on church, works’ or schools’ outings, at rural fetes, galas and celebrations, or as street or casual football, the latter taking place in meadows, fields and greens. Importantly, these were predominantly small-sided games and are arguably the ones closest to Association football, as it was codified in 1863, and hence of most interest to the debate on origins. Importantly, they were not part of folk or mob football that usually took place at Shrovetide or Easter. This form of football, however, may have survived longer and in greater volume than previously thought and ought to be the subject of further research. Relatively small-sided games are the ones that will be mainly evidenced in this paper, supporting the thesis that football persisted across the century among the general population in a variety of forms none of which required the assistance or involvement of the public schools or public schoolboys to ensure its survival as some ‘orthodox historians had previously believed. Indeed, given the amount of evidence from previous papers, together with the evidence presented below, the so-called ‘orthodox’ or ‘dominant paradigm’ position in the ‘Origins’ debate now looks increasingly untenable and the ‘revisionist’ position progressively more secure. Here is more evidence of the broad, tenacious and visible football culture from 1860 alone.

At the beginning of 1860 the subscribers and friends of the Yorkshire Catholic Reformatory held their Annual Meeting in the Council Hall at Market Weighton. At that meeting, and referring to a remark from a visitor to the Reformatory who had expressed a fear that the children were treated too gently, the ‘Hon. Chas. Langdale said ‘he had visited the institution very frequently and was satisfied that that any such fear was entirely groundless’. Indeed, he listed a series of onerous tasks that children had to undertake which was ‘proof of how hard they had to toil’. Despite this, he went on to claim it was ‘wonderful how much labour they were capable of, and as shewing they were not worked past their strength, he might mention that, as soon as their labour was over, they were ready for a game at football’. Similarly, in the House of Refuge for 423 boys in Glasgow it was noted on inspection, that ‘one class of the boys is now employed on out-door work on a farm at some distance, and more active exercise and amusements (football, &c.) are encouraged throughout the school with very good effects’. Even some children in the workhouse had occasional access to the game. For example, at Glasgow's Barony Parish Poorhouse in Barnhill they had an annual excursion to 'Colintraive, in the Kyles of Bute' and having reached their destination, ‘they proceeded to the rendezvous, which was a beautiful green knoll surrounded with trees... this shady alcove for three hours was the scene of many an exploit, such as racing, football, & c., which afforded great amusement to the young, as well as the more advanced in years’.

Football was evidently not quite as dead in mid-nineteenth century Britain as some historians would have us believe. Indeed, it seems the game, in a variety of forms, was still played in mid-century, the strength of feeling amongst local people being illustrated down in Ashbourne in Derbyshire with their defence of the traditional game of folk football which had been played there
since ‘time immemorial’. Despite, several convictions for playing the game with fines of 40 shillings and costs and, if unpaid, the alternative being three month’s imprisonment, the resistance by the local population to the continued repression of this form of football continued across the century. Indeed, a further report in the *Derby Mercury* indicated that not only folk football was being played in this area in this period but other varieties of the game, mainly small-sided. For example, at Derby County Lunatic Asylum summer sports were being enjoyed in the summer months, and ‘all who were able have engaged in cricket, football and skittles’. And again in Staffordshire, Lord Shrewsbury’s tenants and tradesmen were invited to meet his lordship and guests and when the repast was over, the country people came up again to the front of the Hall, and in the park engaged with great energy and hilarity in the sports which had been provided for them. These consisted of the old English class. At football they were joined by some of the visitors, some of whose red hunting coats formed a conspicuous and agreeable contrast to the habiliments of the peasantry.

