

The Origins and Development of  
Association Football in  
Nottinghamshire c.1860-1915

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## Abstract

Home to two of the oldest football clubs in the world, Nottinghamshire was a hub of the association game. Yet it barely receives a mention in scholarly studies of football. Based predominantly on original research in the local press, this thesis offers new knowledge with regards networks, professionalism, amateurism and identity through its study of the game's formation and development in relation to the county between 1860 and 1915. Nottinghamshire was especially involved in networks with Sheffield and the London based FA early in soccer's history. Games continued to be played with differing rules depending on the region with Nottingham also having its own rules. This thesis demonstrates how it was mainly the FA Cup, but also other national events such as the North-South game and England-Scotland game, which were major influences in ensuring that the game played under the FA's rules became the dominant football code. This study examines how the FA Cup fuelled professionalism too as sides sought advantage over others. Nottinghamshire clubs felt justified in using professional methods because of professionalism in cricket. This aided their stance in the debates on legalizing professionalism which Nottinghamshire helped influence. Amateurism, meanwhile, remained a strong feature of the local game and Nottinghamshire's staunch amateurs certainly played a prominent role in the Amateur Football Association during its split from the FA. Football was part of the identity of Nottingham and its county. This was expressed especially with the slightly varying FA Cup celebrations in 1894 and 1898. Civic leaders were keen to associate themselves with football early in the game's development as it became a respected part of the county's culture. The Notts-Forest rivalry was intriguing too: for a period it was class based; there was always an element of town versus county to it; sometimes the clubs were friends; at other times they were bitter enemies. The local press reflected and reinforced enthusiasm for the game. And when those from the area travelled, they took the game with them aiding the game's expansion through work links or tours either primarily for the love of the game or as promoters of the sport.

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## List of Abbreviations

- AFA – Amateur Football Association
- BFA – British Football Association
- FA - Football Association

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## Introduction

Home to two of the oldest football clubs in the world, Nottinghamshire was a hub of the association game. Yet it barely receives a mention in scholarly studies of football. Based predominantly on original research in the local press, this thesis offers new knowledge and interpretations of the networks, identities and professional and amateur trajectories of football through a study of the game's formation and development in Nottinghamshire between 1860 and 1915.

Academic writing on the history of association football is actually no longer in its infancy. It is now over forty years since James Walvin's first scholarly study, *The People's Game*, appeared in the mid-1970s.<sup>1</sup> Since then, a series of monographs, PhD theses and journal articles have been produced, developing and refining our understanding of both of the history of the game and its place in the broader social and cultural history of Britain. It is perhaps not surprising that football's early years – or what is variously described as its 'origins', 'emergence' or initial 'development' – have interested historians the most. Understanding how a range of varying popular and public school games were transformed into a small number of 'football' codes in the middle decades of the nineteenth century has preoccupied historians and sociologists alike for a number of years. Nottinghamshire was especially involved in networks with Sheffield and the London-based FA early in soccer's history. Games continued to be played with differing rules depending on the region, with Nottingham also having its own rules. This thesis demonstrates that the FA Cup particularly, as well as other national events such as the North-South game and England-Scotland game, were major influences in ensuring that the game played under the FA's rules became the dominant football code. This study examines how the FA Cup fuelled professionalism, too, as sides sought advantage over others. Nottinghamshire clubs felt justified in using professional methods because of

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<sup>1</sup> Walvin J., *The People's Game: A Social History of British Football* (London: Allen Lane, 1975).



professionalism in cricket. This aided their stance in the debates on legalizing professionalism which Nottinghamshire helped significantly to influence. Amateurism, meanwhile, remained a strong feature of the local game and Nottinghamshire's staunch amateurs certainly played a prominent role in the Amateur Football Association during its split from the FA in the early 1900s.

The question of how and why football came to represent something significant and meaningful in the civic life and culture of many late Victorian and Edwardian towns and cities has also been of significant interest to historians. Football was part of the identity of Nottingham and its county. This was expressed especially in the varied FA Cup celebrations in 1894 and 1898. Civic leaders were keen to associate themselves with football early in the game's development as it became a respected part of the county's culture. The Notts-Forest rivalry was intriguing too: for a period it was class based and there was always an element of town versus county to it. Sometimes the clubs were friends while at other times they were bitter enemies. The local press reflected and reinforced enthusiasm for the game. And when those from the area travelled, they took the game with them aiding the game's expansion through work links or tours either primarily for the love of the game or as promoters of the sport. This introductory chapter will explore the current state of the scholarly writing on the history of football. It will seek to locate the present study within this literature and demonstrate what the study of the game Nottinghamshire adds to existing knowledge.

### **Football and History**

The first academic studies of football in the late 1970s and 1980s emerged from a wider interest among social and labour historians in the leisure and non-work lives of the British working class. For both James Walvin at York and Tony Mason at

Warwick, association football's central role in the lives of so many workers meant that it needed to be taken seriously and studied in the same way as other facets of working class culture such as the music hall, the public house and the cinema. For Walvin, sport was 'an essential ingredient in the social and physical well-being of any nation worldwide' whilst his book was an attempt to 'make good the discrepancy between the social importance of football in English history and the virtual absence of football from historiography'.<sup>2</sup>

Walvin and Mason's books stand out as the key formative studies in the history of football. While the history of leisure was gaining ground, both were working in an academic climate where football, as Walvin has claimed, was treated with disdain.<sup>3</sup> The books differ significantly in their approach and source base though both touch on a series of themes that have become important in subsequent analyses. Walvin addresses topics such as 'traditional' folk football, the public school influence on the game, professionalism and how the game expanded overseas; all have been debated by sports historians subsequently and are also explored in this thesis. The importance of the public school game as well as the rise of working class football, with its varying origins in church, grammar school, factory and cricket clubs are key themes. A number of Walvin's observations have become part of the popular history of the game. He sees Blackburn Olympic's 1883 FA Cup victory, for instance, as a pivotal and symbolic moment after which professionalism made headway at the expense of the public schoolboy, amateur game. And he correctly notes how the presence of Scots in Lancashire caused friction in the game, especially in Birmingham and Sheffield, highlighting again a crucial moment in the rise of the professional game.<sup>4</sup> His claim, too, that football is 'England's Most Durable Export' has certainly been repeated many times, even if the relationship between British and overseas football is

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<sup>2</sup> Walvin, *People's Game*, pp. 1, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Walvin, *People's Game*, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Walvin, *People's Game*, pp. 77-8.

increasingly being understood as more complex and nuanced than Walvin acknowledged.<sup>5</sup>

Walvin's book was an important landmark in academic football history but, for some, it was a frustrating read. The absence of references has troubled those scholars who are convinced that serious academic study requires proper scholarly apparatus. More satisfying in this respect is Mason's *Association Football and English Society* which was published in 1980 and was based on meticulous research in association and club archives and, particularly, in the British Library's Newspaper Library at Colindale. Like Walvin, Mason begins by exploring 'traditional' football and its subsequent development. He refers to traditional games as 'rough football' and, like Walvin, argues that these games died out in the mid nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Mason suggests the outlawing of football on highways in 1835, industrial expansion which left little space to play the game, and evangelical attitudes, as reasons for this.<sup>7</sup>

Mason builds on Walvin's work by providing a more detailed analysis of clubs. Their origins, whether church, workplace, public house, neighbourhood or cricket club, are analysed. Who was involved in the running of these clubs is also investigated. His results have helped to frame the work of subsequent historians working on England and beyond. Mason is thorough too in his study of the period of friction between amateurism and professionalism during the 1880s, highlighting key incidents and offering a convincing exploration of the motives of those involved; though the analysis of debates on the legalization of professionalism within the FA (Football Association) is limited. In his final chapter, Mason explores the notion that late Victorian and Edwardian football fostered a sense of identity and belonging. He

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<sup>5</sup> Walvin, *People's Game*, p. 92; Murray B., *The World's Game: A History of Soccer* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1998), p. 22; Mason T., 'Middle-Class Wanderers and Working-Class Professionals' in Griffiths C.V.J., Nott J.J. and Whyte W. (eds), *Classes, Cultures and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 121-138; Taylor M., *The Association Game: A History of British Football* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), pp. 160-182.

<sup>6</sup> Walvin, *People's Game*, p. 27-8; see also Malcolmson R.W., *Popular Recreation in English Society 1700-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 89-117.

<sup>7</sup> Mason T., *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), p. 10.

argues, though only partially demonstrates, that this was manifested in the incredible celebrations seen when teams returned with the cup.<sup>8</sup> Mason's analysis of the game's meanings was suggestive rather than comprehensive. There was, as will be discussed below, more to be explored here on the forms these celebrations took, why winning a cup produced such elation, and what connections this may have had to burgeoning civic identities. Still, *Association Football* is a vital work. That it has provided inspiration and been cited so often in the decades since it was published is testament to this.<sup>9</sup>

Examples of *Association Football's* influence can be found in Neal Garnham's *Association Football and Society in Pre-Partition Ireland*, Martin Johnes' *Soccer and Society: South Wales*, Dave Russell's *Football and the English* and Nicholas Fishwick's *English Football and Society*.<sup>10</sup> These works adopt a similar focus, and often a parallel structure, by studying the development of the game, players, clubs, amateurs, professionals and the make-up of crowds. But all offer fresh perspectives too. Garnham provides fascinating insight into how football in Ireland declined and became divided after Ireland won the British Home Championship in 1914. He demonstrates how professionalization of football in the North of Ireland clashed with predominantly amateur ideals in the South before political events reinforced this schism.<sup>11</sup> Johnes' work excels in his examining of football, civic and national identity. He argues that identities can be multi-layered and uses Cardiff City's FA Cup Final appearances of 1925 and 1927 to demonstrate this. We are told how the notable Welsh singing and wearing of leeks combined with visits to the cenotaph and singing 'Abide With Me' with the English at the game in London, the British capital,

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<sup>8</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, pp. 21-258.

<sup>9</sup> Holt R., "No Ideas But in Things': Tony Mason's *Association Football and English Society*", *The Sports Historian*, 22, 1, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Garnham N., *Association Football and Society in Pre-Partition Ireland* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2004); Johnes M., *Soccer and Society South Wales 1900-1939* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002); Russell D., *Football and the English: A Social History of Football in England, 1863-1995* (Preston: Carnegie, 1997); Fishwick N., *English Football and Society, 1910-1950* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> Garnham, *Association Football and Society in Pre-Partition Ireland*, pp. 159-200.

reinforced feelings of Welshness *and* Britishness.<sup>12</sup> Russell too offers an insightful investigation of identities. He argues how identities go beyond feelings of being part of a town or city. He demonstrates how Bristol's teams represented areas of Bristol, how Yorkshire had a strong county identity so those from Bradford supported Huddersfield in an FA Cup Final, how there are strong southern and northern identities in England and how 'big teams', such as Arsenal and Chelsea initially, could become a source of identification for people who did not even come from where that team was from.<sup>13</sup> Fishwick's work covers a later period, from 1910 to 1950, yet it offers insights for the present study into how journalists, local papers, national papers and football specials were 'crucial agents in nationalizing the game', as newspapers form the backbone of my research.<sup>14</sup>

One of the longest-lasting scholarly debates in the history of football has focused on the game's 'origins' and early development in mid-Victorian England. Matthew Taylor has offered a balanced overview of the debate in his synoptic study *The Association Game* in 2008.<sup>15</sup> The 'origins of football' debate has evolved around two main theories or approaches. The established view developed by Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard claimed that football developed mainly from Public School and Oxbridge games and that traditional football had practically died out by the middle part of the nineteenth century to be replaced by a more civilized game but watched by increasingly violent spectators.<sup>16</sup> This theory came under increasing scrutiny. Criticism of elements of Dunning and Sheard's findings regarding the supposed fluctuation in the violence of players in the latter half of the nineteenth century was expressed by Tony Collins whilst Neil Tranter was likewise critical of their findings on

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<sup>12</sup> Johnes, *Soccer and Society South Wales*, p. 177.

<sup>13</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, pp. 64-9.

<sup>14</sup> Fishwick, *English Football and Society*, pp. 94-110.

<sup>15</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, pp. 20-31.

<sup>16</sup> Dunning E. and Sheard K., *Barbarians, Gentlemen and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football* (London: Routledge, 2005 (1st edition 1979)); Dunning E., 'The Development of Football' in *The Sociology of Sport* (London: Frank Cass, 1972), pp. 133-4.

crowd behaviour.<sup>17</sup> Rob Lewis, whilst supportive of the established view, was also critical of Dunning and his narrow theories on spectator behaviour which lacked broad research.<sup>18</sup> Richard Holt has been sceptical, too, on how much games were actually changed by any supposed civilizing process and has claimed: 'To understand how far things did *not* change is just as important as understanding the extent to which they did'.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, Dunning has acknowledged shortfalls in his research but, with Graham Curry and Sheard, still vehemently defended his ideas and methodology.<sup>20</sup>

Revisionist views, promoted especially by Adrian Harvey, John Goulstone and Peter Swain, claim that football grew predominantly from popular games that had evolved within communities outside of public school influence.<sup>21</sup> Harvey's thought-provoking work *Football: The First Hundred Years* is strong in examining the football culture that developed in Sheffield and how it was influential in, rather than influenced by, the proceedings of the struggling London-based Football Association towards the latter half of the 1860s. Harvey claims that Sheffield's Youdan Cup was an inspiration behind the beginnings of the FA Cup, which would truly take the game to a national level from 1871.<sup>22</sup>

Curry, who supports Dunning and Sheard and highlights the strong links between Cambridge University and football's codification, has, along with Hutton and Goodman, acknowledged Harvey's extremely useful findings but claims a link

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<sup>17</sup> Collins T., *Rugby's Great Split* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), p.129. Tranter N., *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 177.

<sup>18</sup> Lewis R.W., "'Touched Pitch and Been Shockingly Defiled": Football, Class, Social Darwinism and Decadence in England, 1880-1914' in J. A. Mangan, (ed), *Sport in Europe: Politics, Class, Gender* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 138-9.

<sup>19</sup> Holt R., *Sport and the British* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Curry G., Dunning E. and Sheard K., 'Sociological v Empiricist History: Some Comments on Tony Collins's 'History, Theory and the 'Civilizing Process'', *Sport in History*, 26, 1, 2006.

