Playing the Canadian Game: Baseball’s Missing Chapter in Uncovering the Triumph of the New York Style!

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The 4 June 1838 baseball-type game in Beachville, Upper Canada described in stunningly fulsome detail by Dr. Adam Ford in a letter to the Sporting Life of Philadelphia in 1886 continues to befuddle historians. (Beachville is a small village five miles west of Woodstock, Ontario; Upper Canada was the name of today’s Ontario – a full map description of places in this essay is found on page 22)

Two noted Canadian academics, (Robert Barney of the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, and Nancy Bouchier, today a professor at McMaster University in Hamilton), in their 1988 analysis in the Journal of Sport History are generally sympathetic to the authenticity of Ford’s account despite Ford being six at the time. (He turned seven two months later).

David Block is skeptical suggesting the account may fall into the Abner Graves file of discredited origins and that in the absence of additional authentication one should be leery about its integrity.

Most recently Brian “Chip” Martin’s Baseball’s Creation Myth describes the surprising overlap between Ford and Graves’s lives not only in the Denver Colorado of the late 19th century, but in other personal ways. He speculates, because a smoking gun could not be found, that Graves and Ford being at the very least drinking buddies, shared a love of baseball and possibly as well, tall tales, one of which flowed from Ford’s recollection of a childhood game in Beachville into Graves’s head. We’ll never know.

Tall tales of course aren’t history except in the widest margins of their telling and it is those wide margins of the Ford account which have the greatest plausibility. Many aspects of his description while truthful, are more likely ascribing styles of play from one era to other moments in time.

His account from my perspective effectively describes three time periods. The first is his world of 1886 in which the New York game (the essence of today’s baseball) has long been dominant. For many it is the only form of the game ever known to its players and spectators. Ford could not have been completely disinterested in his world of 1886 to not have had it influence some aspects of his storytelling recall. The second is the 1848 to 1855 period when he was in his athletic prime, and engaged in playing the game with distinct characteristics, rules, and organization. And the third obviously is the recollection of the events of 4 June 1838.

Adam Ford’s story is therefore problematic, though one we would be wise not to discard. We recognize that memories of events from one’s early years can often be more profound than those of a few days ago, but also we can all recall times when we have unwittingly combined events from different periods as if it were one remembrance. Having said this it begsgars credulity 46 years after the fact to believe he would have recalled, or even known in 1838, distances between bases (as shown below in Ford’s diagram accompanying his Sporting Life submission), much less the players’ identity. This seems so obvious it is a wonder so many are prepared to accept the literalness of his story.
On the other hand at least some aspects ring true for the time in question and at least argue for Ford’s ability to confirm its place in the historic calendar with an accuracy attuned to its moment. The 4th of June was a significant date in the Anglo-Canadian calendar marking the traditional spring holiday in celebration of George III’s birthday (yup the mad king!). 75 years before at a celebration for this holiday British soldiers had been massacred at Fort Michilimackinac by lacrosse-playing Ojibwe.

The volunteers Ford describes as being in attendance were associated with well-documented regiments sent out to sweep up the last combatants of the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion.

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**SECOND REGIMENT OXFORD.**

BLENHEIM, BLANFORD AND WOODSTOCK.

Col. A. W. Light, Jan’y 19, 1838,
Lieut. Col. P. Graham Feb. 8, 1838,
Major C. Beale, April 23, 1838,
Capt. J. Gibson, Jan. 19, 1838,

“ Ed. Deedes, “
“ John Jackson, “
“ D. Barnes, “
“ H. Chambers, “
“ M. Johnston, April 25, 1838,
“ R. H. Place, Sept. 23, 1838,
“ H. McGregor, “
“ Elijah Nellis, “
“ Wm. Morygold, “

Lieutenant J. Rouviere, Jan. 19, 1838,
Adjudant Hugh Chambers, January 19, 1838.

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**THIRD REGIMENT OXFORD.**

Lieutenant W. S. Light, Jan 19, 1838,

“ Jacob Choat, “
“ Wm. Carroll, “
“ Robt. Deedes, “
“ Henry Finkle, “
“ H. de Blaquiere, “
“ P. Graham, jr., Sep. 27, “
“ Wm. Lawson, “
“ C. Beard, “
“ F. Groves, “

Ensign George Cazlett, Jan. 19, 1838,

“ Alex. Light, “
“ Wm. Burtoh, “
“ J. Raynolds, “

One of those they were pursuing was an American-born Beachville wagon-maker Cornelius Cunningham who was captured and hung for his role in the Rebellion. These were dangerous times in what is today’s Ontario, and such anxiety and fear would percolate downwards to even a near seven year old boy, sharpening his memory of even the most trivial of pursuits.
Suspicion fell on any who promoted American ideas of governance, free expression, and separation of church and state. These were not times in other words for playing a recreation with an avowed American identity. If one doubts this correspondence between politics and sports one need go no farther than commentary of the Queen’s representative in Upper Canada, Sir Francis Bond Head, at the time of the 1837 Rebellion. “A cricketer,” he said, “as a matter of course, detests democracy, and is staunch in allegiance to his king.”