Meanwhile, in Birmingham, 800 workpeople and ‘a host of private friends’ joined in celebrating the majority of Mr. William Aston who was ‘the eldest son of the well-known button manufacturer, whose works in Princip Street give employment to a greater number of men, women and children, than any other establishment in the town’. Apparently, ‘early in the day the workpeople, to make the most of their holiday, assembled in the park and indulged in cricket, football, and other less masculine games’. Not everyone was as well disposed to football, however, as the Aston family. In Lancaster, a ‘working man’s wife’ objected, in a letter to the local press, over the possible provision of a park for the recreation of ‘working men’ so that ‘after the toils of the day are over they can resort to pass their leisure evening hours in playing at football, quoits, cricket, &c.’. She believed that ‘if out-door recreation be what he wishes, who would be more willing than his wife and children to accompany him along the many beautiful walks around our ancient town’. Nonetheless, the idea that there should be provision of a public park that could be used for football indicates that the game was not moribund. Another indication that this was the case was at Aston Hall in Birmingham, a site where people ‘could partake in recreation every day during the season’, recreations that included ‘archery, cricket, quoits and football’. Indeed, further adverts appeared in the local press for this clutch of sports over the summer months at Aston Hall. Can Collins really refer to these sports as ‘informal leisure practices or folk customs’? I have found no advert in any nineteenth century newspaper that calls for people to participate in such titled events but only in these sports by name.

Prior to this, though, the Easter holidays had seen a familiar pattern of football being played on school and church outings. This time, ‘boys belonging to the Trinity Church Sunday and Day Schools had their annual treat at the camp ground on Monday, when cricket, foot-ball, and other amusements were indulged in’. Similarly, over in Nailsea, eight miles to the south-west of Bristol, the ‘Band of Hope and Sunday’ were given a ‘treat’ on a Monday holiday by being taken to ‘Cadbury Camp’. When they arrived at the camp ‘all were every soon engaged, some at cricket, others at football, and a goodly number at “kiss in the ring”’. And likewise in Birmingham, ‘the teachers of St. Mary’s Sunday Schools, with their friends numbering about 150’ spent ‘a most enjoyable day.... with cricket, football and other amusements; after which tea was provided in a large tent adjoining the Rose and Crown Inn, when the National Anthem was sung, and the party proceeded to Barnt Green Station, from whence they arrived in town at twenty minutes past nine’.
In similar fashion, the children of St. Mary Redcliff and St. Thomas schools in Bristol were taken to ‘an open air festival’ held ‘in the grounds of Kensington House, Brislington, which their kind-hearted proprietor, Richard Poole King Esq. had placed at the disposal of the promoters’. 700 boys and girls were ‘marched to Mr King’s grounds’ and ‘racing, football, “hunting the hare”, and other amusements were heartily embarked in by the boys’. 80 Meanwhile up in Scotland, scholars from ‘the Hamilton Parish Church School and Orphan Society enjoyed their annual excursion to the High Parks of Chatelherault in Hamilton, South Lanarkshire. Whilst there, 500 took part in ‘some recreative and healthy amusement, including football, racing, rounders and such like’. 81 Not to be outdone, in Ballymena, Northern Ireland, children from the Parochial Sabbath School had ‘a highly interesting fete’ organised by the ‘Rev .Edward Maguire, in the open air, on the lawn of the Parochial Glebe-house. The children, to the number of about three hundred, who were all clean and comfortably dressed, enjoyed themselves in games of the “round ring,” football, and other innocent recreations, among which two securely constructed “swings” were patronised extensively’. 82 And ‘the children of the Garrison Schools, numbering 200, celebrated their anniversary on Tuesday last….. Various rustic sport were afterwards provided for the juveniles, to whom were distributed toys and sweetmeats; and prizes for foot-races foot-ball matches & c., were afterwards competed for by several of the soldiers’. 83