<sup>21</sup> Harvey A., *Football: The First Hundred Years: The Untold Story* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005); Goulstone J., *Football's Secret History* (Upminster: 3-2 Books, 2001); Swain P., 'Cultural Continuity and Football in Nineteenth Century Lancashire', *Sport in History*, 28, 4, December 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p. 125.

between Sheffield FC and Cambridge University through the older brother of William Prest, co-founder of Sheffield FC.<sup>23</sup> It is more likely that the public school games did play a major, but not the only, role in how football developed. Taylor has acknowledged that both arguments, revisionist and established, whilst not demonstrating the whole picture, hold useful explanatory value. Still, the debate has remained firmly divided especially over what football was being played in the mid nineteenth century and the methodology used to analyse this.<sup>24</sup> Martyn Cooke and Gary James have recently argued for the development of a consensus among historians engaged in the debate even if this is rather optimistic in a debate where positions have become somewhat entrenched.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, this thesis speaks to some of these issues by assessing how football developed in Nottinghamshire from the mid nineteenth century and what forces, such as the influence of other

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<sup>23</sup> Curry G., 'The Trinity Collection: an analysis of the role of members of Cambridge University in the development of football in the mid-nineteenth century', *The Sports Historian*, 22, 2, November 2002; Hutton S., Curry G. and Goodman P., *Sheffield Football Club: 150 Years of Football*, (Altrincham: At Heart Publications, 2007), pp. 24-5.

<sup>24</sup> Curry G., 'Football: A Study in Diffusion', unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leicester, 2001; Curry G. and Dunning E., 'The problem with revisionism: how new data on the origins of modern football have led to hasty conclusions', *Soccer and Society*, 14, 4, 2013; Curry G., 'The Origins of Football Debate: Comments on Adrian Harvey's Historiography', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 31, 17, 2014; Curry G. and Dunning E., 'The Power Game: Continued Reflections on the Early Development of Modern Football', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 33, 3, 2016; Harvey A., 'The Emergence of Football in Nineteenth-Century England: The Historiographic Debate', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 30, 18, 2013; Hay R., Harvey A. and Smith M., 'Football before codification: the problems of myopia', *Soccer and Society*, 16, 2-3, 2015; Swain P. and Harvey A., 'On Bosworth Field or the Playing Fields of Eton and Rugby? Who Really Invented Modern Football?', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29, 10, July 2012; Swain P., 'The Origins of Football Debate: The Continuing Demise of the Dominant Paradigm, 1852-1856', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 31, 17, 2014; Swain P., 'The Origins of Football Debate: The 'Grander Design and the Involvement of the Lower Classes', 1818-1840', *Sport in History*, 34, 4, December 2014; Swain P., 'The Origins of Football Debate: The Evidence Mounts, 1841-1851', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32, 2, 2015; Swain P., 'The Origins of Football Debate: Football and Cultural Continuity', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32, 5, 2015; Swain P., 'Early Football and the Emergence of Modern Soccer: A Reply to Tony Collins', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 33, 3, 2016.

<sup>25</sup> Cooke M.D. and James G., 'Myths, truths and pioneers: the early development of association football in the Potteries', *Soccer and Society*, published online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14660970.2016.1276247> (January 2017); James G., 'Historical Frameworks and Sporting Research', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 33, 10, 2016; Collins T., 'Early Football and the Emergence of Modern Soccer c.1840-1880', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, June 2015; Kitching G., 'The Origins of Football: History, Ideology and the Making of 'The People's Game'', *History Workshop Journal*, February 2015.

footballing regions and the FA Cup competition, drove its development. This work argues that there are elements of orthodox and revisionist views that hold validity by demonstrating that, while public schools did have an influence on football in Nottinghamshire, football here also developed from an existing sporting culture which had little or no public school influence.

Much of the significant work on the early history of football in the last decade or so has taken the form of local studies. Inspired by the work of Lewis and Johnes on Lancashire and South Wales respectively in the 1990s, recent studies have looked to explore the rise of football in particular cities and regions and the connection of the sport to a range of place-based and social identities.<sup>26</sup> Many have taken the form of MA or PhD theses, with Ian Nannestad on Lincolnshire, Ian Preston on Liverpool and Matthew McDowell on Scotland being notable examples.<sup>27</sup> For Gary James, the choice of place with Manchester has been significant, reflecting a desire to insert a neglected local narrative into the wider history of the game.<sup>28</sup> Some local studies of the development of football in nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain, such as those by Mike Huggins, Neil Tranter and Colm Kerrigan, have also focused on particular aspects of the game, such as its diffusion, its economics and links with education.<sup>29</sup> Other studies, such as Catherine Budd's on Middlesbrough and Dave Pendleton's on Bradford, have been important in seeking to situate football within

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<sup>26</sup> Lewis R.W., 'The Development of Football in Lancashire, 1870-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Lancaster, 1993; Johnes, *Soccer and Society*.

<sup>27</sup> Nannestad I., 'From Sabbath Breakers to Respectable Sportsmen: The Development of Football in Lincolnshire circa 1855 to circa 1881', MA dissertation, De Montfort University, 2006; Preston T.J., 'The Origins and Development of Association Football in the Liverpool District c.1879 until c.1915', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Central Lancashire, 2006; McDowell M., *A Cultural History of Association Football in Scotland, 1865-1902: Understanding Sports as a Way of Understanding Society* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> James G., 'The Emergence, Development and Establishment of Association Football in Manchester', Unpublished PhD thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2015;

<sup>29</sup> Huggins M., 'The Spread of Association Football in North-East England, 1876-90: The Pattern of Diffusion', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 6, 3, December 1989; Kerrigan C., *Teachers and Football: Schoolboy Association Football in England, 1885-1915* (Abingdon: Routledge Farmer, 2005); Tranter, *Sport, Economy and Society in Britain*.



the broader sporting cultures of cities and regions.<sup>30</sup> Here, a revived desire to view sport as a part of wider studies of leisure and entertainment has also encouraged scholars to consider the development of sport and its associated culture in a broad sense rather than treating the histories of individual sports as narrow narratives. Indeed, Collins's recent suggestion that the different codes of football ought to be considered within a single overarching historiography might be extended to other sports, whose histories were, as will be argued in this thesis in relation to cricket and football in Nottinghamshire, interdependent and intertwined.<sup>31</sup>

While Nottingham and its county has been mentioned regularly as an important region in the early history of football, there has been no in-depth study in book or article form.<sup>32</sup> One exception is a recent article by Curry and Dunning on Nottingham, written in the context of the 'origins' debate. Its focus is narrow, however, being predominantly concerned with the notion of public school influence on the game in Nottingham, and it adds little to the wider historiography of football.<sup>33</sup> This thesis, by contrast, aims to explore the history of Nottinghamshire football in terms of the varying identities of its population and its changing relations with other places. It is not intended to be an inward-looking study, but instead seeks to situate Nottinghamshire within regional, national and indeed international networks.

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<sup>30</sup> Budd C.A., 'The Growth of an Urban Sporting Culture: Middlesbrough c. 1870-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2012; Pendleton P., 'Sport and the Victorian City: The development of commercialised spectator sport, Bradford 1836-1908', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Collins T., 'Association and rugby football: two codes, one historiography' in Hughson J., Moore K. Spaaij R. and Maguire J. (eds), *Routledge Handbook of Football Studies* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 30-9.

<sup>32</sup> Goldblatt D., *The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football* (London: Penguin, 2007), p. 38; Huggins M., *Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambleton, 2004), p. 155.

<sup>33</sup> Curry G. and Dunning E., 'The 'origins' of football debate and the early development of the game in Nottinghamshire', *Soccer & Society*, DOI: 10.1080/14660970.2015.1067801 (2015).

## Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire is a county in the East Midlands of England which shares borders with Lincolnshire to the East, Leicestershire to the South, Derbyshire to the West and South Yorkshire to the North. Nottingham is and was by far the largest settlement in the county and it was awarded city status in 1897 as part of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Mansfield, to the north of the county, had become the second most prominent town in Nottinghamshire by the Edwardian period. The population of Nottinghamshire was 294,380 in 1851 and 716,519 by 1911. The Nottingham region's population meanwhile in 1851 was 58,419 and 259,904 by 1911, while the Mansfield region, including places such as Sutton-in-Ashfield and Kirkby-in-Ashfield, rose from a population of 30,146 in 1851 to 125,359 in 1911. Other sizeable centres in Nottinghamshire with populations of over 30,000 were Newark-on-Trent, whose population rose from 30,348 in 1851 to 32,711 in 1911, and Worksop, whose population rose more rapidly from 19,153 in 1851 to 56,608 in 1911. However, the populations of the Nottingham and Mansfield areas combined accounted for over a half of Nottinghamshire's population by 1911. Nottingham and its county are, of course, also famously associated with Sherwood Forest. That this forms a strong identity for the area was reflected in the 45<sup>th</sup> (Nottinghamshire) Regiment of Foot in the British Army taking on the name 'Sherwood Foresters' in 1866.<sup>34</sup>

Lace manufacture and hosiery-making provided most of Nottingham and its surrounding area's employment in the Victorian era, whilst textile mills maintained economic strength in the Mansfield area. Into the latter part of the Victorian era, pharmaceuticals, cycle manufacture and tobacco - namely Boots, Raleigh and Players - came to prominence in Nottingham whilst coal provided significant employment to the west and north of Nottingham and around Mansfield especially. Brewing also boosted the economies of Nottingham and Mansfield.<sup>35</sup> Reflective of the growing

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<sup>34</sup> *Grantham Journal*, 5 January 1867; *Cork Examiner*, 1 January 1867.

<sup>35</sup> Church R.A., *Economic and Social Change in a Midland Town: Victorian Nottingham 1815-*

prosperity that came from Nottingham's staple industries was the growth shown in retail such as with innkeepers, butchers, clothing stores and bakers. Furthermore, the 'Lenton and Nottingham Co-operative Society' had 50 shops, 13,000 members and an annual turnover of £250,000 by 1914 and could trace its roots back to a single working class temperance society store at Lenton in 1863.<sup>36</sup>

Nineteenth century Nottingham had a rough reputation. It also had an intriguing and radical political landscape.<sup>37</sup> John Beckett has argued that:

Turbulent Nottingham became a byword for troubles of one sort or another, although it was also a litmus test for Westminster governments anxious to take the temperature of political opinion outside the capital. As late as the 1880s, elections, both local and national, were invariably marked by disorder and riot.<sup>38</sup>

The people of Nottingham rebelled with food riots in the 1750s and 1760s, Painite (sympathisers with the French Revolution) and electoral disturbances of the 1790s, Luddite revolts from 1811 to 1816, the attack on the castle, which belonged to the Duke of Newcastle who was an opponent of voting reforms in 1831 and Chartist protests from 1838 to 1848. The Lambs gang, whose allegiance could be swayed by any side, intimidated voters in 1844 and again in 1865. In 1861, disorder also broke out when the Whigs put forward the son of the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Lincoln,

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1900 (London: Frank Cass, 1966), pp.228-310; Chapman S.D., 'Industry and Trade', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 343; Chapman S.D., 'Economy, Industry and Employment', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), pp. 480-496.

<sup>36</sup> Chapman, 'Industry and Trade', pp. 346-7;

<https://nottinghamhiddenhistoryteam.wordpress.com/2013/01/07/nottinghams-first-co-operative/> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>37</sup> Owen J., 'An inexplicable constituency': Organised Liberalism in Nottingham, 1868-1880', *Midland History*, 35, 1, 2010; Pelling H., *Social Geography of British Elections: 1885-1910* (London: MacMillan, 1967), pp. 207-210.

<sup>38</sup> Beckett J., 'Radical Nottingham', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 284.

to stand in a by-election. Nottingham had such a reputation for disorder that it was the first sizeable town to receive a barracks for the quartering of troops in 1792.

This thesis addresses this historiographical portrayal of Nottingham as a 'troubled' place by exploring how far the city's reputation for violence was transferred into organised football. Notts County were nicknamed 'The Lambs' and the press often highlighted the roughness of the crowds and players in the city and surrounding areas.

Nottingham did not have a strong party political identity and was predominantly a place of Conservative-Liberal marginal seats.<sup>39</sup> However, Nottingham was also targeted as potentially having strong Socialist support from 1870, ran a 'labour candidate', John Burns, in 1885, and had the only Chartist MP, Fergus O'Connor, who was elected in 1847. Yet these ideas held no longevity in nineteenth century Nottingham. For instance, Burns could only poll 598 votes and this was seen as a success by his supporters. Moreover, this election in 1885 resulted in a riot injuring 150.<sup>40</sup>

Nottingham itself was a city divided in the second half of the nineteenth century between the nouveau riche, who took residence in the affluent Park area, and the poor, who were crammed into Nottingham's appalling slums which had become a subject of a Royal Commission for which Nottingham's water engineer Thomas Hawksley gave evidence on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1844. An editorial of the *Nottingham Review* on the 6<sup>th</sup> September referred to Hawksley's report of 1844 and reflected how shocking the life expectancy was in Nottingham at the time:

No one can read Mr Hawksley's report without being convinced that there is a vast, an appalling sacrifice of health and life every year in Nottingham. This gentleman has proved beyond all doubt that the

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<sup>39</sup> Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections*, pp. 207-210.

<sup>40</sup> Beckett, 'Radical Nottingham', p. 310.

average duration of life among the males of the town is very little beyond *twenty years!*<sup>41</sup>

Nottingham enjoyed continuous open spaces though, unlike other cities, because of the slow pace of enclosure in the city and because spaces were protected for recreational use. The Meadows, the scene of a wild 1820s football match painting and where 'a numerous party assembled' to play football on Shrove Tuesday in 1832, The Park, the Forest Fields and the Embankment near Trent Bridge, the location of an early painting of football being played c.1860, were all examples of this.<sup>42</sup> Sixty years after Enclosure had first been proposed, a bill was finalised at the end of June 1845 but passing the Act 'divided the town' and it was not until 1867 that the impasse was finally resolved, by which time 'the garden town had become an industrial slum'.<sup>43</sup> However, Beckett describes how cricket was played on the Meadows where the players rose at 5am to play and, with reference to H. Conways's *People's Parks*, how there is 'no other town in the kingdom, perhaps, that offers so many advantages in having open spaces in the immediate vicinity of the town'.<sup>44</sup> The relative late enclosure of land combined with a slow transformation of the workforce into workshops and factories meant workers had control of their spare time leading to the survival of recreational activities in areas such as the Meadows.<sup>45</sup> This all meant that the line between football being squeezed out of city life and industrialisation was not

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<sup>41</sup> Beckett J. and Brand K., 'Municipal Reform and Parliamentary Enclosure', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), pp. 235-6.

<sup>42</sup> Beckett J., 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 391; Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform and Parliamentary Enclosure', 239; Illiffe R. and Baguley W., *Victorian Nottingham: A Story in Pictures (Volume 14)*, (Nottingham: Nottingham Historical Film Unit Publication, 1975) is dedicated to football.

<sup>43</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform and Parliamentary Enclosure', pp. 238, 241; Beckett J., 'An Industrial Town in the Making, 1750-1830', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 215.

<sup>44</sup> Beckett, 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', p. 391.