The above argues for the Beachville game’s primary significance. This informal bat and ball play did not have a national profile at this time and so if it is valid, and I argue it is, it speaks to the role of Canadians, or at least those in southwestern Ontario, as being amongst its earliest regional adherents. Even if one discounts its legitimacy however the list below of “early base ball type happenings” in Canada, requires revision of the long accepted picture of the game as having a solely American evolution.

In accepting, without too much historic alarm, the validity of this early baseball-type game on 4 June 1838 I have to ask - why would Ford have made it up? After all he never made any claims for an invention of baseball as later Cooperstown proponents would make for their “first” game - a game which according to Graves “supposedly” occurred one to three years after this one. As well as noted above we have a variety of still expanding sources of early baseball-type forms in this era not only in nearby parts of Ontario but from other parts of this immense British realm. Most had no connection to each other. They show how pervasive baseball-type sport was in North America, and include:

- Newspaper accounts such as an 1841 Nova Scotian news reference to ball and bat,
- The uncertain meaning of local ordinances such as an 1845 Upper Canada Lord’s Day proclamation against “ball”,
- Ambiguous diary entries such as an 1803 account from York (today’s Toronto),
- Games with connections to early styles of ball playing such as one-old-cat and two-old-cat in Whitby, Ontario and London Ontario,
- Bat in the Manitoba’s Selkirk Settlement ,
- Rounders in London, Ontario and Victoria, British Columbia
• Multiple references to old country sports, games of ball (one of which was in Beachville’s near neighbour Woodstock), as well as unnamed sports and games.

There are more including Robert Sellar’s interviews with the early settlers of the western Quebec region describing a death associated with a baseball-type game gone bad in 1837, one year before Ford’s remembrance, though it too was the product of interviews conducted long after the fact.\textsuperscript{iix}

These early types of play could have had several influences. They might have been direct English imports. They might have been passed on by Americans settling in, or passing through, regions of Canada. They might have been observed by Canadians either in England or the United States and introduced by them into Canada.

Fred Landon’s \textbf{Western Ontario and the American Frontier} published in 1941, and M.L. (Marcus Lee) Hansen’s \textbf{The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples}, published posthumously the year before, both covered in exhaustive academic detail the cross border connections between the United States and Canada in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Unfortunately neither mentioned the example of baseball.

As to their ultimate origin, even those from the American states may have been barely regurgitated interpretations of activities with roots in old English games\textsuperscript{x} of which we have only partial, though increasing, knowledge. As these early forms of baseball found fertile soil throughout all parts of Canada they were played with a gusto matching the enthusiasm south of the border. As argued it was a time when the game, unlike cricket in England, had no, or only limited, national identity. Different parts of Canada, as in the United States, were regional participants in the game’s spread, growing popularity, and experimentation with varying rules.

Eventually all of these places became the ground in which one definitive interpretation (the New York style we know today) would complete the game’s evolution into a popular national and international entertainment. Canada’s geographic size and sparse population in large measure precluded significant baseball interaction between its various parts and so the flow of baseball contact and influence was generally with adjacent American regions. There are some small exceptions to this rule in the case of the Canadian prairies (Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba) where ball playing settlers from eastern Canada brought the game along with their meager possessions, though even here contact with American regions to the south was probably the prevailing influence.

One area however, southwestern Ontario, became the place in which a brief but somewhat distinct local interpretation of the game occurred. Our sources are varied and some more detailed than others. Others require a degree of speculation on our part.

Accepting, with a high degree of likelihood, ball playing in Beachville in 1838, what are we to make of Ford’s detailed description?

Adam Enoch Ford was born on his father’s farm in Zorra Township, Oxford County, Ontario in August 1831. In his boyhood he developed an avid interest in the sports played in and around his locale, including cricket, baseball, curling, and shooting. Ford apparently went off to University in 1848 and
eventually graduated as a doctor in 1855 from Victoria College in Cobourg, about 150 miles east of Beachville.\textsuperscript{x1}

I am convinced that the style of play Ford ascribed to the 1838 Beachville game was more likely based on his experience of playing the game between 1848 and 1855.