Football seems to be one of the sporting mainstays at ‘annual treats, for children in this period. For example, the one given to ‘the children belonging to the Congregational schools’ in Melford in Suffolk took place in a ‘field kindly lent by Mr. Thomas Ardley. The children baring flags, & c., and numbering upwards of 220, marched through the street in procession, after which they repaired to the Meadow for cricket, foot-ball, & c.’. 86 And just to show that football was being played all over the British Isles, Gwersyllt near Wrexham in Wales saw ‘the customary summer treat given to the pupils and teachers of the National Infants’ and Sunday Schools by Thomas Irven Esq’ at his ‘mansion’ at Stanty Park. After a reception ‘the rest of the evening was spent in all manner of games and sports, racing for money and sweets, leaping, football, and dancing included until a late evening shower closed upon their merriment’. 87 Football seems to be part of the nation’s sporting culture in this period, notably well outside of the public schools and influence of public schoolboys. So, over on the east coast of England, the children of the Hull Ragged and Industrial Schools had their ‘red letter day in the calendar’ as they were taken by J.A. Sykes, the chairman of the schools, to his ‘delightful residence at Raywell’. Several of the committee were then ‘present to superintend the games of football, foot-races in sacks and other amusements’. 84 Similarly, at Braintree in Essex ‘the children of the Church Sunday an Day Schools had their annual treat’ and ‘after dinner the children re-assembled in the meadow, when cricket, foot-ball, and other games became the order of the day, varied by merry dance’. 85 Over the country in the South-west of England in Bristol ‘the Sunday school in connexion with Coopers’ Hall Baptist Chapel’, King- street, with their pastor the Rev. James Davis, superintendents and teachers, numbering upwards of 200, were conveyed in eight vans and flys to farmer Webb’s, Brislington……the favourable weather enhanced the pleasures, consisting of cricket, rounders, football, racing for various toys, sweetmeats, fruits, &c.’. 85 And just to show that football was being played all over the British Isles, Gwersyllt near Wrexham in Wales saw ‘the customary summer treat given to the pupils and teachers of the National Infants’ and Sunday Schools by Thomas Irven Esq’ at his ‘mansion’ at Stanty Park. After a reception ‘the rest of the evening was spent in all manner of games and sports, racing for money and sweets, leaping, football, and dancing included until a late evening shower closed upon their merriment’. 87 Football seems to be one of the sporting mainstays at ‘annual treats, for children in this period. For example, the one given to ‘the children belonging to the Congregational schools’ in Melford in Suffolk took place in a ‘field kindly lent by Mr. Thomas Ardley. The children baring flags, & c., and numbering upwards of 220, marched through the street in procession, after which they repaired to the Meadow for cricket, foot-ball, & c.’. 86 Similarly 300 children of ‘the Odiham National and Sundays schools’, in Hampshire, had their ‘annual treat’ at which ‘several games were entered into most heartily; running for prizes, jumping, cricketing, foot-ball, & c.’. 89 Over double that number of children, from the Sunday Schools and Ragged Schools of St. Mary’s Parish in Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk, benefited from their annual treat after being ‘marched in procession, carrying flags and banner, to the militia depot, the drill field having been kindly lent by Captain Mc Gregor as a
playground. Here various games, such as cricket, foot-ball, & c., were indulged until tea time’. Meanwhile, in Ipswich ‘the school children connected with the Trinity Church’ were ‘treated with a trip to Harwich by the “Alma” and, by the kind invitation of the Rev. F.H. Maude’. Apparently, ‘upon landing at Harwich they proceeded to Beacon Hill, thence through the Spa to the grounds of cliff House, the residence of Captain Jervis, M.P., where they enjoyed themselves at trap-ball, foot-ball, cricket, and various other games’. And at Lancaster National School, school duties were suspended at the boys were taken to ‘a field on Brooks Hall Farm, which Mrs. Waterhouse had kindly lent for the occasion’ and ‘on their arrival they became engaged – leaping, running, cricket, foot-ball, hurdle racing, &c.’.