<sup>45</sup> Beckett, 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', p. 390; Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 42.

as clear cut in Nottingham as has been argued in relation to other parts of the country.<sup>46</sup>

Mansfield also suffered from overcrowding yet maintained recreational space. For instance, within the Field Mill complex was a large field that was used for cricket in the 1850s and, from 1861, football. Herbert Greenhalgh, who owned a cotton doubling business, initially ran the football side here. Field Mill claims to be the second oldest football ground in the world after Sandygate Road in Sheffield which is used by Hallam FC and was also used for cricket.<sup>47</sup> Cricket was also played in Mansfield in the 1850s at Littleworth, Newgate Lane and at Sherwood Hall where All-England Eleven games were even staged.<sup>48</sup> This reflects the idea, explored further in this thesis, of a sporting culture that existed in Nottinghamshire continuously throughout the nineteenth century.

### **Professionals and Amateurs**

This section explores professionalism then amateurism by investigating their meanings and assessing how they impacted on football's development. The relationship between professionals and amateurs is a key theme in academic football history as it is a key to understanding the social context and significance of football in this period. Studies of professionalism and amateurism demonstrate that football was embedded in contemporary debates relating to social control, class relations,

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<sup>46</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, p. 10; Walvin, *People's Game*, pp. 27-8; Malcolmson, *Popular Recreation in English Society*, pp. 89-117.

<sup>47</sup> Hill D., 'Mansfield' online at <http://www.nottsheritagegateway.org.uk/places/mansfield.htm> (accessed 3 April 2017) ; Retter J. with Taylor P., *Mansfield Town: The First 100 Years* (Tuxford: Glen Publications, 1997), pp. 9-10; <http://www.stagsnet.net/fm/history/History.html> (accessed 3 April 2107).

<sup>48</sup> Groves W.H., *The History of Mansfield* (Nottingham: Frank Murray, 1894) p. 380; *Mansfield Reporter*, 28 May, 4, 11, 18, 25 June, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 July, 1858.

economic relationships, appropriate forms of behaviour and respectability. Taylor has demonstrated how football was regulated by gentlemen amateurs, such as Major Francis Marindin and Lord Arthur Kinnaird, at the FA during the period of this study. Taylor highlights too how amateurism was 'infused with class connotations' as amateurs 'were often former public school men with the necessary private means to devote their time to playing or promoting sport' whilst asserting that 'dignity, self-control, effortless style and courage' were the values of gentlemen amateurs that working class men 'rarely embraced'.<sup>49</sup>

Working class interest in football gained momentum in the late 1870s and early 1880s and a rise in professionalism, especially in Lancashire, came associated with this. Football, from the 1870s, became increasingly about winning too. Cup competition, local rivalries and, eventually, the Football League gave games extra meaning. Clubs sought to gain advantage over others in a number of ways and this created division as some of these methods, which could be termed as professional, were considered unfair. The FA sought to control professionalism by legalising it in 1885 in a manner similar to cricket. A key factor in this would have been that in cricket, as Holt has exemplified, amateurs were able to maintain authority over professionals.<sup>50</sup> However, amateurs were subsequently not able to maintain dominance over professionals. After professionalism was eventually legalised in 1885, the formation of the Football League in 1888 especially, and then the Southern League in 1894, gave professionalism extra impetus. In Nottinghamshire, County first, and then Forest, turned professional in the late 1880s in order to improve their own finances or to make themselves competitive against other teams. The FA sought to bring wages and the transfer of players under control. Yet they also tried to force local FAs to include professional clubs which Middlesex and Surrey were especially opposed to. The split consequently occurred from which staunch amateurs would form the Amateur Football Association (AFA) in 1907 of which Nottinghamshire

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<sup>49</sup> Taylor M., *Football: A Short History* (Oxford: Shire Publications, 2011), p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 107.

provided the most northerly association. This had little impact on the game, however, and professional football grew substantially throughout the nation during the Edwardian period. Football's popularity during this time meant that amateur football generally was only marginally affected by the secession of the elite amateurs of the AFA. Eventually, the AFA, who had harmed themselves by being cut adrift, rejoined the FA in 1914.

How can we define professionalism as it emerged in Victorian and Edwardian football? Lewis has identified a number of facets of professionalism, such as importing players, using guest players, poaching players and finding employment for 'popular' players who had been imported.<sup>51</sup> Russell's work adds a further dimension to professionalism: the notion that training and physical labour were regarded as a means of gaining an unfair advantage; alongside clubs 'simply paying above regulation rates for broken time'.<sup>52</sup> Lewis asserts that local rivalries in Lancashire brought about this extra competitiveness whereby, for instance, Preston North End imported players from Scotland in 'a deliberate attempt to match rivals like Bolton Wanderers and Blackburn Rovers'.<sup>53</sup> Collins, too, has demonstrated in his work on rugby how the Yorkshire Cup brought about new attitudes towards professionalism in sport.<sup>54</sup> This thesis explores aspects of professionalism in relation to Nottinghamshire. Guesting, poaching, training and, adding to Lewis' and Russell's aspects, using professional cricketers were certainly evident in Nottinghamshire whilst importing was, initially at least, looked upon unfavourably.

A number of scholars have linked the rise of professionalism with changing entrepreneurial behaviour and the emergence of organised cup competitions. Wray Vamplew, for example, has argued that sports entrepreneurs responded to rising

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<sup>51</sup> Lewis R. W., 'The Genesis of Professional Football: Bolton-Blackburn-Darwen, the Centre of Innovation, 1878-85', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 14, 1, April 1997, pp. 32-7.

<sup>52</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, pp. 23-5.

<sup>53</sup> Lewis, 'Genesis of Professional Football', pp. 30-1.

<sup>54</sup> Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, p. 24.



incomes and leisure time by promoting football as an entertainment. William Clarke was one such entrepreneur in Nottingham who developed the Trent Bridge ground for cricket, began charging people to watch Nottinghamshire in 1838 and, subsequently, formed the professional All-England Eleven cricket team.<sup>55</sup> In football, David Goldblatt argues: 'Crucial to the growth and survival of clubs and Associations was the development of cup competitions' with the FA Cup being 'regarded as pivotal here'.<sup>56</sup> Mike Huggins has stated too that 'Attendances soared when cups were introduced'.<sup>57</sup> The Notts FA Cup competition was certainly crucial to the financial well-being of the Notts FA. The Notts-Forest rivalry, meanwhile, was also important financially. This thesis examines how Forest and Notts protected their special rivalry. At times, though, this competitiveness created jealousies yet it also fuelled both clubs' attempts to keep up with each other. It was the desire to progress in the FA Cup and the dream of winning it that created the most excitement and tension across Britain in the 1870s and 1880s however. Clubs and supporters measured the success of a season on their progress in the FA Cup.

It is somewhat ironic that the FA's tournament, the FA Cup, proved to be the real turning-point in the power shift away from the amateur stronghold, the public schools. Whilst many historians have highlighted the significance of Blackburn Olympic's defeat of the Old Etonians, and the FA Cup's key role in the unification of association football's rules, little has been done to fully explore the FA Cup's role in the rise of professionalism in the late 1870s and the first half of the 1880s.<sup>58</sup> Using Nottinghamshire as a case study, this thesis argues that the FA Cup was the key driving force behind professionalism's rise.

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<sup>55</sup> Beckett, 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', p. 408; Light R.F., 'Cricket's Forgotten Past: A Social and Cultural History of the Game in the West Riding of Yorkshire 1820 –1870', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, June 2008, pp. 54, 77-8, 105-8, 167, 174-7, 283.

<sup>56</sup> Goldblatt D., *The Game of our Lives: The Meaning and Making of Modern Football* (London: Penguin, 2014), p. 267; pp. 275-8.

<sup>57</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 197.

<sup>58</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, pp. 43-4; Russell, *Football and the English*, pp. 11-2; Walvin, *People's Game*, p. 74.

The FA used its main competition as a device to try to control professionalism. The governing body endeavoured to control professionalism by banning clubs from its competition beginning, significantly, with Preston North End in January 1884, to be followed at the start of the next season with Burnley and Great Lever. This caused immense friction leading to the threat of a breakaway association, the British Football Association (BFA) in October 1884, which almost divided the emerging game.<sup>59</sup> Consensus was eventually achieved with professionalism legalized but under 'stringent conditions'.<sup>60</sup>

Despite being such a crucial moment in the history of football, there are few detailed interpretations of the debates leading to the legalization of professionalism in 1885. Russell's recent book chapter is the best account, providing as it does a thorough analysis of the views of opposing factions and the stages through which professionalism could move from being an 'evil' to becoming an 'expedient' necessary for the survival of the game.<sup>61</sup> Russell has astutely observed that the divide could not simply be seen as a class issue but was a regional one too. Taylor, meanwhile, has called for 'more detailed information on who voted for what at key FA meetings, and a greater understanding of the local debates over professionalism'.<sup>62</sup> This thesis answers this call by detailing the position of Nottinghamshire, a key footballing centre, in the professionalism debate. It asserts that the general consensus of those from Nottinghamshire neither reflected the strict amateur ethos of those from London and the Home Counties, as well as elements of the Sheffield and Birmingham Associations, nor was it as pro-professional as many in Lancashire. This thesis assesses how the general feeling in Nottinghamshire, that importing was the most unsavoury aspect of professionalism, was reinforced by the

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<sup>59</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 25.

<sup>60</sup> Porter D., 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's 'Great Split', 1907-14, *Sport in History*, 26, 3, December 2006, p. 425.

<sup>61</sup> Russell D., 'From Evil to Expedient: The Legalization of Professionalism in English Football, 1884-85' in Wagg S. (ed.), *Myths and Milestones in the History of Sport* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011).

<sup>62</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 51.

local press. It also demonstrates that cricket's strong influence in the county was a key influence on considerations of how professionalism could be regulated and controlled in football.

Once professionalism was legalised in 1885, the FA was able to re-assert its control of the game nationally for a period. The establishment of the Football League in 1888, however, certainly gave professionalism further momentum. The 1900s saw football's popularity soaring and this was reflected in a surge in crowd numbers. Certain clubs' popularity grew as a result of their strong leadership. Indeed some clubs, it has been argued, such as Liverpool, Chelsea and Manchester United, became virtual dictatorships.<sup>63</sup> In contrast, Nottingham Forest remained a committee-run club at a time when most clubs of similar stature had become limited companies. Notts County encountered little change too and their directorate did not change from 1890, when it was made a limited company, until 1914.<sup>64</sup> This thesis argues that the conservative way these clubs were run in the 1900s affected their sporting and economic success, to the point where they were no longer considered 'major' clubs on a national scale as they had been during the 1890s.<sup>65</sup> Crucial, too, in the sporting demise of Nottingham's leading clubs was the fact that Notts and Forest struggled to keep pace with clubs who were experiencing large attendances due to new Football League success, FA Cup success or fresh rivalries decades after Forest and Notts had first experienced such events.

Continued desire for success meant that clubs could overstretch themselves financially. The FA sought to control this by introducing a maximum wage in 1901. The FA, as stated, also tried to force local FAs to incorporate professional clubs. This

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<sup>63</sup> Lewis, 'The Development of Football in Lancashire, 1870-1914', p. 86.

<sup>64</sup> Tischler S., *Footballers and Businessmen: The Origins of Professional Soccer in England* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1981), pp. 86 and 92.

<sup>65</sup> In relation to Harding's 'super eight' that included Aston Villa, Everton, Liverpool, Manchester City, Manchester United, Newcastle United, Sunderland and Sheffield Wednesday; Harding J., *For the Good of the Game: Official History of the Professional Footballers Association* (London: Robson Books Ltd, 1998), p.34. I argue in Chapter 5 that another four clubs – Chelsea, Sheffield United, Tottenham Hotspur and Blackburn Rovers - should be added to this list too.

caused a schism in the game resulting in the formation of a purely amateur association, the AFA. Dilwyn Porter has explored the events that led to this split with regards to the increased commercialisation of the game and the dispute regarding incorporation of professional clubs. He has also shown that the AFA struggled on before being integrated back into the FA under 'stringent conditions'- ironic considering it was 'stringent conditions' that professionals were once subject to.<sup>66</sup> This thesis adds to this research by demonstrating how gentleman amateurs in Nottinghamshire provided a vital influence at this time through their support of the AFA by being not only the most northerly AFA Association but also through having a pivotal role in debates regarding whether clubs should have a choice in who they play. It also argues that the AFA split ultimately had a minimal effect on amateur football in the country and that, indeed, regular amateur football in Nottinghamshire remained relatively unaffected by the divide.

As one of the most significant concepts in nineteenth-century sport it is no surprise that amateurism continues to preoccupy historians. Rooted in the worldview of Muscular Christianity and the British public school, amateur sport has traditionally been considered as an outgrowth of ideologies of athleticism and notions of Victorian 'manliness' that then spread around the British world 'through a mixture of cultural diffusion and cultural imperialism'.<sup>67</sup> If the term 'amateur' has come to mean playing for no pay, this was neither the most obvious, nor the most significant, meaning attached to it for much of the Victorian and Edwardian period. In the early nineteenth century, it was used to denote an aristocratic supporter or patron of sport; aristocrats who played games like cricket were generally termed 'gentlemen' rather than amateurs. Significantly, amateurism developed as a more coherent ideology in reaction to the growth of working class sport from the mid to late decades of the nineteenth century. The 'amateur' definitions of rowing and athletic bodies thus

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<sup>66</sup> Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires', pp. 406-428.

<sup>67</sup> Holt R., 'The Amateur Body and Middle-class Man: Work, Health and Style in Victorian Britain', *Sport in History*, 26, 3, 2006, p. 353.

specifically excluded on the basis of social position, while in rugby, as Collins has carefully demonstrated, the authorities chose not to define amateurism explicitly but to treat it as the antithesis of professionalism.<sup>68</sup>

Nineteenth-century amateurism developed as a philosophy characterised by the idea of 'fair play' and the absence of material reward. There were a number of components to this. Firstly, it was about the manner in which the game was played – not just to abide by the rules but to also enter into the spirit of the game whereby 'a true amateur should never seek to gain any advantage over an opponent that he would not expect his opponent to take over him'. Secondly, 'style' was a significant amateur trait: 'grace and talent were far more important than working hard and training.'<sup>69</sup> This much is broadly accepted by historians. But recent interventions have added to our understanding of the complexities of amateurism in theory and practice. Baker, for instance, has added to our knowledge of what 'gentlemanly amateurism' was by demonstrating how the term gentleman had moved 'away from the rural squire or courtly fop towards a more broadly responsible, self-disciplined, functional elite capable of retaining the leadership of a more 'modern' society'. He also asserts how the gentlemen of the professional middle class 'did not wish to compete with professional athletes from the lower classes, whether from fear of defeat or aversion to physical contact'. Moreover, Baker has identified further characteristics of gentlemanly amateurism, which include elements of volunteerism, exclusivity and purity. He also highlights a lack of interest in attracting spectators, a characteristic also identified by Holt.<sup>70</sup> More significantly, perhaps, Holt has argued that amateurism has been too narrowly defined. He opens it up beyond the moral, educational and social influences that drove it, to consider its economic, medical and aesthetic dimensions. In such a context, the body of the amateur athlete, as well as

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<sup>68</sup> Collins, T. *Sport in Capitalist Society: A Short History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p. 31; Collins T., *A Social History of English Rugby Union* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), pp. 30-5.