Of that period however he wrote:

\textit{When I got older I played myself, for the game never died out. I well remember when some fellows down at or near New York got up the game of base ball that had a “pitcher” and “fouls,” etc., and was played with a ball hard as a stick. India rubber had come into use, and they put so much into the balls to make them lively that when the fellow tossed it to you like a girl playing “one o’d cat,” you could knock it so far that the fielders would be chasing it yet, like dogs hunting sheep, after you had gone clear around and scored–your tally. Neil McTaggart, Henry Cruttenden, Gordon Cook, Henry Taylor, James Piper, Almon Burch, Wm. Herrington and others told me of it when I came home from the University. We, with a “lot of good fellows more,” went out and played it one day. The next day we felt as if we had been on an overland trip to the moon.}

While Ford is somewhat unclear as to when he played this game, one of two possibilities present themselves – it was either during a summer return from university while still a student (between 1848 and 1855), or after his university days had concluded and after which he “went out and played it one day”. It can be assumed despite his somewhat ambiguous account that this was close in time to his university days, not years later.

By 1857 for instance he was living in nearby St. Marys, had married, and was practicing medicine. The players he names appear however through genealogical examination more likely to have been residents of Beachville not St. Marys, thus his memory of playing the New York game would have pre-dated 1857.

While we can have little doubt Ford played a baseball-type game as a young man, it is certain that he wasn’t playing something resembling what “...some fellows down at or near New York got up [as] the game of base ball”. He was simply relying too much on his 1886 understanding of what that New York game had become. In the 1848 to 1855 period however that style of play was still in its formative stages, and almost certainly little known beyond the immediate Gotham hinterland, much less within that city itself. There’s no likelihood that it could have been known or played in the 1848 to 1855 period in Canada West (today’s Ontario). All evidence, and at least one account, suggests that the ultimately successful New York interpretation was not played in Canada West until the end of the 1850s.

On the other hand Ford’s drawing and description of the 1838 baseball field matches in many aspects what knowledge we have from an 1860 description of a Canadian interpretation of early formal baseball (by formal I mean understood rules, some level of structured club organization, and the beginning of play with those outside one’s club). Ford’s baseball “infield”, as shown above, has features conforming to that Canadian game.

What about the practice, common in other places, of throwing the ball at a player off base and connecting (plugging) to “retire” him? Our best source is Ford. Though he attributes it to the 1838 game it’s more likely to have been a remembrance from the game he was actually playing in the 1850s.
The bases were the lines between the byes and a base runner was out if hit by the ball when he was off of his bye…. The object in having the first bye so near the home was to get the runners on the base lines so as to have the fun of putting them out or enjoying the mistakes of the fielders when some fleet-footed fellow would dodge the ball and come in home.

It is a game whose play, John Thorn says in Baseball in the Garden of Eden, may have been more fun than the New York style which eventually triumphed. Runners scrambling to avoid being hit by the ball thrown at them and fielders engaged in such pursuit must have made for an occasionally chaotic but humorous scene.

Thus we can thank Adam Ford for perhaps unwittingly filling in some of the missing pieces of the Canadian game even while recognizing that aspects of his description are tainted by his later knowledge of what became baseball as we know it today.

Limited corroboration of Ford’s memory is provided in the 1915 release of the long poem Zorra by William M. Campbell about the rural township from which came some of the men whom Ford describes as playing in the 1838 Beachville game. Amongst its intriguing lines are these.

'It's frustratingly limited in detail but the key phrase is “...not hard the balls we used”. This description fits perfectly the “plugging” game described by Ford, as a softer ball was required for a game in which one threw the ball at a player between bases. Its location in a poem about Zorra is thus particularly significant.

Another, and in this case contemporary, source is a London, Canada West “base ball” organization of 1856. It was described in Railton’s Directory as containing 22 members. This is consistent, though not stated as such, with two internal teams of 11 aside.
They played a team from the nearby village of Delaware in a two inning match in which it seems all had to be retired before the other team came to bat.\textsuperscript{xv}

None of these sources however described the game as played in this part of southwestern Ontario as having any distinction. For descriptions of “the game played in Canada” or this “Canadian game”, we are fortunate to have three New York Clipper accounts - two box scores of games between Ingersoll\textsuperscript{xv} and Woodstock\textsuperscript{xvi} in 1860, and the third news item from 1861.

The first game account in particular provides considerable detail.
There is little doubt as to the authenticity of these game reports but in case any doubters remain we have corroboration for the second of the two in the diary of a young Ingersoll school teacher John Wells. His diaries are preserved in fragile condition in the Public Archives of Ontario. On page 296 of his diary from 25 July 1860, he writes: “John and I drove to Woodstock; got my government money; Saw a game of Base Ball between the Ingersoll and Woodstock Clubs; home to tea; I had a letter from Mr. Whittaker.” The account from the game he witnessed is below.
At the start of the next baseball season a Canadian interpretation is more formerly recognized. The lower case rendering of “game” in the Clipper account is telling, suggesting its tentative position in the minds of contemporary reporters as to its baseball identity.