Children were not the only participants in football in mid-century so, for example, a committee in Southmolton in Devon met in the ‘Mechanics’ Institute, for the purpose of making arrangements for the approaching festival’. The Fete was to be held on ‘Thursday, the 12th of July’, 1860, at ‘Castle Hill’ as ‘Earl Fortesque’ had ‘kindly consented to throw open his magnificent park and grounds for the occasion. The amusements will include a variety of good old English sports and pastimes, consisting of dancing, cricket, archery, quoits, football, skittles, jingling, hurdle, foot and donkey races for prizes, Aunt Sally, and other sources of entertainment’. Another fete was organised, this time in Brocklesby Park, near Grimsby, in aid ‘of the funds of the Brigg Reading Society, and ‘the match at football, between 12 married and 12 single men, was won after an exciting struggle by the single, who received 1s each’. It is noteworthy that the newspaper report indicated that that at the Fete ‘it is computed that 9,000 were present, and that the profits accruing to the Brigg Reading Society will be above a hundred pounds’. Not quite so many were present, though, at the excursion of millworkers in Northern Ireland when ‘the operatives of the Beeswork concern of Messrs. Richardson, Sons, & Owden, were treated by their employers with an excursion to Castleblaney’. Apparently only, ‘about 1,500 availed themselves of the opportunity of rusticating in the demesne there, and the long string of carriages required for their accommodation created surprise in the neighbourhood. Cricket, foot-ball, and other games were happily enjoyed….’. Other beneficiaries of a rural Fete, this time held in Southampton at Bitterne Moor, were the local Athenaeum Literary Society as the President of the Athenaeum, Steuart Macnaghten, Esq., ‘kindly afforded for the occasion the use of the whole of his picturesque park and adjacent grounds, which form the site of the ancient Roman fort and station Clausentum. In one spacious field, at the rear of the mansion, arrangements were made for cricket, trap and football, &c., and these exercises were enjoyed there during the earlier portion of the afternoon, while in the evening football was played in the open portion of the park before the house’. And also in a park, this time at Wivenhoe, located on the eastern edge of Colchester, the owners John Gurdon Renbow and Lady Georgiana Gurden Rebow allowed their domain to be used by 12 members of the Colchester Volunteer Rifle Corps to shoot for a ‘valuable silver cup’. More importantly for our purposes, ‘during the afternoon a large concourse of the public in the park, engaged in various rural amusements, including cricket, quoits, football, trap-ball and gymnastic exercises’. A ‘Grand Military Fete’ was also advertised to be held in Tredgar Park under the patronage of Lord and Lady Tredgar on behalf of the ‘Third Monmouthshire, or First Newport Rifle Volunteers’. At that fete the advert stated that ‘The Amusements of the day will further consist of various RURAL SPORTS, as Foot Racing, Hurdle Racing, Racing in Sacks, Aunt Sally, Foot-ball & c.’. Football continued to figure in all sorts of occasions. In an example of mid-century industrial paternalism, 200 workmen in the employ of Messrs. George Salter and Co., including their wives, travelled from Spen Lane station by rail to Hagley on the Worcestershire border. When they arrived
‘after a pleasant ride around at Lyttelton Arms Inn, the company, after a short stay, went to the noble park, which by the kind permission of Lord Lyttelton was thrown open to the company…….. Here they partook of an excellent dinner, and subsequently of tea. The day’s enjoyments were interspersed with out-door sports, such as cricket, football, quoits, &c. And similarly in August, 1860, a Mr. S. Tonks entertained a party of upwards of eighty of his workpeople at his private residence, Holly House in Erdington, five miles to the north-east of Birmingham. There, ‘the good things of this life having been supplied in abundance, sports such as football, dancing, singing, &c. followed and a most pleasant day was spent’. Not only workpeople enjoyed the generosity of paternalistic practices by indulging in sports, including football. So, for example, in Lancashire the ‘greater part of the inhabitants of Scorton were entertained at the annual treat provided by W. Hopwood and