<sup>69</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp. 98-109.

<sup>70</sup> Baker N, 'Whose Hegemony? The Origins of the Amateur Ethos in Nineteenth Century English Society', *Sport in History*, 24, 1, 2004, pp. 1-16; Holt, 'The Amateur Body', pp. 361-2.

gesture, clothing and visual style all contributed to what amateurism meant to contemporaries.<sup>71</sup>

The most important part of Holt's revised analysis, however, lies in his emphasis on amateurism's roots in 'the material life of the middle classes' as well as the 'visual style and patrician virtue of the upper classes'. He argues that amateurism was embraced by a 'vastly enlarged middle class' as it was a fusing of 'the values of a striving, enterprising liberal elite with the refined and restrained world of upper-class good manners and style'.<sup>72</sup> More than just a repackaging of ideals related to muscular Christianity, amateurism was about keeping healthy in mind and body. Holt shows how amateur sport was played in the green suburban areas such as Epping Forest, Wimbledon or Twickenham away from central London.<sup>73</sup> The same was true of Nottingham, where early football teams played on grounds shared with cricket away from the centre at Forest Fields or on the Meadows and just outside the Nottingham boundary at Trent Bridge and Beeston. Football was furthermore promoted by leaders in Nottinghamshire as a healthy pastime and grounds for sporting use were protected whilst, at the same time, some clubs remained exclusive.

Amateurism was not one thing but many, as the work of Holt and others has clearly demonstrated. This becomes even clearer if we move beyond its ideology to its practical manifestations. Here Morris's distinction between 'gentlemanly amateurism' and 'pragmatic amateurism' in his history of amateur football is particularly useful. Morris sees the former as characterised by those who 'saw themselves as part of a social and sporting elite, by virtue of their background and ethos' whilst the latter were 'those who simply wanted to play football in the manner

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<sup>71</sup> Holt, 'The Amateur Body', pp. 363-6.

<sup>72</sup> Holt, 'The Amateur Body', p. 366-7.

<sup>73</sup> Holt, 'The Amateur Body', p. 358.

which seemed to them to be most viable, and to offer the greatest chances of stimulating competition, financial survival and durability'.<sup>74</sup>

Very few clubs, or players for that matter, were privileged enough to be able to keep playing football within semi-private clubs on strict amateur lines. For the great majority, it was only practical that money had to come into the game from outside in order for the club to stay afloat. In Nottinghamshire, whilst Notts Magdala were fortunate enough to be able to run themselves within an elite amateur network, the major clubs from the county had to find ways to survive and be competitive. As will be demonstrated, Forest and Notts were, in time, able to embrace professionalism fully yet, for others, this was not a financially viable option – especially as Forest and Notts attracted most of the support within the county. Clubs from Newark, Mansfield and Worksop struggled even at the Midland League level.

Meanwhile, local leagues flourished in a predominantly pragmatic amateur way. Morris has exemplified how the Ismithian League, which began in 1905, had a mixture of gentleman amateurs and pragmatic amateurs.<sup>75</sup> Similarly, the Notts. League, which was created in 1889, contained Notts Amateurs, whose cricketing side played the exclusive Marylebone Cricket Club, alongside works teams such as Notts Jardines, town teams such as a 'Mansfield Town' and a side with a church link, Beeston St. Johns. The pragmatic amateurs needed gate money or support from their associated body to survive. By the time Mansfield Wesley joined this league in 1906, the club had lost the support of the Wesleyan church due to the club not remaining within purely amateur circles and had to rename itself Mansfield Wesley before becoming the current Mansfield Town. The Notts. Junior League which started in 1894 and became the Notts. Alliance, meanwhile, was certainly more amateur. However, it contained Boots Athletic who were 'heavily subsidised' by their parent

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<sup>74</sup> Morris T., *In a Class of Their Own: A History of Amateur Football* (Sheffield: Chequered Flag, 2015), p. 179.

<sup>75</sup> Morris, *In a Class of Their Own*, pp. 102-4.

company. This setup drew scepticism from amateur administrators who believed that they 'could not be regarded as amateur in the strictest sense'.<sup>76</sup> The players themselves at this level were rarely staunchly amateur too, were a mixture of working and middle class and apparently took no issue in playing against or with professionals. Few, for instance, would have refused the chance of joining Forest or Notts if given the opportunity. Beneath the Notts. League and Notts. Alliance were at least another seven local leagues by 1903. This was an impressive number in comparison with London and Surrey where, as Morris has highlighted, the local FA's were wary of the competitive nature and commercial aspects of league competition - seen as a threat to the ethos of amateurism.<sup>77</sup> In rugby union, which remained amateur, the game had a cross-class appeal in Coventry, Leicester and the south-west of England as opposed to being predominantly middle class elsewhere in England. Reflecting diversity within amateurism, leagues developed in Bristol, Cornwall and Devon to the annoyance of the Rugby Football Union whilst Coventry contained working class factory teams.<sup>78</sup> This thesis exemplifies the three strands of amateurism that occurred in Nottinghamshire as highlighted by the AFA loyal elite amateurs of Notts Magdala, FA loyal elite amateurs of South Notts and pragmatic amateurs of Boots Athletic.

### **Pride of Place: City and County**

'From its earliest moments', Russell has argued, 'football has proved a potent vehicle for the generation of territorial loyalties'.<sup>79</sup> The connections between the game and the communities from which it emerged have been an essential theme in

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<sup>76</sup> Morris, *In a Class of Their Own*, p. 270.

<sup>77</sup> Morris, *In a Class of Their Own*, pp. 145-6.

<sup>78</sup> Collins, *English Rugby Union*, pp. 111-3.

<sup>79</sup> Russell, D., 'Associating with Football: Social Identity in England 1863-1998', in G. Armstrong and R. Giulianotti (eds), *Football Cultures and Identities* (Basingstoke; Macmillan, 1999), p. 19.



the history of nineteenth century football. Many scholars have drawn, explicitly or not, on Benedict Anderson's notion of 'Imagined Communities', arguing that engagement with a football club was one crucial way in which a community in the mind could be made 'real'. For Russell, again, 'idealised notions of community produced empowering myths through which people expressed their hopes and aspirations'.<sup>80</sup> And this sense of 'belonging' could also be reflected in 'the invention of emotionally and symbolically-charged signs of club membership such as football club ties, blazers, scarves, shirts, caps, etc.'.<sup>81</sup> Holt described this as a form of 'symbolic citizenship', a powerful sense of belonging that made the growing towns and cities of the late Victorian period more concrete and 'knowable' to those who thronged the terraces.<sup>82</sup>

Football historians have tended to focus on town and city-based identities above all others. Civic pride has been a key theme in a range of local and national sports histories. Collins's influential work on rugby football, for example, has done much to explore the connections between city identity and sport, asserting that 'football rapidly became the recreational medium for municipal and trade rivalry'.<sup>83</sup> In Nottingham as elsewhere, there is considerable mileage in the idea that football teams reflected wider developments in the localities, such as the grand designs of civic buildings. T.C. Hine, for instance, was asked by Nottingham's Town Improvement committee in 1857 to submit a design to improve the market place and town hall following similar projects in Birmingham and Leeds. Influenced by Trafalgar Square and French chateau designs, his plan was grand, though shelved. As Beckett and Brand state: 'New Nottingham had not yet developed the civic pride of its northern industrial neighbours'.<sup>84</sup> Still, there was 'the biggest civic party in memory-

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<sup>80</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 65.

<sup>81</sup> Lewis, 'Genesis of Professional Football', p. 22.

<sup>82</sup> See Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp. 159-79; Russell, 'Associating with Football', p. 19.

<sup>83</sup> Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, p. 17.

<sup>84</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform and Parliamentary Enclosure', p. 249; Beckett, 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', p. 404.

the opening of the Arboretum' which opened on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1852 and 'attracted a crowd of 25,000'.<sup>85</sup>

Other interpretations have tried to develop Holt's notion of 'symbolic citizenship', subjecting it to a detailed and sustained theoretical and empirical analysis. Brad Beaven, in particular, an urban historian first and foremost, has explored the idea of 'citizenship' as applied to late nineteenth and early twentieth-century football. While he accepts that inhabitants and migrants into a town could find belonging and thus, citizenship, through the support of a club (a sense of attachment that others have argued was 'frequently elusive' elsewhere), he has argued that 'citizenship' manifested itself in different ways for different social groups.<sup>86</sup> For the working class football supporter in the terraces, Beaven suggests, pride in 'place' was often demonstrated in instinctive and organic ways that may well have complemented, but could also run counter to, organised celebrations. 'Supporting the local team', it is claimed, 'cultivated a symbolic class-specific form of citizenship that differed markedly from the municipal initiative that emphasised class cooperation'.<sup>87</sup> In Nottingham, we will see that civic leaders were particularly keen to attach themselves to football clubs; indeed, the association with the success of local clubs was evident earlier in Nottingham than has been claimed elsewhere. As a result, while a 'true cross-section of the local population' could indeed be 'mobilised' at certain times in support of leading clubs in Nottingham, there were clear differences between responses that were municipally-led and those that were citizen-led.<sup>88</sup>

Civic pride thrived on competition, particularly in the context of the creation of cups and, later, leagues. Pride could be especially strong if the competition was of national standing. Simply put, winning a cup gave a town's team and its supporters a feeling

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<sup>85</sup> *Nottingham's Millenium* (no author given) (Derby: Breedon Books, 1999), p. 27.

<sup>86</sup> Waller P.J., *Town, City and Nation: England, 1850-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), p. 78.

<sup>87</sup> Beaven B., *Leisure, Citizenship and Working Class Men in Britain, 1850-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 81.

<sup>88</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 95.

of superiority over their neighbours and high standing within the country, boosting the name of town and club. Historians have highlighted the importance of cup competitions – the Yorkshire Cup in rugby, for example or the Youdan Cup in early Sheffield soccer – in helping a particular sport establish itself in an area by fuelling club and sporting allegiances.<sup>89</sup> In football, the FA Cup, introduced in 1871, was a key driver both in developing association football (aiding unity in rules and professionalism) and encouraging local expressions of belonging and pride.

Scholars have interpreted the celebrations that accompanied the return home of victorious (and sometimes defeated) teams in cup finals as events imbued with considerable symbolic significance.<sup>90</sup> Holt, for one, has suggested that these celebrations were surpassed only by ‘a coronation or the end of war’.<sup>91</sup> According to Russell, local and civic pride was ‘never more intensely and graphically expressed than at celebrations which followed the League and Cup successes’. He describes how:

The pattern of civic footballing celebration was well established by the end of the 1880s and remained in place at least until the 1960s. The central ingredients, almost clicks of the civic repertory, involved the triumphal greeting of the team at the station, often with a band or bands in attendance to play Handel’s ‘See the conquering hero comes’, a procession through the town, and finally, a public dinner at which civic dignitaries thanked the team for bringing such honour to the community.

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<sup>89</sup> Collins, *Rugby’s Great Split*, pp. 22-4; Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p.108; pp. 114-5; p. 125; p. 172.

<sup>90</sup> Collins, *Rugby’s Great Split*, p. 23; Williams Jack, ‘“One Could Literally Have Walked on the Heads of the People Congregated There”: Sport, the town and Identity’ in Laybourn K. (ed.), *Social Conditions, Status and Community, 1860- c.1920* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1997); Taylor M., *The Leaguers* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), p. x.

<sup>91</sup> Holt R., ‘Football and the Urban Way of Life’ in Mangan J.A. (ed.), *Pleasure, Profit and Proselytism: British Culture and Sport at Home and Abroad, 1700-1914* (London: Frank Cass, 1988), p. 81.

However, the notion of a 'pattern of civic footballing celebration' conceals differences in the way in which celebrations were organised and understood.<sup>92</sup> This is particularly true in the case of Nottingham, which witnessed the return of the FA Cup twice in the 1890s, with both its main clubs (Notts Forest, as they were then commonly referred to, in 1898 and Notts County in 1894). Here, this thesis will argue that, whilst Notts' return with the cup was met with civic involvement occurring earlier than some writers such as Jack Williams have demonstrated, the welcome from the public was more ecstatic than the authorities were prepared for.<sup>93</sup> The ad hoc nature of these celebrations as people rushed to the station and poured into the streets slowing the process of the team trying to get to its headquarters was certainly an expression of citizenship, as Beaven has contended. However, Forest's return appeared more under control, was more processional in nature and similar to Jubilee celebrations for instance. This pattern of events in Nottingham was not unique, however, with instances in Sheffield following a similar pattern during the 1890s.<sup>94</sup>

Club rivalries in football helped to sustain and enrich place-based identities. The sociologist Richard Giulianotti has claimed that 'rivalry and opposition' was crucial in the establishment of 'cultural identities' and that the purest rivalries were those involving 'civic siblings'.<sup>95</sup> Almost all clubs named after towns and cities, of course, were originally named after smaller neighbourhoods and communities. Manchester United and Manchester City, for example, initially came from Newton Heath and Ardwick, showing far more localised origins than their future names would reflect. Similarly, Birmingham's major clubs emerged from the areas of Aston and Small Heath. The original Merseyside derby was between the areas of Everton and Bootle. And the clubs of London still reflect intra-city localities more than the city itself. These local rivalries could actually fuel support for clubs rather than dilute it. Being able to

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<sup>92</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, pp. 64-5.

<sup>93</sup> Williams, 'Sport, the Town and Identity', pp. 131-2.

<sup>94</sup> *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 19 April 1899.

<sup>95</sup> Giulianotti, R., *Football: A Sociology of the Global Game* (London: Polity Press, 1999), p. 10.

sustain more than one major club would in fact establish a city as being a 'hotbed' for its established sport:

In Manchester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Sheffield and Liverpool the derby rivalries, in which each club came to depend upon the presence of the other, grew up.<sup>96</sup>

A local derby match could grip the imagination of a city leading up to, during and after the match with local, as well as national, feelings of superiority at stake.

Studies of the development of football have some way to go in properly historicising the meanings and identities associated with local rivalries. A rivalry such as that which developed between Notts County and Nottingham Forest may well have been seen as a continuation of old feelings; in Walvin's words, 'almost a return to the pre-modern, traditional world where social life had been determined not by any sense of belonging to, or fondness of, the nation at large, but to the locality and the parish'. Football in this sense might be regarded as a late nineteenth century version of earlier parish feuds.<sup>97</sup> Huggins has highlighted how 'by 1896 a Small Heath... supporter cheered when they received news by telegram of Aston Villa's FA Cup defeat at Derby'.<sup>98</sup> Yet there was potential for uniting as well as dividing communities, as supporters would cheer rather than jeer a rival's defeat.