Today we can give full merit to the Canadian Game as a distinct though relatively brief entity. It is rendered herein with a large "G".

From all of the above we can cobble together a description of something which in its day, at least in Ingersoll and Woodstock, was called the Canadian Game. It had the following features:

- Four bases plus a home plate
- Each team had 11 players (the additional positions included a backstop and a fourth baseman)
- The ball was thrown by the pitcher not pitched (which we assume means it was thrown overhand rather than pitched underhand)
- Games lasted two innings,
- Games followed cricket’s practice in which all had to retired before the other team batted.
- Throwing the ball at, and having it connect with, an offensive player while he was off base resulted in his being “out”, and
- The distances between bases he cites likely conformed to those in the Canadian game.

The latter two are based on a deconstruction of Ford’s account but appear to be consistent with the games played between Ingersoll and Woodstock, as further evidence will confirm.
One thing however must be said. This Canadian game is not unique. It resembles aspects of the 1858 formalized rules of the Massachusetts Game, as well as the early Philadelphia townball style of play. It had some local tweaks. With time, and had the “plugging” game succeeded as baseball’s dominant form, these variations might have evolved, as did gridiron football, into two distinct American and Canadian versions of baseball.

In large measure this Canadian Game owed much to, and was an example of, what came to be referred to after the fact, as the, old fashioned, old style, or old time game. Adam Ford’s field layout for his Sporting Life article in 1886 is remarkably similar to that which George Moreland showed in his early baseball encyclopedia Balldom (1914). Moreland attributed his diamond to 1842.

One criticism of this conclusion of a well-defined Canadian Game remains. Despite the geographic proximity of these Ontario places and their shared governance in a British province, why should we not conclude that despite similarities in play the Canadian game as such was simply a one-off editorial description provided by the New York Clipper in response to just these two baseball games between Woodstock and Ingersoll.

The simple answer - we can’t deny the possibility.
The description below however appearing in a reminiscence by J. Henry Brown in the Woodstock Sentinel Review of 12 April 1915 goes at least some way in attributing a regional, Canadian (i.e. southwestern Ontario) interpretation of early baseball.

In describing the arrival of organized baseball and the eventual passage, from what Brown called the “the old-style game” to the New York style, the Woodstock paper stated:

James Shuttleworth’s role is significant and supported by the facts. He was the younger brother by six years of William Shuttleworth, who in turn is generally recognized as the father of baseball in Hamilton, and more recently was inducted in 2015 into Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame for his seminal pioneering role in early baseball in Canada.
The first place in which the modern organized structure of baseball appeared in Canada was Hamilton, Canada West in 1854 with the establishment of the Young Canadian base ball organization (whose name changed to the Maple Leaf in the early 1860s). They were followed a year later by the Burlington club also in Hamilton. A firm recording of their foundation does not appear until a listing in the Hamilton Directory of 1862. Our first newspaper account of the Young Canadians (at least to date) is from 1858 with names of their club executive headed by a tobacconist Richard Thorn. Later that summer their game with the Burlingtons was noted.

We can accept the 1854 date with a high degree of confidence however given the later commentary of their “paternal head” and therefore likely founder William Shuttleworth, born c. 1834 in Brantford, Ontario (less than 30 miles from Woodstock and Beachville). The 1851 census listed him as a clerk for a Hamilton dry goods business.

In reference to the organization of baseball in Canada, the Hamilton Spectator’s account of 4 December 1865 of the annual Maple Leaf Base Ball Club Dinner, says:

_Last evening the members of the Maple Leaf Base Ball club held their first Annual Dinner in their room on John Street, the President Mr. W. Shuttleworth, occupying the Chair and Mr. Thos. Carroll the Vice-Chair. About 30 persons sat down to the spread, which was provided by T. Young, saloon keeper and was got up in the best style. The usual toasts of the Queen, the Royal Family, the Governor General, the press, etc. were drunk with all the honors and songs appropriate to these were sung by several members of the Club. The toast “Prosperity to the Maple Leaf Base Ball Club” having been proposed, the President replied in suitable terms, giving a short sketch of the Club, its organization in 1854, since which time it has been steadily increasing up to the present time. Toasts and speech making was kept up till a late hour, all apparently enjoying themselves._

The Hamilton Times report of the Maple Leaf Base Ball Club Supper in its 23 February 1867 edition provides further corroboration.

_In response to the sentiment, Mr. Wm. Shuttleworth, the President, was proud to boast that the Maple Leaf was the father of all the Canadian Ball Clubs, and that himself was the paternal head of the Maple Leaf; it was organized fourteen years ago, under the name of the Young Canadian Club. The speaker had been President for a series of years, and had invariably received the cordial support of his brother officers and the members at large._

14 years ago no doubt means 14 seasons ago. Regardless it supports the assertion of the club’s organization in 1854 as the “Young Canadian”, under the leadership of William Shuttleworth.