C. Fishwick, Esqrs., of Springfield, and W.F. Hopwood, Esq., of Burnley’. After being assembled at the school-room ‘Sunday and day scholars, teachers, superintendents and mill hands’ marched up ‘Tithe Barn Lane, to a field at the top of Nicky Nook, kindly lent by Mr. Oglethorpe for the occasion. Here they amused themselves in various games “blind man’s bluff”, “two’s and threes”, “foot and a half”, “foot-ball”, and other amusing games. Over in the White Rose county, however, the Huddersfield Chronicle was able to report that its own employees, and those of ‘Mr. Brown’s printing establishment in the Market-place’, had been taken to ‘Harden Moss, beyond Meltham, 1,200 feet above the sea-level’ where ‘every provision had been made – cricket, quoits, football and abundance of good cheer, were at hand and all were taken advantage of to conduce to the enjoyment of the party’. In Autumn in Norfolk and Suffolk, ‘harvest home’ celebrations took place in the parishes of Aylsham, Downham, Finham, Gooderstone, Bacton, Oulton, Ditchingham, and Carlton Colville’ with proceedings having been ‘generally commenced with a sermon at the parish church, after which a procession is formed, and, headed by a band of music, proceeds to some appropriate spot, where cricket, football, and various other manly exercises are succeeded by a dinner of old English fare provided by the farmers of the parish’. Over on the south west coast in Cornwall in Marhamchurch ‘the Rev. Mr. Wright held his annual harvest home festival’ where ‘in the morning service was performed in the church’. After dinner, though, ‘several toasts were drunk; after which the party adjourned to football and other amusements on the green’. In rather more organised fashion the Sheffield Football Club, which had been formed in 1857, held their annual meeting on a Monday evening at the Adelphi Hotel. ‘The report showed that the club had been very successful during the last season, both as to funds and as to the number of members’. It was noted that the ‘season will commence on the first Saturday in November’. Indeed, a game of theirs was reported after they met the ‘Officers of the 58th Regiment’ in a ‘well contested and exciting match… on the Barrack ground, Hillboro….. the victory was disputed for upwards of two hours, but in the end the match was decided in favour of the club, who obtained one goal and ten rouges. The officers scored one goal and five rouges’. Meanwhile, at Ringwood in Hampshire it was noted that ‘during the last fortnight the game of football has been played in this town, and is likely to be continued throughout the winter months, in a field kindly lent by Mr. W. Cottman’. This may, though, have had some public school influence as it was further noted that ‘it is supported by the principal gentry of the place, many of whom are players. Among the subscribers are the Revs. C.H. Maturin, J. Harrison, and A. Clarke: H.T. Johns, H. Maturin, H. Davy. J.B. Dawson, W. Purkins, and – Middlemist, Esqrs.; and Messrs. J. Adams, J. Travers. T. Blake, and A. Hutton. The novelty of the game in this district has excited the attendance of a large number of spectators’.
In a recent article it has been outlined how many games of football, that took place in Britain between 1818 and 1840, were only reported ‘tangentially’ in the pages of newspapers simply because a concurrent criminal offence, unrelated to the football match, had been committed. In a similar manner, The Bury and Norwich Post reported on a ‘charge of assault against a Grammar scholar’. In the court, William Fleetwood deposed that ‘I am a pupil at the Grammar school, and I was playing at football last Tuesday, I kicked the ball over into Mr. Reed’s brickyard’. Apparently, in trying to retrieve the ball an assault allegedly took place by Alexander Haldane, a pupil at King Edward’s Grammar School on Henry Reed jnr. the son of the landlord of the White Lion Inn. Without the criminal charge, however, no account of this game would have been recorded. It then begs the question of how many other games of football took place that day, and across the year, that went unreported as there were no criminal charges, the players simply playing the game and going home without incident. It is obviously an unanswerable question but it is not unreasonable to assume, despite Tony Collins’ sophistry, that many others would have taken place, without incident, unnoticed and unreported.