That regional allegiances could often run in tandem with local identities has rarely been acknowledged in histories of football. For Russell, who has written widely about regional identities in sport, affections for more than one football club in a given region up until the 1960s were not only common, it often represented the norm. The Nottingham case similarly provides evidence that in the city and its surrounding area

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<sup>96</sup> Holt R., 'Working Class Football and The City: The Problem of Continuity', *British Journal of Sports History*, 3, 1, 1986, p. 13.

<sup>97</sup> Walvin, *Football and the Decline of Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986), pp. 46-47. Holt, 'Working Class Football and the City', pp. 6, 10, 12, 13 and 15.

<sup>98</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 197.

people followed both leading clubs and were happy when their rival was successful. In some cases this may have been the type of 'gentle regional or county patriotism' hinted at by Russell.<sup>99</sup> But it is also crucial to recognise, as relatively few scholars have, that football clubs located in towns and cities were more than markers of urban identity.<sup>100</sup>

Huggins has astutely noted the 'complex, contested, contradictory or overlapping' nature of sporting loyalties: 'They included real or imagined communities associated with school, workplace, street, town, region or nation, as well as class, religion or ethnic group'.<sup>101</sup> Williams may have claimed that 1 in 3 males from Blackburn were watching Blackburn Rovers by 1914. Yet, it is hard to believe that all the Blackburn Rovers supporters were from Blackburn. Surely, many had come from the surrounding villages and towns. Blackburn Rovers represented and could represent something much more than Blackburn. After all, Williams highlights how Bolton Wanderers represented places such as Farnworth and that, when Blackburn Rovers played in the 1882 FA Cup final, they were seen to be representing 'the town, the county and the provinces, against "Metropolitan" protection and "Metropolitan" monopoly'.<sup>102</sup> This study assesses the impact Notts and Forest had on their surrounding region, arguing that from the 1890s they dominated senior football not only throughout most of the county but even into Lincolnshire and Derbyshire too.

The existence of county loyalties and identities in football has generally been dismissed as too minor or insignificant to warrant particular consideration.<sup>103</sup> Where county patriotism has been seen to emerge, it is normally associated with professional or middle class administrators rather than the predominantly working class followers of the sport. Yet the fact that the leading clubs in Nottingham

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<sup>99</sup> Russell, 'Associating with Football', p. 20.

<sup>100</sup> Holt, 'Working Class Football and The City', p. 11.

<sup>101</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 192.

<sup>102</sup> Williams, 'Sport, the Town and Identity', p. 133.

<sup>103</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, pp. 191-2.

promoted themselves as representatives of both town/ city and county is important, allowing this thesis to address a neglected theme in the historiography of football. That Notts took on the abbreviated name of the county throughout this period, whilst Forest consistently did so between July 1887 and May 1901, is not contradictory even if it was peculiar in football.<sup>104</sup> The inspiration for this would have come through the close ties football had with cricket in Nottinghamshire. Significantly, Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club was powerful and successful. It gave the area a sense of county pride, a pride which Notts and Forest, for a while, were also able to attach themselves to. Huggins has demonstrated how Yorkshire had a strong county identity in cricket too.<sup>105</sup> Lancashire had one as well and these strong county identities certainly manifested themselves in the 'Roses' cricket matches.<sup>106</sup> Yet it would have been difficult for Lancashire or Yorkshire's prominent early clubs from Sheffield or Blackburn, for instance, to have taken on the county name as they were not the county town or the largest town in the county as Nottingham was in Nottinghamshire. They could not genuinely aspire to represent the county, yet Notts, Forest, as well as other sides such as Notts Rangers, Notts Jardines, Notts Wanderers, Notts Olympic, Notts Swifts and Notts Magdala, did.

Football, alongside cricket, was part of Nottinghamshire culture and consequently part of its identity. This manifested itself when those from the county travelled and took the game with them. This thesis examines how people from Nottinghamshire influenced the development of the game elsewhere as part of existing networks that developed through cricket with Sheffield, trade with northern Italy and through workplace skills with Woolwich in London. Football players and officials in Nottinghamshire were also able to consolidate the game and aid the game's

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<sup>104</sup> It has to be noted that, despite the fact Forest sought to be known as Notts Forest in the press during this period, they did not officially change their name with the football authorities, *Football League Handbooks*, 1889/90 – 1910/11 (in possession of Matthew Taylor). In Great Britain, the only other example of a county name being used is with Ross County in Scotland. East Stirlingshire, East Fife and Heart of Midlothian, from Scotland as well, also refer to parts of counties.

<sup>105</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 205.

<sup>106</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp. 177-8.

expansion through football networks that existed not only within the county but with London, Birmingham, Lancashire, Scotland, South America and amongst staunch amateurs.

## Sources and Methodology

Newspapers are an essential source in this study of football in Nottinghamshire. A newspaper dynasty was established in Nottingham by Thomas Forman and this began with him taking control of the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in March 1849. He then founded the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* in 1861 and the *Nottingham Evening Post* in 1878. Thomas' sons, John and Jesse, were involved in the running and ownership of the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* from the 1870s whilst Jesse was the first editor of the *Nottingham Evening Post*. Being part of this Forman group of newspapers, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* was able to draw easily from important newspapers of the region for its weekly digest. As its name implies too, it was written for a county-wide readership. This is why the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* has been the most common resource of this thesis.<sup>107</sup>

Other local newspapers have also been consulted, some digitally and others on microfiche at the Nottingham Central Library. These include the *Nottingham Evening Post*, *The Nottingham Daily Guardian*, *The Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, *Nottingham Evening News* and the *Nottingham Journal*. Nottingham's two football specials the *Football News*, founded in 1891, and *Football Post*, founded in 1903, have also proved valuable. *The Mansfield Chronicle* and *The Mansfield Reporter* have also been examined, though in less detail. The *Athletic News*, a Manchester-based sporting publication founded in 1875 covered the rise of

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<sup>107</sup> Fry T. 'Thomas Foreman and his Nottingham newspapers' online at <http://www.thorotonsociety.org.uk/publications/articles/thomasforman.htm> (accessed 3 April 2017).



professional football closely during the late 1870s and 1880s and, later, was seen as the mouthpiece of the Football League. Its perspective on the emergence of football in Nottinghamshire, which it covered on a regular basis, was therefore significant for this thesis. Other predominantly local newspapers have also been consulted via the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Periodicals, 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Library Newspapers and British Newspaper Archive databases.

The use of digitised newspapers has considerable advantages but also inherent issues which historians of all types, and those of sport specifically, are only just beginning to acknowledge. Once the word 'football' has been searched, for instance, it cannot be relied upon that that means association football. Closer analysis then has to be done to find the word's context so as to find out what type of football was being played. This study has followed a similar approach to that of Phillips, Ormond and Townsend, who have suggested that:

Distant reading of newspapers enables us to create a road map that provides ways not only to get to destinations but also find new destinations. But, if we want to fully explore both the journey *and* destination, then this will require the close reading skills that historians have always embraced in representing the past.<sup>108</sup>

A search, for instance, of 'football' or 'foot ball' in 1870 can lead the researcher to a particular game they are looking for at that time or even a discovery of a game. Then closer reading has to be done of the text to work out the type of game being played. A game in Nottingham, Sheffield, London or Leeds could be quite different. Possibly, the researcher has to use knowledge of where the paper is from to understand the game being played. 'Football' in 1870 would probably mean

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<sup>108</sup> Phillips M.G., Ormond G. and Townsend S., 'A Birds-Eye View of the Past: Digital History, Distant Reading and Sport History', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32, 15, 2015.

Nottingham Rules in a Nottinghamshire paper, Sheffield Rules in Sheffield, Association Rules in London and Rugby Rules in Leeds for example.

Concluding what ‘football’ means has further risks. Swain, for example, has highlighted many instances of where the word ‘football’ has been found in the early to mid-nineteenth century to emphasise his revisionist views on association football’s origins. These football instances happen in a variety of occasions normally alongside other games at church, works’ or school gatherings or as games played on streets or in fields. This thesis certainly draws on such events to highlight a continuing sporting culture that existed in Nottinghamshire in the 1850s. Yet, Swain argues these examples are close to association football, which requires a leap of faith as there is very little description of how these games were played and are, by his own admission, arguable.<sup>109</sup>

This is not a thesis based primarily on an analysis of archival resources. There are few records of either of the main Nottinghamshire clubs, or any other significant clubs in the county from this period. However, some archives have been of use. The Nottinghamshire Archives have been explored and examination of records on playing fields, council minutes, schools’ football and Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee arrangements together with the *Memorandum of Association of the Notts. Incorporated Football Club* have proved to be enlightening. Online censuses and passenger lists have also been searched here. Whereas the proceedings of the Nottinghamshire FA had to be followed in the local press, the records of the Birmingham FA, which was closely connected to Nottinghamshire and included a number of the county’s clubs at various times, were consulted at the Wolfson Centre for Archival Research at Birmingham City Library. *The Football Annual* collection from 1871 to 1888 was consulted at the National Football Museum Archives in Preston. A visit to the Football League Archives at the Lancashire Archives in Preston proved,

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<sup>109</sup> Swain, ‘The Origins of Football Debate: The ‘Grander Design’’; Swain, ‘Early Football and the Emergence of Modern Soccer’.

however, to be less fruitful as no information was found there that was relevant to this study. Research has also been conducted at the British Library with Richard Daft's *King's of Cricket* and Amateur Football Association Annuals providing invaluable information. A visit to the National Football Museum in Manchester also provided thought provoking information on football's early years with regards professionalism in Lancashire.

Plenty has already been written about Nottinghamshire's clubs by enthusiastic supporters. Though these books may be derided by some sports historians and dubbed 'scarf and rattle', beginning with Fishwick, some of them are actually well researched with their authors painstakingly putting together data and unearthing fascinating archives.<sup>110</sup> McDowell has highlighted the value of some of these club histories, making good use of Ross's well researched history of Kilmarnock FC for instance, whilst ensuring they are not met without a critical eye.<sup>111</sup> This is the case in this thesis too, where considerable use has been made of Keith Warsop and Tony Brown's *The Definitive Notts County* as well as Jack Retter and Paul Taylor's *Mansfield Town – The First 100 Years*.<sup>112</sup>

There may be evidence that the gap between 'Scarf and Rattle' and academic histories may be actually narrowing. Darrin Foss's *Notts County FC and the Birth of Modern Football* contains excellent research regards connections between Notts County's origins and the Robin Hood Rifles. Furthermore, Foss cites the works of Curry and Walvin as being instrumental in shaping his work.<sup>113</sup> Similarly, Don Wright's *Forever Forest* contains especially fascinating insight into Walter Lymbery's book

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<sup>110</sup> Fishwick, *English Football and Society*, p. ix.

<sup>111</sup> McDowell, *A Cultural History of Association Football in Scotland*, pp. 17-8, 35-7; Ross, D., *Killie The Official History: 125 Years of Kilmarnock F.C.* (Harefield: Yore Publications, 1994).

<sup>112</sup> Warsop K. and Brown T., *The Definitive Notts County* (Beeston: Tony Brown, 2007); Retter J. with Taylor P., *Mansfield Town: The First 100 Years* (Tuxford: Glen Publications, 1997).

<sup>113</sup> Foss D., *Notts County FC and the Birth of Modern Football: The Early Years of the Oldest Professional Club in the World* (No town given: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013), p. 6.

keeping whilst citing Beckett and Goldblatt as influences on his work.<sup>114</sup> Further evidence of the gap closing between academic and fan in the history of football is provided by Manchester City supporter and historian Gary James moving into academic research.<sup>115</sup>

### **Title and Structure of Thesis**

This thesis examines the development of football in Nottinghamshire. However, its main focus is Nottingham and the surrounding district, and in particular the two key football clubs of the period - Notts and Forest. It is not intended as a comprehensive study of the emergence of football in every part of Nottinghamshire: there is relatively little analysis here, for instance, of football in Mansfield, Newark and Worksop. However, Notts and Forest certainly dominated the Nottinghamshire footballing landscape and this was demonstrated through the support they got and the fact that they attracted the best players in the region.

The use of Nottinghamshire in the title requires further justification. Firstly, the football structures that were created in the area were almost always county driven. The Nottingham Schools' FA and Nottingham Boys Brigade League are the only examples of Nottingham institutions here. By contrast, the Notts FA, Notts FA Cup, Notts Football League, Notts Amateur League, Notts Amateur Football Association, Notts Junior League, Notts Junior Challenge Cup, Notts Football Alliance, Notts Combination, Notts Thursday League, Notts Church FA, Notts Church League and Notts and District Football League were all institutions that reinforced the area's footballing structures as being county rather than the city-based. Secondly identification in relation to football did not simply revolve around the city. That Notts

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<sup>114</sup> Wright D., *Forever Forest: The Official 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Original Reds* (Stroud: Amberley, 2015), pp. 23-4; p. 254.

<sup>115</sup> James, 'Association Football in Manchester'.

County always took the abbreviated name of the county emphasises this. They certainly represented the shire and played home games in Beeston and at Trent Bridge, which was not only the home of the county cricket club but was also located in West Bridgford, not Nottingham. Other sides such as Notts Forest, Notts Rangers, Notts Olympic, Notts Jardines, Notts Wanderers, Notts Swifts and Notts Magdala also used the county name. Meanwhile, the abbreviation for Nottingham, 'Nottm', was certainly less common in football though it was used for Forest, when using Nottingham Forest as their name, and some local sides such as Nottingham Christ Church, St Stephen's Nottingham, Nottingham High Pavement Institute, Nottingham Amateur Football Club and Nottingham Thursday Athletic.<sup>116</sup> Thirdly, a major exponent of the county's sporting culture was Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club who had a strong influence, together with cricket generally, on football in Nottinghamshire. Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club were hugely successful and brought a sense of county pride to the area. Finally, as stated, a key source has been the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* newspaper which, as its name suggests, sought to represent the county.

The period, 1860 to 1915, was chosen as 1860 was an embryonic year for the county's oldest football club, Notts County, and 1915 was when the Football League shut down due to World War One. Though the structure of the thesis is chronological, key themes of football's development in Nottinghamshire between 1860 and 1915 are mapped on to the chronology. However, certain central themes, such as the influence of the press and the importance of the FA Cup, recur across chapters. In one case, the dates of the chapters overlap. This is done between Chapters 3 and 4 as details regarding Notts County's 1891 FA Cup final appearance fit a key theme of Chapter 4, civic pride. Meanwhile, an outcome of Chapter 3's main theme of football

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<sup>116</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 10 December 1880, 7 September 1881, 29 October 1888, *Nottingham Journal*, 21 November 1884.

being firmly integrated into Nottinghamshire culture is that the county had a strong influence on league football's developments by 1892.