A severe Hamilton financial depression in 1857 would cause James, a shoemaker, to seek opportunities in Woodstock. He was listed as living there when the 1861 census was undertaken, and his seminal role there was described by Brown.
Yet, quibblers might ask, hadn’t baseball been played in the Woodstock area since at least Ford’s memory of an 1838 game, and our own deconstructed account of likely play in the 1848 to 1855 period?

What James must have brought was the formality of club organization he had learned from his older brother in Hamilton. More significantly in becoming part of the Woodstock lineup playing the Canadian Game he was neither advocating on behalf of the New York game which had come to Hamilton the previous year, nor was he showing discomfort with what the Clipper called the Canadian Game. James was simply playing and therefor promoting a game he had learned in Hamilton and for whose description we have the games between Ingersoll and Woodstock.

Others would be eventual proponents in Woodstock for the New York style. James himself would make the transition, enjoying baseball regardless of its form for the rest of his brief life.

Beyond our knowledge of the Canadian game’s resilience until the early 1860s and our confidence the New York game arrived later than Ford says, is the New York Clipper account of 11 June 1859. It describes the first such game on 24 May 1859. We can be fairly confident as to its accuracy given the arrival of the New York game in Buffalo and Rochester a short time before.

Who were these players? For years I remained somewhat skeptical as they appeared neither before nor afterwards in my research. Gradually however the doubts have been overcome.

Rival pitchers Shrader (sic) and Curtis we now know quite well as their manufacturing advertisements for leaf tobacco and cigars appear in Hamilton directories throughout the 1860s. Shrader was in fact Frederick J. Schrader (also spelled Schraeder), born in Germany in 1832 and living till 1918. He no doubt played for the Toronto team owing to its lack of sufficient players even for the New York mandated nine aside. W. Curtis was William Curtis listed in the Hamilton Directory as a cigar maker. The other Hamilton players still remain largely anonymous.
The Toronto players however are somewhat better defined. Caverhill’s Toronto City Directory for 1859-60 lists J.F. Jameson (centre field) as a cigar maker, A. Simons (1<sup>st</sup> base) as a cigar maker, William Klopp (2<sup>nd</sup> base) as a cigar maker, A. Williams (left field), another cigar maker.

The game, played in Hamilton (though likely at Laud’s Bush not Land’s Bush as shown in the account) got no mention in the two leading local papers of the day, the Toronto Globe and Hamilton Spectator, and only a brief mention in the 24 May 1859 Hamilton Times.

Then two days later, after a public holiday, the Times reported: “BASE BALL – The Toronto Club carried off the prize yesterday.”

The Hamilton Times’s description of the encounter as one between “brethren” is telling. It’s a curious early workingmen’s description of allied trades and independent artisanal craftspeople in an age before they had become part of an industrial and factory-based labouring class. Many of these trades would eventually decline or disappear. We can be fairly certain, despite knowing only the working identity of six of the 18 players, that the brethren in this case were largely, if exclusively, a guild or artisan comradeship of cigar makers!

Possibly frustrated that their encounter got so little local recognition they fired off its box score and other details to the prominent New York Clipper. If so it’s our good fortune they did.

Nor were they the only cigar makers/tobacconists in local baseball. As noted above a year before in 1858 the Young Canadian Base Ball Club of Hamilton had been led by Richard W. Thorn, a tobacconist at the corner of Hughson and King streets in Hamilton. Thorn’s team (of which William Shuttleworth was a member as possibly was James before moving to Woodstock) no doubt played the Canadian Game version. We can only speculate as to what caused other cigar makers to adopt the New York game.

At least two of the players in the 24 May 1859 game had small continuing roles in the game’s evolution. The Toronto Globe newspaper of 9 August 1859, listed centre fielder J.F. Jameson, as the President of a new Toronto organization, the Canadian Pioneer Base Ball Club. Thomas Keen (probably Keene) was a clerk, while P.A. O’Neill (Patrick A. O’Neil) was proprietor of the Toronto Mirror newspaper.
Unfortunately this is the last we hear of the Young Pioneers who no doubt would have played the New York style, at a time when others were only debating the merits of switching to it. A year later likewise Frederick Schrader appeared in the lineup of the Young Canadians of Hamilton who, whatever their misgivings, had come over to the New York style by 1860.