**Conclusion**

In his excellent 2008 summary of the ‘Origins’ debate, Matthew Taylor identified two opposing schools of thought that had plotted football’s ‘prolonged, messy and complicated birth’ in the nineteenth century. These he termed ‘orthodox’ and ‘revisionist’ interpretations and have been the subject of debate amongst scholars subsequently. Undeniably, however, the debate has moved on considerably from Taylor, not least because of the access to a new resource for historians - the British Library’s digitisation of a number of nineteenth century newspapers. This resource has been used extensively in this article and the exciting prospect is that digitisation continues apace and, as more and more newspapers come online yet further evidence will surely be uncovered of a broader, more tenacious and yet even more visible footballing culture than has already been evidenced above, and in other similar articles. It now means, though, that the ‘prolonged, messy and complicated birth’ is looking increasingly less so, the new evidence helping to shorten, order and simplify the ‘Origins’ debate. Collins’ failed attempt to steer a path between ‘orthodox’ and ‘revisionist’ is likely to be seen in the same light as previous attempts to rescue the ‘orthodox’ history of the game by Graham Curry and Eric Dunning, although his plea to contextualise the ‘origins’ debate within ‘the tremendous social changes that were taking place in British society’ ought not to go unheard.

As regards the so-called ‘mess’ in the historiography of football, that was all of historians own making insofar as they were simply looking for the ‘wrong sort’ of evidence of an on-going football culture from 1800 through to 1863 and the birth of the Association game. Football had not ‘disappeared’ between 1830 and 1860 it was simply not of the form historians were looking for – with Collins wanting to continue to look only for supposed ‘legal organised matches’ so he can count them as football matches in his paradigm. Anything else, for Collins, is simply some ‘leisure practice or folk custom’. Those historians, who, seemingly, only sought to identify and record formal matches (including myself), as though early and mid-century football games were all of that form, much like the ‘headline’ games of today, were misguided. In that respect, both ‘dominant paradigm’ and ‘revisionist’ historians have been guilty of using what Tony Collins has correctly identified as an essentially a Whig theory of history, using history as a form of teleology by using the perspective of the present to project back onto the past today’s forms of the game, engendering a near collective
myopia towards the general footballing culture. And, it seems Tony Collins now wants to continue to repeat the same error.

Secondly, football continued to be part of the indigenous sporting culture in a number of forms, which incorporated both kicking and handling varieties, although the rules to all or any of these games remain obscure. There were, though, undoubtedly small sided games being played and in that respect they are the ones which are, arguably, closest to Association football and hence of most interest to the debate on origins. It is perhaps noteworthy that in the article previously referred to by George Forrest entitled ‘Football’, and written in 1862, boys are instructed in how to construct a round ball, as opposed to the oval Rugby ball, indicating that he thought the game was essentially about dribbling. This may also be the case in the identified small-sided games. Indeed, the first of Forrest’s six simple rules for the game states categorically that the ‘The game being essentially Foot-ball, no player may take up the ball from the ground’, although catching the ball was still allowed. Interestingly, in the previous year, in a letter to the Editor of Bell’s Life the correspondent makes a similar point, writing that, ‘First, then, football is essentially a game for the feet; hands, therefore, ought to be used no more than is strictly necessary’. If small-sided games had a similar view of the game, a similar round ball and similar rules then they were much closer to Association football than previously thought, and certainly very close to the initial rules of the Football Association. These games, however, were not formal matches between equal sides but were informal ones which invariably took place on church, works’ or schools’ outings, at rural fetes, galas and celebrations, or as street or casual football, the latter taking place on meadows, fields and greens thereby attempting to escape the wrath of authorities attempting to impose ban on the game using the Highway or Police Acts or attempting to enforce Sabbatarianism.

However, given the breadth and depth of the newly identified football culture that existed outside of public schools and public school influence the ‘orthodox’ interpretation of the development of the modern game which held it to be the product of a rationalisation and civilisation of traditional folk football within those schools now looks increasingly unconvincing, questionable and fallacious. The main proponents of this position, Eric Dunning and Graham Curry, must now surely abide by their ‘Eliasian desire to follow the evidence’ and concede that a broad, tenacious and increasingly visible football culture existed amongst the general population across the early and mid-nineteenth century, uninfluenced by the public schools and public school boys. This culture, that in the main played small-sided games, eventually embraced Association football after its codification in 1863 and so, middle class missionaries found it unnecessary to spend time converting the working class natives as they were already enthusiastic lovers and players of the game. However, it was the newly emerging lower middle-class, and not public schoolboys, that introduced the codified form of the Association game into Lancashire and developed and diffused it across the county, particularly in the Bolton-Blackburn-Darwen triangle, that eventually led to the formation of the Lancashire Football Association, the Football League and the professionalisation of Association football. Further research, to build on Russell’s seminal paper on this area and in Yorkshire, is surely needed.


20 See note 4.


23 Swain, *Football and Cultural Continuity*, 14-15

24 Ibid.


26 Ibid.

27 Ibid, 7.

28 Harvey, *Football*, 57.


33 Ibid. See Tony Collins’ footnote 52, p.15, which reads:- ‘See, for example, Tony Collins, *Rugby’s Great Split* (London: Cass, 1998), 3-4.’.

34 Kitching, *Old’ Football*, 1747.


38 Kitching, *Old’ Football*, 1741.

*Sports Telegraph*, January 25, 1872. This corresponds with the report of a game in Turton in 1830 – see note 37.


Darwen News, March 9, 1878.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Kitching, ‘Old’ Football, 1741


Swain. Modern Football, 108.

Ibid, 97-98.