Chapter one explores how football developed in Nottinghamshire between 1860 and 1880. Key themes here are who the important characters were in the game's development in Nottinghamshire and how rules and tactics of the game developed. I identify the backgrounds of Nottinghamshire's early clubs and argue that football in Nottinghamshire developed from an existing sporting culture. Football in Nottinghamshire, furthermore, grew within a positive environment of open spaces. Nottingham's two major clubs had a different type of rivalry compared with other cities: it was based around class in the late 1870s and around being of the city or shire until the 1880s at least. I argue that the networks that both clubs worked within, and helped to construct, with London and Sheffield respectively, reflected their differing social backgrounds. Notts were more elite and insular whereas Forest networked in a more inclusive fashion and this ultimately proved more successful.

The second chapter explores how Nottinghamshire reacted to the onset of professionalism and the interest generated by the FA Cup. This was a period of high emotion because of the excitement caused by the FA Cup and the professionalism that this competition fuelled. The local press both reflected and stoked up the fervour that was now becoming common in football. Clubs and associations sought to assert their power as professionalism became more prevalent and Nottinghamshire offers an interesting angle on how this was handled between 1880 and 1885, as cricket had become an important part of its culture.

Between 1885 and 1892, it became clear that football was embedded in Nottinghamshire culture and this is explored in the third chapter. This is done through examining the way in which football became connected to notions of respectability, particularly through its links with the church, education and the military. Football was also integrated into popular culture as seen in local

entertainments. Football had an ugly side too, though, and this reflected an element of 'roughness' commonly associated with Nottingham's 'Lambs' gang. The press fuelled this by making references to this notorious gang, after which the Notts club were nick-named. This was a period, too, when Notts and Forest were trying to gain admission to the newly formed Football League and this chapter explores how these clubs manoeuvred themselves at this time. Notts and Forest also ensured that their rivalry continued to be as important as possible by taking a rising force in the county, Notts Rangers, off their fixture lists.

Forest and Notts were FA Cup winners in the 1890s and I investigate the pride that was felt in these instances in the fourth chapter. This pride was reflected by not only the successful team's supporters but was city-wide too. Examined too is how these victories impacted on local football and whether there was a resulting surge in enthusiasm for the game as Gary James and David Day discovered happened in Manchester following Manchester City's 1904 success.<sup>117</sup> I also explore how celebrations varied with the two homecomings, with the city authorities seemingly better prepared second time around. The involvement of civic leaders in Nottingham and its county's football and how this compared with elsewhere, is also examined.

The fifth chapter, which fits the period 1900 to 1915, examines how Notts and Forest struggled to keep pace with a footballing boom that was happening throughout the nation. The game remained strong locally, however. This was despite a rift occurring in the game which certainly affected Nottinghamshire as staunch amateurs created their own national association of which Nottinghamshire had the most northern affiliate association. This development is explored in detail and the Nottinghamshire story here fills a gap in the historiography of amateurism in football as it explores the amateur game beyond London and the Home Counties. That the

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<sup>117</sup> James G. and Day D., 'FA Cup success, football infrastructure and the establishment of Manchester's footballing identity', *Soccer & Society*, 16, 2-3, 2015, pp. 200-16.

game was strong in the county meant that when those from the county travelled they took the game with them. Nottinghamshire was therefore able to impact on the game's development through work links. Furthermore, touring teams from Nottinghamshire were also able to help the game grow abroad. Building on previous knowledge of football tours is the investigation of how these tours differed slightly in nature. Professional and amateur touring teams had different objectives; the former generally toured for the purpose of enabling the game's expansion, the latter tended to do so for pleasure.



## Chapter One

### The Emergence of a 'football kicking fraternity', c.1860-1880

'Football' in England before the mid-1870s was a mix of localised activities varying from traditional folk games involving hundreds of participants to the game-forms developed at particular public schools. Harvey has charted instances of the various forms of football played and the locations with which they were associated in the 1860s and early 1870s; Collins, more recently, has pointed out that the word 'football', though principally associated with soccer or rugby, could still denote different activities in different places, even in the 1870s after its principal variants had been codified.<sup>1</sup> Kitching, meanwhile, has placed the emphasis on *development*, turning away from the search for *origins* with which so many sports historians have been primarily concerned.<sup>2</sup> Building on this, the intention here is to demonstrate that football in Nottinghamshire did not fall into line with what was happening in other parts of the country until the mid-1870s and that, even within the county boundaries, 'football' remained for many years a rather uncertain concept played according to what were described variously as 'Nottingham Rules', 'FA Rules' and 'Sheffield Rules', not to mention the rules applying to rugby, which had a minority following. It was the introduction of national competitions in the early 1870s - the FA Cup especially – and also representative matches, such as North-South and England-Scotland, that encouraged uniformity across the county and across the country as a whole. This chapter will also explore the way in which Nottinghamshire, partly because football was embedded in a well-established local sporting culture and also on account of its

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<sup>1</sup> Harvey A., *Football: The First Hundred Years - The Untold Story* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 178-196; Collins T., 'Early Football and the Emergence of Modern Soccer c.1840-1880', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32, 9, June 2015, p. 1136.

<sup>2</sup> Kitching G., "'Old" Football and "New" Codes: Some Thoughts on the "Origins of Football" Debate and Suggestions for Further Research', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, 13, September 2011, pp.1733-1749.

cross- and inter-regional networks and connections, was able to contribute to the wider development of association football in late nineteenth century England.

Association football in Nottinghamshire initially took root among young men of the growing middle class in Nottingham itself, about half-a-century before city status was awarded in 1897. In the 1840s and 1850s Nottingham had already been through a period of rapid change due to industrialisation and population growth. By 1860, a new Nottingham sprawled out in all directions from the old town, its living conditions having been described in the report of a *Royal Commission into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts* in 1844 as 'hardly to be surpassed in misery by anything to be found within the entire range of our manufacturing cities'.<sup>3</sup> The Nottingham Enclosure Act of 1845, prompted by the atrocious conditions the report had revealed, proved vitally important in ensuring that the green areas of Forest Fields and Queens Drive were kept protected whilst plans were put in place for The Arboretum and various walks to ensure a green belt circled the centre of the town, thereby ensuring that Nottingham was supplied with some space where its inhabitants could later enjoy sport and other forms of outdoor recreation.<sup>4</sup>

To the west of old Nottingham, The Park area began to grow from 1856. It gained a reputation for exclusivity, its residents comprising a middle-class elite, mainly textile manufacturers but also including lawyers, clergymen, architects, bank managers, wholesalers and retailers. A bowling-green and tennis courts were included as recreational options in this garden suburb.<sup>5</sup> The Sand Fields area, to the north of the old town and just south of Forest Fields, evolved in the 1850s. This also became a middle-class residential suburb, the Boys' and Girls' High Schools that moved into the area as a result of encouragement from the corporation making them especially

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<sup>3</sup> Beckett J. and Brand K., 'Municipal Reform and Parliamentary Enclosure', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 220.

<sup>4</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform', pp. 239-40; *File re playing fields and playgrounds owned and managed by the corporation* from the Nottinghamshire Archives. GB0157. CA/PA/1/1. Accession number 5707.

<sup>5</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform', p. 246.

appealing.<sup>6</sup> The available recreational space in these two new areas and the sporting enthusiasm of the young men that lived in them provided the conditions in which Nottingham's first two football clubs emerged, Notts County (Notts) first playing in the Park area and Nottingham Forest (Forest) on Forest Fields. Significantly, the gentlemen who first played for Notts comprised mainly the bankers, lawyers and other young professionals for which The Park area was renowned.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, Forest had close links with the High School in the Sand Fields area that was near to Forest Fields.<sup>8</sup>

Between 1861 and 1881, Nottingham's population grew from 74,693 to 186,575. This was mainly because of the 1877 boundary extension.<sup>9</sup> As Nottingham expanded after 1845, it merged with neighbouring villages and small towns. One such area, Radford, had a population of 15,127 in 1871 and was itself larger than the Nottinghamshire towns of Newark and Mansfield, thus demonstrating how dominant Nottingham and its immediate environs had become in the county. A complex overlapping of parish boundaries, along Alfreton Road for instance, was one reason for the creation of a Greater Nottingham, though the principal reason for the emergence of a single authority covering Nottingham, Basford, Radford, Lenton and Sneinton was that sewerage could be controlled more effectively.<sup>10</sup> The emergence of a Greater Nottingham after 1877 also provided a basis from which a local footballing network could grow.

It was also significant that the expanding rail network from Nottingham Midland Station underpinned Nottingham's historic role as the hub of the county of Nottinghamshire and its bordering areas. The first railway in Nottingham connected

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<sup>6</sup> Beckett J. and Oldfield G., 'Greater Nottingham and the City Charter', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 254.

<sup>7</sup> Warsop K. and Brown T., *The Definitive Notts County* (Nottingham: Tony Brown, 2003), p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> *Nottingham Forest F.C.: The Official Illustrated History* (Burton Joyce: Pineapple Books, 2009), p.8; Wright, D., *Forever Forest: The Official 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Original Reds* (Stroud: Amberley, 2015), p. 23.

<sup>9</sup> Beckett J., 'An Industrial Town in the Making', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 192.

<sup>10</sup> Beckett and Oldfield, 'Greater Nottingham', pp. 259-60.

the town with Derby in 1839.<sup>11</sup> Nottingham was then linked to Lincoln in 1846 via the Nottinghamshire villages and towns of Carlton-on-Trent, Burton Joyce, Lowdham, Thurgarton, Fiskerton and Newark.<sup>12</sup> Another line was then built to Lenton, Radford, Basford, Bulwell, Hucknall and Kirkby-in-Ashfield in 1848 before being extended to Mansfield in 1849.<sup>13</sup> In July, 1850, Netherfield, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Bingham, Aslockton, Bottesford and Grantham, all to the east of Nottingham, were joined to the town by railway.<sup>14</sup> Later, in 1875, Nottingham's connections expanded as a line was constructed out to Trowell via Radford before heading through the Erewash Valley and on to Northern Industrial Towns which, significantly for Nottingham's sporting connections, included Sheffield.<sup>15</sup> Vital too was that during the 1870s, the tram network in Nottingham developed so that Basford, Carrington and important sporting locations such as Trent Bridge and The Forest were connected to Nottingham Midland Station.<sup>16</sup>

The textiles industry, particularly lace manufacturing, increasingly dominated Nottingham and its surrounding area during the nineteenth century until the 1880s after which its industrial base became more diversified. Morley's, who had a football team, developed factories in Manvers Street, Nottingham, in 1866, Daybrook and Heanor in 1875, and Handel Street, Nottingham, in 1879 for instance. Of the 223 lace factories that could be accounted for in England in 1876, six were in the West of England whilst the rest were in Nottingham and its 'satellite towns' of 'Beeston, Ilkeston, Long Eaton etc'.<sup>17</sup> Cotton spinning, bleaching, dyeing and engineering were also important factory-based industries in Nottingham at this time. A growing number of shopkeepers in the town were able to take advantage of the 'rising proportion of retail turnover'. By 1885, there were 576 Innkeepers and beer sellers,

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<sup>11</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform', pp. 228-9.

<sup>12</sup> *Leicestershire Mercury*, 8 August 1846.

<sup>13</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform', p. 229.

<sup>14</sup> *Lincolnshire Chronicle*, 19 July 1850; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 July 1850.

<sup>15</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform', p. 229.

<sup>16</sup> Beckett and Oldfield, 'Greater Nottingham', pp. 265-6.

<sup>17</sup> Chapman S.D., 'Industry and Trade: 1750-1900', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), pp. 328, 330.

who were supplied by the brewers of Newark, Kimberley and Burton amongst others, 393 butchers, 482 milliners and dressmakers, 277 tailors, 159 mercers and drapers, 225 bakers, 61 clothes dealers and 526 boot and shoemakers.<sup>18</sup>

In all, Nottingham was considered a much more pleasant place in the 1880s than it had ever been since the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837. The *Nottingham Daily Guardian* stated in 1887 that 'provision of recreation grounds and public walks has greatly assisted in promoting the public health, and the town has become one of the most healthy, as well as one of the most attractive in the country'.<sup>19</sup> In short, the city of Nottingham provided an environment in which sport was likely to flourish.

Whilst there is little scholarly work on football in Nottinghamshire, what was written in the contemporary press indicates a vibrant and proactive football culture. This chapter focuses on how the game spread from the first clubs through various networks and identifies the key individuals who facilitated its growth. It will be argued that Nottinghamshire was no different to other footballing areas in having to compromise its own ways of playing as association football developed nationally after the adoption of a uniform code. But it also contends that the county was able to make a significant contribution to football's development at this time. This was partly on account of the particular strengths of the soccer culture which developed in Nottingham and in Nottinghamshire and also because of links that were forged with other areas that influenced the development of the association game in this period. The Sheffield connection was especially important in this respect, but links with Birmingham, Lancashire, London and Scotland also played a part.

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<sup>18</sup> Chapman, 'Industry and Trade', pp. 345-6.

<sup>19</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 18 June 1887.

## The Foundations of Football in Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire, and Nottingham in particular, developed a strong group of clubs at an early stage in the development of the association game, with Notts and Forest quickly emerging as the county's two dominant soccer institutions. Football, moreover, was embedded in and aided by a wider and long-established sporting culture in the county which embraced cricket and a local variant of hockey, among other sporting activities. Yet, though the importance of Nottinghamshire as an early centre of football has been recognised to some extent, there has been little sustained analysis of the way in which it developed and its relationship with this wider sporting culture.

'World's Oldest Football League Club Notts County FC Founded 1862' is the legend proudly displayed at Meadow Lane, the current home of Notts County. The primary evidence used to justify this claim runs as follows:

The opening of the Nottingham Football Club commenced on Tuesday last at Cremorne Gardens. A side was chosen by W. Arkwright and Chas. Deakin. A very spirited game resulted in the latter scoring two goals and two rouges against one and one.<sup>20</sup>

A search for the origins of this quotation brings up a different story. In fact, the Milton Football Club was founded at this point and the sides were chosen by Wainwright and Deakin.<sup>21</sup> It is difficult to see how this was an early version of Notts County as neither Deakin nor Wainwright appear in any early Notts sides. It appears that Milton were actually a club from Sheffield.<sup>22</sup> Though hardly on the same level as

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<sup>20</sup> Brown T., *The Official History of Notts County 1862-1995* (Harefield; Yore Publications, 1996), p. 7, citing the *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 28 November 1862 as its source. Brown and Warsop have since acknowledged that the *Sky Sports Football Yearbook's* use of this account 'can safely be ignored' but without mentioning the account is about Milton Football Club. Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 November 1862.