Barney and Bouchier, in their Adam Ford account in the *Journal of Sport History*, remark that they could find no mention after reviewing local papers from several towns of any debate as to the merits of either game, though, as they acknowledge, their survey of Hamilton papers was less thorough. An early Canadian baseball researcher, Eves Raja, over 30 years ago said William Shuttleworth, and Alfred Feast, a local marble cutter, refused to have anything to do with the New York game. So far no confirmation for this point of view has been found and it may be speculation on Raja’s part. His description “refuse to have anything to do with” is a curious one as well, since such points of view are generally absent from Canadian news accounts about baseball in this period.

Buffalo had embraced the New York game shortly before its arrival north of the border and now teams from both sides of the border looked forward avidly to international matches.

Such encounters were no doubt the impetus for both the Young Canadians and the Burlingtons of Hamilton switching to the New York game by the spring of 1860. The first international game in mid-August 1860 featured the Burlingtons and Queen Cities of Buffalo. They met in Clifton, which was the Canadian city of Niagara Falls’ name before the 1880s.

Thus the first ever international match was played in Canada!

(The only cautionary note in describing this as the first ever international baseball game was the previous year’s mixture of English cricketers, Americans and one Canadian [Godfrey Phipps Baker, Ottawa’s post master and an avid cricketer] playing what Porter’s 19 November 1859 Spirit of the Times described as an international baseball match in Rochester, New York.)

The box score for the historic encounter between Hamilton and Buffalo was recorded in the Buffalo Morning Express.
For the next cross border game a few weeks later, pre-game commentary in the 29 August 1860 Buffalo Daily Courierxxxii was modest in its expectations for the Niagara club against Hamilton’s Young Canadians. Niagara was missing several players. The Hamilton team was the oldest in Canada. It was experienced, and perhaps most notably had bat and ball skills refined from playing cricket. The latter point is questionable; there’s no evidence to support it. The 30 August 1860 Hamilton Spectator underplayed the nature of Hamilton’s crushing loss stating, “The game resulted in the victory of the former [Niagara] by a large majority of runs.” The Buffalo’s paper’s description below was more fulsome.
How does one explain this slaughter (for what other word describes an 87-13 win by an away team lacking many of its starting nine)? The only reasonable explanation is that the Hamilton team was until this contest playing the Canadian interpretation of the game with the very likely practice of plugging a player between bases (as suggested in Ford’s account), and thus using a much softer ball. The New York game with its harder ball and faster pace of play (something Ford also documents though likely confusing the time periods when he saw/played such a game) must have been overwhelming, despite the Canadian players long participation in baseball-type activity. Improvement however was forthcoming as the teams met again near the end of September as reported in the Buffalo Daily Courier on 1 October 1860, by now however Frederick (F.J.) Schrader had disappeared from their lineup.

As noted, Woodstock made the switch from the Canadian Game to the New York style in 1861. It appears that when Guelph opted for baseball over cricket in the early 1860s (accounts range between
1861 and 1863), the instigator Alfred Feast had no qualms about the New York game he brought, if he ever did!

Remnants of a fading old style of baseball continued however. The New England Game was featured in an 1862 account from Moncton in the distant British Atlantic provinces.\textsuperscript{xxviii}

In its Ontario home there were occasional hints that the old game was still part of the standard way of thinking. A 13 July 1861 Hamilton Spectator story says a game lasted “one innings”, however the listing of hands lost (27 out in total) shows this was a New York style nine innings game.
A 1934 Ontario published book, William Perkins Bull’s *From Rattlesnake Hunt to Hockey: The history of sports in Canada and the sportsmen of Peel, 1798 to 1934*, says a version of the “plugging” game was still popular in the 1880s, though his accounts (he believed the Doubleday myth) and the book’s appearance so many years after the fact, cause one to question its reliability.

Finally as late as the 13 July 1877 issue of the *Canadian Gentleman’s Journal and Sporting Times*, the following description of a local ball game notes, “The “best” game of base ball ever played in Canada, was on the Dominion Day, between the Mutuals of West Lorne and the Champions of Rodney, resulting in the defeat of the latter by a score of 115 to 105.” There are several possibilities for its meaning. The word “best” appearing in italics could be the writer’s sarcastic jab, but possibly it also signifies an editorial evaluation of this particular game’s prominence as the best game of the many forms of baseball available. A 115 to 105 result certainly looks like a typical Canadian Game score.

So Adam Ford despite the inconsistencies and problematic nature of his 1886 description of a 4 June 1838 has done us an invaluable service. He has expanded our appreciation for the dual nation regional development of baseball from a kind of underground, childish, and informal play thing to its prominence today as played in those two countries. He has provided additional details on the nature of what the New York Clipper itself called, the Canadian Game. And he has helped us understand the troubling but eventual triumph of the faster and heavier ball New York game.