Collins, Early Football, 8.


Hackett, Historians, 154-5.

Kitching, ‘Old’ Football, 1741.

Holt, Football, 72.


Ibid.

The author, in collaboration with Hugh Hornby, has now over 170 examples of folk football played in the nineteenth century, many of which survived well past 1830.


Sheffield & Rotherham Independent, Supplement, Saturday, January 21, 1860, 10.

Glasgow Herald, Friday, June 29, 1860.

Glasgow Herald, Saturday, June 30, 1860.

70 See Hugh Hornby, *Uppies and Downies; The Extraordinary Football Games of Britain* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2008), 68-79. The author, in collaboration with Hugh Hornby, has now over 170 examples of folk football played in the nineteenth century, many of which survived well past 1830.

71 *Derby Mercury*, Wednesday, May 2, 1860.

72 *Morning Post*, Friday, April 13, 1860, 5.


74 *Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, Yorkshire, &c.*, Saturday, June 02, 1860, 8.


76 *Birmingham Daily Post*, Friday August 17, 1860.

77 *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc*, Saturday. April 14, 1860.

78 *Bristol Mercury*, Saturday, June 9, 1860.

79 *Birmingham Daily Post*, Thursday, July 12, 1860.

80 *Bristol Mercury*, Saturday, July 21, 1860.

81 *Glasgow Herald*, Tuesday, July 24, 1860.

82 *Belfast News-Letter*, Tuesday, August 14, 1860.

83 *Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, Friday, August 03, 1860.

84 *Hull Packet and East Riding Times*, Friday, August 24, 1860.

85 *Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, Friday, August 10, 1860.

86 *Bristol Mercury*, Saturday, September 8, 1860.

87 *Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser, and Cheshire, Shropshire and North Wales Register*, Saturday, August, 25, 1860.

88 *Bury and Norwich Post, and Suffolk Herald*, Tuesday, August 28, 1860.

89 *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle*, Saturday, September 1, 1860.

90 *Bury and Norwich Post, and Suffolk Herald*, Tuesday, September 11, 1860.

91 *Ipswich Journal*. Saturday, 15, 1860.

93 Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser, Wednesday, June 27, 1860.

94 Hull Packet and East Riding Times, Friday, July 13, 1860.

95 Ibid.

96 Belfast Newsletter, Saturday, August 11, 1860.

97 Hampshire Advertiser, Saturday, August 18, 1860, 5.

98 The Standard, Saturday, September 08, 1860, 6. See the advert for the ‘Grand Fete’ in the Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties, Tuesday, August, 29, 1860 and again on Friday, August 31, 1860 and Wednesday, September 05, 1860. A report of the proceedings is also found in the Essex Standard on Friday, September 07, 1860.

99 Bristol Mercury, Saturday, September 15, 1860. The advert was also in the same newspaper on Saturday, September 22, 1860.

100 Birmingham Daily Post, Wednesday, August 15, 1860.

101 Birmingham Daily Post, Friday, August 17, 1860.

102 Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmoreland, Yorkshire & c, Saturday, August 18, 1860.

103 Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser, Saturday, August 25, 1860.

104 Bury and Norwich Post, and Suffolk Herald, Tuesday, October 09, 1860. A report of the ‘Harvest Home’ at Carlton Colville that includes ‘foot-ball’ is contained in the Ipswich Journal, Saturday, October 6, 1860.

105 Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post or Plymouth and Cornish Advertiser, Wednesday, October 10, 1860.


107 Sheffield & Rotherham Independent, Saturday, October 13, 1860, 7. For an account of Sheffield’s role in the development of football see Swain and Harvey, ‘On Bosworth’.


109 Hampshire Advertiser, Saturday, November 17, 1860, 6.

110 Swain, The Grander Design.


112 Swain, The Grander Design; The Evidence; The Continuing Demise, Common-sense and Cultural Continuity, Football and Cultural Continuity.

113 Collins. Early Football, 12. Also see Swain, The Evidence Mounts, 312-313.

115 Forrest, Football, 37-45.

116 Bell’s Life in London, Sunday, December 08, 1861, 6.

117 Curry, Comments, 2.

118 Cunningham, Leisure, 128.