<sup>22</sup> Foss D., *Notts County FC and the Birth of Modern Football: The Early Years of the Oldest Professional Club in the World* (No town given: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013), pp. 15-6; Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p. 105.

the stories associated with William Webb Ellis, Walter Camp or Cooperstown, this is yet another example of a sporting foundation myth.<sup>23</sup> A fledgling football culture of organised teams was beginning to develop around Nottingham at the time though which is also exemplified by the organised teams that played each other at Willoughby in the same year.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, thirteen players from the Robin Hood Rifles became early or founder members of Notts suggesting these players had been playing informally amongst themselves at the Barracks in the Park area.<sup>25</sup>

Notts, in 2017, can still claim with some justification to be ‘The World’s Oldest Football League Club’, as displayed on the Jimmy Sirrel stand, or ‘the world’s oldest professional football club’.<sup>26</sup> However, it seems most likely that the club now known as Notts County was not officially formed until 1864 and that it was known by a variety of names in its early years - such as Nottingham Football Club, Nottinghamshire Club and Notts. Foot Ball Club - but there is evidence of continuity and it is clear that the game they played eventually evolved into association football or soccer.<sup>27</sup> As it is extremely rare to use either of these terms in Nottinghamshire, I shall refer more commonly from now on to association football - or to what would become association football – simply as ‘football’, as the locals did at the time.

The newly organised teams of the 1860s did not emerge from a vacuum. Light has demonstrated with regards to cricket how clubs were established in ‘most major urban centres and a number of smaller communities’ in the West Riding area of Yorkshire by the 1850s alongside ‘a more traditional form as cricket [that] continued to be played as an informal popular recreation’.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Pendleton has demonstrated how horse-racing, pedestrianism, pub sports and knurr and spell

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<sup>23</sup> Collins T., *The Oval World: A Global History of Rugby* (London, Bloomsbury Sport, 2015), pp. 21, 165-6, 258, 272; Guttmann A., *From Ritual to Record- The Nature of Modern Sports* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004 (1<sup>st</sup> edition- 1978)), p.101, 127.

<sup>24</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 January 1862.

<sup>25</sup> Foss, *Notts County*, pp. 14-6.

<sup>26</sup> Wain P., *Notts County: A Pictorial History* (Harefield: Yore Publications, 2004), front cover.

<sup>27</sup> See Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 23; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 March 1867.

<sup>28</sup> Light R.F., ‘*Cricket’s Forgotten Past: A Social and Cultural History of the Game in the West Riding of Yorkshire 1820 –1870*’, unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2008, p. 261.

overlapped with the emergence of organised cricket and football teams in Bradford between 1830 and 1868.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, football in Nottinghamshire in the early 1860s, when Notts played their first matches, emerged within an established sporting culture that was already an integral part of the local way of life. This was evident on many levels in the activities and experiences of children and adults, the working-class and middle-class and town and countryside during the 1850s.

Masters, in his study of the development of football in York has demonstrated that some form of the game was played at a Church of England Sunday Schools annual outing.<sup>30</sup> There are reports of Nottinghamshire children playing some form of football - alongside other games, such as cricket, swinging, tag, racing, stilt-walking, dancing, skipping, hurdle-jumping, scrambling for toys and donkey-riding - at similar events at Annesley Hall, Shardlow Union House, Stubton and on The Meadows.<sup>31</sup> In 1851, for example, 'Mr. Hollins, hosier, of Castle-gate, gave a sumptuous treat to 123 of the teachers and scholars belonging to the High-Pavement Sabbath School' where cricket, football and dancing were enjoyed.<sup>32</sup> As for adults, members of local friendly societies played football - and cricket - on the lawn of the local rectory at Bingham.<sup>33</sup> Cricket and football were linked again when football was played by cricketers following matches between Nottingham Commercial Club and White Lion Radford Club at the Trent Bridge Ground and between sides from the Nottingham division of the county constabulary at Newstead.<sup>34</sup> There are also reports from the 1850s describing large groups playing football at an 'extraordinary assemblage of persons from Loughborough and the neighbouring villages' by the River Soar by the Nottinghamshire-Leicestershire border on the occasion of a feast, at a marriage at

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<sup>29</sup> Pendleton D., 'Sport and the Victorian City: The development of commercialised spectator sport, Bradford 1836-1908', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2016, pp. 1-150.

<sup>30</sup> Masters C.W., *Rugby, Football and the Working Classes in Victorian and Edwardian York*, Borthwick Paper 123 and 124 (York: University of York, 2014), p. 7.

<sup>31</sup> *Nottingham Review and General Advertiser for the Midland Counties*, 9 January 1852; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 22 October 1850; 6 January 1853; 1 September, 1859; 8 September 1859.

<sup>32</sup> *Nottingham Review and General Advertiser for the Midland Counties*, 25 July 1851.

<sup>33</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 June 1852; 10 June 1858.

<sup>34</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 7 July 1853; 6 September 1855.



Worksop, at a harvest festival in South Collingham and at an annual event for workmen of Messrs. Robinson in Linby.<sup>35</sup> It should also be noted that it was not necessarily on high days and holidays that a ball was kicked around for recreation. This comes to light through an 1855 report of a boy who was injured through fetching a football from a ditch having played on a field next to Kingston Street in Sneinton.<sup>36</sup>

Notts had possibly been playing earlier than 1862. Headed notepaper used by the Notts Football Club in the 1880s indicates that they may have been formed in 1860.<sup>37</sup> As well as links to the Robin Hood Rifles, they had close ties with Sheffield Cricket Club and players who competed in Sheffield versus Nottingham cricket matches, a forerunner of Yorkshire versus Nottinghamshire games, can be traced through to the early Notts versus Sheffield Football Club games from 1865. For example, a game between a 'County of Nottingham' Cricket XI and Sheffield XVI in 1860 included the players Daft, Parr, Waterfall and Prest, all of whom were to feature in future football matches in Sheffield and Nottingham.<sup>38</sup> As Richard Daft himself later pointed out, football was seen as a way for cricketers to maintain fitness in winter.<sup>39</sup> The cricket connection was exemplified further when Sam Widdowson invented shin pads in 1874 when he cut up his cricket pads and wore them outside his socks, possibly a reaction to the hacking that could still sometimes occur in games in Nottinghamshire.<sup>40</sup>

By the time Notts played Sheffield FC on 2 January 1865, there were at least thirteen established local sides regularly playing each other in Sheffield. Having links to such a strong football centre helped to give the game in Nottinghamshire credibility and status, not least on account of the attention it merited in the local press. For this

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<sup>35</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 22 February 1855; 5 March 1857; 16 September 1858; *Nottingham Review and General Advertiser for the Midland Counties*, 26 July 1850.

<sup>36</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 22 February 1855.

<sup>37</sup> Mellor K., *The Garibaldi Reds* (Buckingham: Sporting and Leisure Press, 1984), p. 22.

<sup>38</sup> *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, 9 June 1860; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 June 1860; 6 January 1865.

<sup>39</sup> Daft R., *Kings of Cricket* (Bolton: Tillotson and Son, 1893), p.256.

<sup>40</sup> Wright, *Forever Forest*, p. 28.

seventeen-a-side game, the practice of wearing caps, borrowed from cricket, helped everyone involved know who was on each side. Other notable factors of the game mentioned are Sheffield's better adherence to positioning and 'a clever kick' by Notts.<sup>41</sup>

The Sheffield party were distinguished by scarlet shirts and caps, the Notts. men hoisting blue caps, the distinction between the sides thus very apparent to the visitors. The game was kept up in a spirited manner, the Sheffields scoring the only goal obtained. Richard Daft took a most prominent and active part for the Notts. club, and "all but" managed a goal for them by a clever kick, which one of the Sheffield men succeeded in stopping at the last juncture. In obtaining their goal the Sheffield club appeared to be up to the game, as they kept their men well-positioned on the field, whilst, in some instances, an over-crowding was visible in the ranks of the Notts. club, which rather militated against their chances.<sup>42</sup>

Even at this early stage of its development Nottingham football was able to make a contribution to the development of the game. Its close links with Sheffield supplied the occasion for the first recorded discussions on the use of a referee's whistle. The idea originated with W. Brown, Forest's umpire against Sheffield in 1872 and in a number of other games. The *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* reported that Sheffield FC appreciated input from other clubs, how this was enabling the game to flourish and how they would certainly consider the use of a whistle to replace the waving of flags to signal a foul or other infringement:<sup>43</sup>

A word of encouragement is also due to the delegates of the several clubs for the interest they have taken and the time they have devoted to bring the matches to such a successful issue. Mr Brown in the recent match,

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<sup>41</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p. 106; Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 63; *The Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express*, 3 January 1865.

<sup>42</sup> *The Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express*, 3 January 1865.

<sup>43</sup> Murphy B., *From Sheffield with Love* (Cheltenham: Sportsbooks, 2007), p. 117; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 March 1873, 24 November 1876, 28 February 1879.

Sheffield v Nottingham Forest, made a valuable suggestion, to the effect that each umpire should be furnished with a whistle, which he should blow in case of granting an appeal for a foul; as, in the event of a dispute, the players can not be certain what his decision is. Of course, on the whistle being blown, play would at once cease. At present some cry "Foul" and others "Play on" so the players are uncertain what the umpire's decision really is. Before another season this will be a very proper subject by the Association.<sup>44</sup>

Forest, interestingly, then purchased an umpire's whistle in December 1872 so can lay claim to introducing an important component to the game.<sup>45</sup>

The Nottinghamshire-Sheffield connection was evident not only through football and cricket but in the Notts club's summer athletics meetings, beginning in 1868 and influenced by similar events which had been organised by Oxford University, Cambridge University and Sheffield Football Clubs. Joint founder of Sheffield FC, William Prest, often acted as an official at the Notts meetings.<sup>46</sup> The first of these events was given due prominence in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, not least because it would be patronised by the local aristocracy and by 'gentlemen' of considerable social standing in the town and the county:

ATHLETIC SPORTS OF THE NOTTINGHAM FOOTBALL CLUB.- The managers of this club have just arranged to hold a series of athletic sports in connection with this club, on the Trent Bridge Ground, on Thursday, the 7<sup>th</sup> May. The sports will be held annually, and, as the Football Club has now obtained a firm and popular footing amongst the gentlemen athletes, both in town and county, the success of the intended sports appears unquestionable. It is rather to be wondered at that which such an excellent enclosure at Trent Bridge

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<sup>44</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 19 March 1872; also reported in the *Derbyshire Courier*, 23 March 1872.

<sup>45</sup> Wright, *Forever Forest*, p. 23.

<sup>46</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 May 1868; 21 May 1869; 10 June 1870; 2 June 1871. Further examples of the connections between Sheffield and Nottingham are that, in football, Sheffield player, Chambers, guested for Notts; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 December 1866. As late as 1877, A.W. Cursham opted for Sheffield in an FA Cup game against Notts despite being a member of the Notts club; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 November 1877.

Ground, and the facilities that it affords, no efforts have been made before to establish a good athletic society. If high patronage may be considered as any criterion of the club's probable prosperity, we may mention that the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Amberley, Mr Bernal Osbourne, the Mayor of Nottingham, and several other influential persons, have already become patrons. The object of the sports is to encourage out-door athletics amongst county amateurs more than at present, and bring them into competition, not only amongst themselves and those of the town, but with celebrated amateur athletes from the universities and various distinguished clubs. There will be five events open only to members of the club, and eight or nine events to all amateurs. For all the events handsome prizes will be offered. Besides the above, a prize will be offered to the Volunteers and Yeomanry of Notts. for a two mile race, to be run in full marching order uniform; and a prize also for a half-mile race to be competed for by boys attending some school (sic.) in Nottingham.<sup>47</sup>

When the event occurred, Prest remarked how he was 'utterly astonished at the capital arrangements which had been made, and the great success attending them'. Notable winners on the day were W.M. Chinnery and J.K. Barnes from the elite London Athletic Club; they were attracted, to Nottingham, perhaps, by the 'handsome prizes' on offer.<sup>48</sup> Their presence helped to confer additional prestige on the event and all those connected with the Notts Football Club, who could now claim that their reputation extended as far as London.

Nottinghamshire football, though its social profile was essentially middle class in the 1860s and early 1870s, had some complexities in its make-up and early Notts teams contained players from a variety of occupations. For instance, the 1861 Census indicates that Notts players Henry Moody and Charles Frederick Daft, brother of Richard, were a merchant and gentleman respectively.<sup>49</sup> As for Forest, early

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<sup>47</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 April 1868.

<sup>48</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 May 1868.

<sup>49</sup> 1861 Census Records, Nottinghamshire Archives.

members W.R. Lymberry, the son of a lace manufacturer, Alfred Barks and R.P. Hawksley were all described as scholars whilst C.E. Daft appeared to be involved in retail and J.G. Richardson in the lace trade.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, Forest's links with the High School which was located near to Forest Fields are exemplified by J. Tomlinson, T.G. Howitt and W.H. Revis who had certainly been pupils there.<sup>51</sup> There was also a discernible public school element.

Curry and Dunning have highlighted particular matches to demonstrate the public school influence in Nottingham football, noting that the Notts club's public school educated players played a team comprised of those who had not been to public school on three occasions in 1867 and 1868. The Notts-affiliated public schoolboys and ex-public schoolboys, however, had a mixed impact on the club's first team. Of the eleven listed by Curry and Dunning, J.W. Keely, C.F. Smith, Crompton, Fellows and Patterson did not appear in any other match for Notts. Of the other six, five or fewer represented Notts on each occasion of the club's six other matches in 1867 and 1868 which consisted of two games each against Forest, Sheffield and Robin Hood Rifles. Though Curry and Dunning are correct to say it is 'noteworthy' that there was a strong public school element to the Notts set-up, it is perhaps equally or even more significant that the majority of Notts players in these six games had no public - school background.

Of the public school players, Rothera appeared four times, Lambert and T. Keely three times, Deedes twice and C. Elliot and T. Elliot once. The precise backgrounds of these six was also varied, with Rothera and Lambert having attended Rugby School which would have influenced them little with the association-style game that Notts favoured. The other four, Keely, Deedes, C. Elliot and T. Elliot did attend schools which preferred a kicking game (Repton, Winchester, Uppingham and Repton respectively). Their occupations were varied too: Deedes was a banker, T. Elliot and

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<sup>50</sup> 1861 Census Records, Nottinghamshire Archives. The only decipherable word in the return relating to Daft's occupation is 'store'.

<sup>51</sup> *Nottingham Forest F.C.*, p. 8; Wright, *Forever Forest*, p. 23.