Baseball flourished in Canada during the Civil War** and allowed its players to make up some of the ground lost with the earlier adoption of the New York game south of the border. Still its best amateurs were no match in 1864 for America’s best team when they met in Rochester.**
The artisanal nature of early Canadian baseball players as reflected in their diversity of occupations was no better represented than in the person of Jim Shuttleworth, whose sudden death in late August 1869 brought out his working comrades and teammates in a last march to an unmarked grave. It’s an ending seemingly without explanation until this small item was discovered in a Bowmanville-based newspaper east of Toronto and dated 2 September 1869.
“A Shoemaker, doing a small business in Dundas, committed suicide because of dull trade and a bad wife.”

Dundas is a reasonable walk from Hamilton. The item’s timing, its location, the occupation of the victim, and the mystery surrounding James’s death don’t add up to an absolute conclusion but they are as close as we might ever get. In a troubled and uncertain era which we can only mildly enter with any confidence, James’s life and fate and that of Dr. Adam Ford allow at least a brief glimpse into a world in which baseball passed from a casual almost unrecognized identity into fully-fledged prosperity. It wasn’t our world and in looking back into it we must be tempered by this perspective.
Southwestern Ontario is simply a geographic identifier for a region within the province of Ontario. Ontario was the name given to the Province at the time of Canadian Confederation on 1 July 1867. Between 1841 and 1867, Ontario went by the name of Canada West (Quebec was Canada East). Before then and back into the 18th century Ontario was called Upper Canada (Quebec was Lower Canada). In 1854 the Great Western Railway arrived in Hamilton from Buffalo, and then travelled on through southwestern Ontario to Detroit.

Locations mentioned in this essay are boxed. London to Hamilton is a distance of 80 miles. Hamilton to Buffalo, New York is 65 miles. Woodstock to Ingersoll is 11 miles. Woodstock to Beachville is five miles. Woodstock to Hamilton is 50 miles. Brantford to Hamilton is 25 miles. Hamilton to Toronto is 45 miles.
Endnotes


ii Block, David Baseball Before We Knew It (2005)

iii Martin, Brian Baseball’s Creation Myth (2014)

iv Sporting Life, 5 May 1886

v Among sources for the massacre in 1763 is Alexander Henry’s Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories between the years 1760 and 1764, published by The Mackinac Island State Park Commission, 1966

vi from The Oxford Gazetteer: Containing an Abstract of Each Census of the County of Oxford (1852) by Thomas Strahan Shenston, page 106, County of Oxford - its militia, officer etc.

vii Landon, Fred The Common Man in the Era of the Rebellion in Upper Canada, from Aspects of Nineteenth-Century Ontario. Among Landon’s observations. “Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and other states of the West were dealing with the very subjects that were of great interest to the common man in Upper Canada: non-sectarian common schools, roads and bridges, solemnization of marriage, the franchise and elections, tenure of office, and freedom of religion….he had only to spend an evening at the nearest tavern or inn to learn from some American immigrant or traveler what was going on in the neighboring states.” One of those topics of conversation might have been baseball, though Landon doesn’t say!

As Act to prevent the Profanation of the Lord’s Day, commonly called Sunday, in Upper Canada.

[29th March, 1845.]

III. And be it enacted, That if any such Merchant, Tradesman, Artificer, Mechanic, Workman, Labourer, or other person whatsoever, shall, from and after the passing of this Act, sell, or publicly shew forth, or expose, or offer for sale, or shall purchase any wares, merchandizes, goods, chattels, or personal property, or any real estate whatsoever, on the Lord’s Day, commonly called Sunday, as aforesaid, or shall do, or exercise any worldly labour, business, or work of their respective ordinary callings, (except as hereinebefore excepted,)—or if any person or persons shall tipple, or allow or permit tippling in any Inn, Tavern, Grocer, or House of Public Entertainment, or shall revel, or publicly exhibit himself or herself in a state of intoxication, or shall brawl, or use profane language in the public streets, or open air, thereby creating any disturbance or annoyance to Her Majesty’s peaceable subjects on that day,—or shall hold, convey, or attend any public political meeting on that day,—or shall play at skittles, ball, foot-ball, racket, or any other noisy game, or shall gamble with dice or otherwise, or shall run races on foot, or on horseback, in carriages, or vehicles of any sort on that day,—or if any person or persons shall go out fishing, or hunting or shooting, or in quest of, or shall take, kill, or destroy any deer or other game, or any wild animal, bird, or wild fowl, or fish, except as hereinafter mentioned, or shall use any dog, fishing rod, gun, ride, or other machine, or shall set any net or trap for the above mentioned purposes on that day, except in defence of his, her or their property from any wolf, or other ravenous beast or bird of prey, or shall battle in any exposed situation in any water within the limits of any incorporated City or Town, or within
Benn was not a good man: head was not his own. This was in 1837 that my brother was killed. I was there at the time. Amos was a very passionate man, and his first blow might have been in that form. But he struck him twice; the second blow when he was lying senseless in the grass. The American (Granger) who was there, broke Amos's wife into a rage, and her absence at the trial helped to set Amos off. She acted badly.

THE KNOWL-HILL YEARLY RECREATIONS will take place on WHIT TUESDAY, when the lovers of sport will find ample amusement. To commence with a Cricket Match, at 9 o'clock, for ribbons; Base Ball for dittos; Donkey Racing, Running in Sacks, Gingling, Dipping for Eels, Climbing for a Hat, Bowling for a Cheese; a Female Race for a new Gown-piece, and a variety of other Amusements.

HINTON HOUSE.
Doctor Adam E Ford, CPSO #01470, first registered with the College on 29 October 1873 and he died on 30 August 1927.

Dr. Ford attended Victoria College, Cobourg, Ontario, and graduated in medicine in 1855 (Victoria College federated with the University of Toronto in 1892: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victoria_University_in_the_University_of_Toronto). Our records show that Dr. Ford practised in St. Mary’s in 1866 (thus we are pretty sure this is the physician you are looking for). It is interesting that he was practising in 1866 but was not registered. There was a grandfather clause in the first Medical Act that stated that doctors who were practising prior to the establishment of the College (in 1866), were registered. Our records provide no indication as to why he did not register until 1873.

Note: If one wants to look at all the criteria for the registration of doctors at the College’s inception in 1866, one could read “A Legal History of the Health Professions in Ontario” by E. McNab.

Happy hunting and I hope this is helpful 😊

Kathryn

Kathryn Clarke
Sr. Communications Coordinator, Communications
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario

xii Thorn, John Baseball in the Garden of Eden (2011)
xiii pp 50-51, Campbell, William Zorra (Boston: 1915) Sherman, French and Company
xiv 27 September 1856 Clipper
xv 4 August 1860 Clipper
xvi 18 August 1860 Clipper
ed. note regarding the above: Today Burlington is an adjunct municipality northeast of Hamilton, but this Burlington team of the 1850s was based in what is today downtown Hamilton, and only a few blocks from the grounds of the Maple Leaf team above, and so should properly be described as a Hamilton-based team.

On 18 August 1858 the Hamilton Spectator noted the following under the heading, Base Ball. A match at Base Ball between the Young Canadian and Burlington Clubs is to be played this afternoon on the common at the east end of the city. Play to commence at half-past two o'clock.

New York Clipper, 11 June 1859
Michael Katz uses an occupational ranking system which places occupations in six categories, with number one being highest and number six, the lowest. The categories, he suggests are valid for a 19th century city prior to industrialization. A study of the lineups of Ford’s Beachville team (1838), the Hamilton Maple Leafs (1854-69), the Woodstock Young Canadians (1860’s), and the Guelph Maple Leafs (1864-73), reveals the following occupational level of baseball players of this era.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Number represented</th>
<th>Types of occupations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(a Methodist clergyman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(5 clerks, 3 yeoman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(5 shoemakers, 5 machinists, 3 tinsmiths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(teamster, sailor, wool sorter, saloon keeper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(4 labourers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ranking system from, Michael Katz, The People of Hamilton, Canada West (Cambridge, 1975)

Toronto Globe, 9 August 1859
Evidence of the game’s growth is an account from Port Hope in 1861 (New York Clipper, 25 August 1861), east of Toronto. Port Hope’s pitcher “Addie” (below) is described as “a very fine player and a very powerful batter”. He is likely Bob Addy, soon to move to the United States and become a prominent early star.
BASE BALL IN CANADA.—A match at base ball was played on Aug. 6th, on the grounds of the Mechanics club, of Port Hope, C.W., between the Mechanics club, of that place, and the Live Oak club, of Bowmanville. The playing of the Mechanics club was fine, and Gilchrist as catcher played beautifully. He allowed no balls to pass him, and his batting was very powerful. He made four home runs in succession. The pitcher of the Mechanics, Addie, is also a very fine player and a very powerful batter. The Live Oak club is composed of young men residing in Bowmanville. They do not practice as much as they should, and are not composed of as hardy men as the Mechanics, but, with practice will make a good club. We append a score of the match in question:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAMES</th>
<th>H. L.</th>
<th>RUNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinie</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birdes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFarish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veitch</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burden</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 38

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAMES</th>
<th>H. L.</th>
<th>RUNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gilchrist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addie</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hales</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLelland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillips</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cushbert</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 66

RUNS MADE IN EACH INNING:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
<th>9th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live Oak</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sumpter Club is the title of a new base ball club, composed of inveterate, organized on the 16th last. The club is in a