Rothera solicitors, Lambert a lace manufacturer, Keely a hosiery manufacturer and C. Elliot a commercial clerk.<sup>52</sup> A Notts practice match on 12 December 1867 reflected another important point about what, and who, the Notts club represented. The game reported as featuring '11 of the Town' v. '11 of the County' was an indication of the interconnection between town and county-based identities that was to reverberate in Nottingham football over subsequent decades.<sup>53</sup>

A newspaper report of Notts' first official fixture, played on 8 December 1864 against Trent Valley, predicted that 'the impression produced is likely to lead to the establishment of other Foot Ball Clubs in the town'.<sup>54</sup> This proved to be correct as, around a year after the official formation of the Notts club in 1864, Nottingham Forest emerged from the remnants of the Lings Sports Club who had played a type of hockey, referred to locally as 'shinney', before taking up football.<sup>55</sup> Whereas Notts now played home games at the Meadows Cricket ground and generally arranged fixtures for Thursdays, Forest played mainly on Saturdays on the Forest Cricket Ground from which they had taken their name and where the many Nottingham versus Sheffield cricket matches had taken place. In fact, Forest and Notts were closely connected and many players appeared for both sides concurrently in the 1860s and 1870s, S. Widdowson, W.H. Revis, C.L. Rothera, C. Wardle, F. Baillon and E.H. Greenhalgh being notable examples. These close ties between the clubs notwithstanding, matches between Notts and Forest saw the beginnings of what was to be an intense inter-club rivalry to be born with the first Nottingham derby taking place on 22 March 1866.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Curry G. and Dunning E., 'The 'origins of football debate' and the early development of the game in Nottinghamshire', *Soccer & Society*, DOI: 10.1080/14660970.2015.1067801 (2015); Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p.63.

<sup>53</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 63.

<sup>54</sup> Newspaper cutting from Wain, *Notts County: A Pictorial History*, p. 9, (no reference given).

<sup>55</sup> *Nottingham's Millennium* (Derby, Breedon Books, 1999), p. 28; *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 19 March 1892.

<sup>56</sup> Like Sheffield FC-Hallam, this is a rare example of a long running city derby that began in the 1860s and still continues.

## Developing Networks

Previous studies of sporting localities such as Preston on Liverpool, Pendleton on Bradford and Budd on Middlesbrough have been narrow in the sense that they have paid insufficient attention to the details of how clubs, officials and players interacted with their counterparts outside the particular localities.<sup>57</sup> It is a crucial part of the argument in this chapter, however, that Nottinghamshire built on the firm foundations of the football culture that was establishing itself within the county by networking with developing centres of the game elsewhere. Indeed, it was through such networks – links with Sheffield and London were particularly important as well as with Birmingham and Scotland - that Nottinghamshire was able to make an impact on the development of football more widely. Clubs became part of networks through the fixtures they arranged and to which they became committed on a continuing basis. Magee and Thompson have indicated factors which lead to efficient networks:

Networks, we have learned, are built upon trust, reciprocity and moral obligation. They work better when they are inclusive by nature, allow information to flow more freely, comprise people who share a common sense of identity, and when personal or institutional leadership is provided.<sup>58</sup>

The elements of identity, inclusivity and leadership will be considered as networks in football are studied in this chapter.

Following the first Notts-Forest derby in 1866, more sides emerged from Nottinghamshire and along its borders. Trent Valley who appeared in 1864 and Lincoln who appeared in 1865, were already on the scene; Robin Hood Rifles arrived in 1867 whilst Bramcote, Sawley, Ockbrook, Castle Donnington and Nottingham

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<sup>57</sup> Preston T.J., 'The Origins and Development of Association Football in the Liverpool District c.1879 until c.1915', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Central Lancashire, 2006; Pendleton, 'Sport and the Victorian City'; Budd C.A., 'The Growth of an Urban Sporting Culture: Middlesbrough c. 1870-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2012.

<sup>58</sup> Magee G.B. and Thompson A.S., *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c. 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p.57.

Manufacturing Company arrived in 1868. These were followed by Newark and R.H.Morley's in 1869.<sup>59</sup> Initially these sides mainly played matches against each other but a different pattern began to emerge around the turn of the decade and into the 1870s. Notts and Newark joined the London-based Football Association which had been founded in 1863, whilst Forest branched out to play other sides from the Sheffield Association, firstly Sheffield Norfolk in 1868 to be followed by Chesterfield and Sheffield Newhall in 1871, Duffield and Derwent in 1875 and Wednesday in 1876. At the same time Forest began to play matches against other Nottinghamshire sides located away from Nottingham itself, such as Nottingham Manufacturing Company in 1869 and its successor Mansfield, along with Ockbrook and Borrowash, all in 1871.<sup>60</sup> Forest also sent 2<sup>nd</sup> XI sides to play local sides such as Castle in 1874, East Bridgford in 1875, both Bottesford and Southwell in 1876 and both Hucknall and Flintham in 1877, showing they had a more inclusive attitude than Notts when compiling their fixture list.<sup>61</sup> By playing more local clubs, Forest were helping the development of these sides whilst also promoting themselves. Forest's efforts to expand its fixtures were not always successful. Burton, who observed FA rules, refused to play Forest in 1873 because they had nails in their boots.<sup>62</sup>

Notts, meanwhile, had nurtured the links established with the London-based FA. An indication of the strength of this connection in the early 1870s was the organising role undertaken by club secretary and player C. L. Rothera who assembled a team representing the North against the South for a match at the Kennington Oval, London, in December 1870.<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, Notts in the 1870s chose to take on clubs who, it seems likely, were generally more socially-exclusive than many of those

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<sup>59</sup> Newspaper cutting from Wain, *Notts County: A Pictorial History*, p. 9; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 December 1865; 28 February 1868; 20 March 1868; 27 March 1868; 3 December 1869; Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 63.

<sup>60</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 January 1868; 8 December 1871; 11 November 1870; 12 February 1869; 31 March 1871; 10 November 1871; 12 March 1875; 24 December 1875; 14 January 1876; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 18 February 1871.

<sup>61</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 December 1874; 1 January 1875; 10 March 1876; 17 November 1876; 16 March 1877; 9 November 1877.

<sup>62</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 7 March 1873.

<sup>63</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 December 1870.



favoured by Forest. Burton-on-Trent and Newark, both of which followed FA rules, fall into this category; they also played Trent College public school, based at Long Eaton, just outside the county boundary in Derbyshire, and the 'Public Schools' eleven. More impressively still, perhaps, Notts played a London select team in 1873, Queen's Park – generally acknowledged as Scotland's finest - in 1875 and Manchester FC in 1877. That prestigious matches against such high-profile opponents from far afield could be arranged indicates that the Notts club were known and well regarded beyond their native town and county.<sup>64</sup>

Table 1.1 demonstrates the clubs that only Notts played and the clubs that only Forest played, along with the clubs both sides played whilst categorising each of their opponents as belonging to a local, Sheffield, association rules, Birmingham or elite network. Where these categories overlap, both labels are used. Table 1.2 builds on this by numbering the times Forest and Notts played the teams from each network. This demonstrates that Forest played more often against local opposition and sides from Sheffield and Birmingham, whereas Notts played more sides of an elite social standing wherever they were based.

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<sup>64</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 May 1873; Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, pp. 64-5. Notts' games with Trent College and Burton-on-Trent are missing from *The Definitive Notts County*. Also, the game against Cambridge University on 24 February 1876 is stated as being a Notts County game in *The Definitive Notts County* when in fact it was a Nottinghamshire Representative side. *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 March 1876; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 9 March 1875.

**Table 1.1: The Forest and Notts networks, 1864-78 (1)**

<b>Played by Forest only</b>	<b>Played by Notts only</b>	<b>Played by Notts and Forest</b>
Nottm Manufacturing Co. <b>L</b>	Public Schools <b>L/E</b>	Chesterfield <b>S</b> (2)
Sheffield Norfolk <b>S</b>	Robin Hood Rifles <b>L/E</b>	Sawley <b>L</b>
St. Andrews (Derby) <b>L</b>	Staveley <b>L</b>	Ockbrook <b>L</b>
Ockbrook and Borrowwash <b>L</b>	Burton-on-Trent <b>L/A</b>	Stoke <b>E/A</b>
'Local Clubs' <b>L</b>	Newark <b>L/A</b>	Derby Grammar School <b>L/E</b>
Sheffield Newhall <b>S</b>	Grey Friars <b>L</b>	South Derbyshire <b>L/A</b> (3)
Sheffield Wednesday <b>S</b>	Derbyshire <b>L/E</b>	Mansfield <b>L</b>
Derwent (Derby) <b>S</b>	Lincoln <b>E</b>	Nottingham Law <b>L/E</b>
Duffield <b>S</b>	Trent College <b>L/E</b>	Southwell <b>L</b> (4)
Birmingham <b>B</b>	London <b>E/A</b>	Sheffield <b>S/A</b> (5)
Bottesford (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <b>L</b>	Manchester <b>E/A</b>	
Hucknall (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <b>L</b>	Queens Park <b>E/A</b>	
Glasgow Rangers <b>E/A</b>	Grantham <b>L</b>	
Coventry <b>B</b>	Cambridge University <b>E/A</b>	
Herts Rangers <b>E</b> (6)		
Burton Joyce (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <b>L</b>		
Flintham (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <b>L</b>		
Junior Lace (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <b>L</b>		
East Bridgford (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <b>L</b>		
Derby <b>L</b>		
Castle (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) <b>L</b>		

Key- **L** - local network; **S** –Sheffield network; **B** – Met through Birmingham networks; **A** – FA-rules network; **E** – socially-elite network.

Notes- (1) the period covered by the above ends in 1878 when Forest enjoyed a significant FA Cup run and thus were no longer entirely free to choose their opponents; (2) Notts disliked Chesterfield's use of Sheffield rules. However, when Forest and Chesterfield played each other in 1872, they played by 'London Association Rules'.<sup>65</sup> (3) Forest disliked South Derbyshire's use of offside. (4) Only played Forest 2<sup>nd</sup> eleven. (5) Forest only played Sheffield because they were drawn against them in the FA Cup. (6) 1<sup>st</sup> half- 'Forest rules', 2<sup>nd</sup> half- 'Rangers rules'.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 12 February 1872.

<sup>66</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 December 1877.

**Table 1.2: Numbers of Clubs from each network which Forest and Notts played, 1864-1878**

NETWORK	FOREST	NOTTS
LOCAL	16	7
FA RULES /ELITE	2	5
SHEFFIELD	6	1
ELITE (social standing)	1	1
BIRMINGHAM	2	0
LOCAL AND ELITE	2	6
LOCAL AND ASSOCIATION	1	3
SHEFFIELD AND ASSOCIATION	1	1

Utilising Magee and Thompson’s theory of efficient networks based on identity, inclusivity and leadership, it appears that Forest were more effective of the two major clubs in arranging their affairs. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported in 1871:

We understand that the finances of this club are in a most flourishing state there being over one hundred members at present enrolled. Arrangements are being made by the spirited secretary (Mr W R Lymbery) for matches with Chesterfield, Sheffield, Notts and numerous other clubs during the present season.<sup>67</sup>

It was natural that both Nottingham’s senior clubs should move within networks that reflected their own identities. It appears that Notts generally desired to play more sides with FA links or of higher social standing than Forest but this limited the number

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<sup>67</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 3 November 1871.

of teams they could play. Forest, though, had strong leadership in local lace manufacturer Walter Lymbery who was described as ‘an enthusiastic worker’ and whose work for Forest meant ‘the club went ahead rapidly’.<sup>68</sup> Forest competed against a greater variety of clubs than Notts and were more inclusive in who they chose to play. It was a strategy that appeared to pay off. Significantly, between 1872 and 1882, Notts were in a financially perilous state, being nearly wound up in 1872 and 1881. Their athletics meetings may have been prestigious but they were run at a loss in 1867 and 1869 and this may explain why Notts were, at times, so unambitious; for example, they arranged only eight fixtures in the 1874-75 and 1876-77 seasons.<sup>69</sup> Significantly, there were times when Notts seemed to operate as an unusually exclusive club. In the 1877-78 season, nine of their side came from just three families. The Cursham, Greenhalgh and Keely families each represented by three members, A.W., C.L. and H.A. Cursham, E.H., H. and R.J. Greenhalgh and E.M., E.R. and S.W. Keely.<sup>70</sup>

Meanwhile, 1873 saw an emergence of a very healthy local football scene in Nottingham itself which was facilitated by the availability of pitches in the Meadows just to the south of the city, Forest Fields just to the north of the city, Mapperley Plains to the north-east of the city and Colwick to the east of the city. Table 1.3 demonstrates how the council aided this development by acquiring land for recreation at Forest Fields and Queens Drive for the period relevant to this chapter, as well as demonstrating further acquisitions until 1915. Also noted here is the number of pitches that were recorded at each of these locations in 1923.

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<sup>68</sup> Wright, *Forever Forest*, p. 27, citing Gibson A. and Pickford W., *Association Football and the Men Who Made It* (London: Caxton, 1906).

<sup>69</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 17, pp. 65-6; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 February 1884.

<sup>70</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 66.

**Table 1.3: Recorded acquisitions of land by**

**Nottingham Town/City Council and its use for football (1)**

NAME OF GROUND	WHEN ACQUIRED	FOOTBALL PITCHES IN 1923
Forest Fields (2)	Nottingham Enclosure Act of 1845	3
Queen's Drive	Nottingham Enclosure Act of 1845	Not specified
Bulwell Forest	1883 (3)	2
Vernon Park	1901	1
Coppice	1905	1
Victoria Embankment	1906	8
Trent Lane	1908	3
Bulwell Park	1909 (4)	4

Notes- (1) *File re playing fields and playgrounds owned and managed by the corporation from the Nottinghamshire Archives. GB0157. CA/PA/1/1. Accession number 5707.* (2) Named 'The Lings' when the Mayor and Burgesses claimed Forestal Rights in 1675.<sup>71</sup> (3) *Nottingham Council Minutes 1882-83*, p.38. Nottinghamshire Archives. GB0157. CA/TC/1/2. (4) *Nottingham Council Minutes 1909-10*, p.139. Nottinghamshire Archives. GB0157. CA/TC/1/2.

A number of historians have explored the origins of the earliest football clubs. Mason, whose work influenced most subsequent studies, highlighted how team names in most parts of England derived from churches, public houses, workplaces, the locality and cricket clubs.<sup>72</sup> There is a slight difference in Nottinghamshire in comparison with other areas however. Ninety-two sides from a variety of backgrounds can be accounted for in the county up until the end of 1876 but

<sup>71</sup> *The Notts Countryside*, 21, 3, Autumn 1960.

<sup>72</sup> Mason T., *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), pp. 24-31.

Nottinghamshire appears to have only had one public house team: the Royal Oak side. Even here, as Mason demonstrates with sides called Royal Oak, Burton Star and Clarence Rangers, some educated guess work is necessary. It is possible, though unlikely, that Atlas was a pub side and that some of the place-named teams derived from a pub.<sup>73</sup> Whatever, place names appear to be more common in Nottinghamshire than in Mason's study, with educational establishments too making more of a contribution here than in the other areas of the Midlands and North that Mason highlights. Appendix 1 demonstrates how Nottinghamshire teams derived from place names, churches, work places and educational establishments. Place names are the most common name with 46 instances (50%) whilst church organisations (23%), work places (17%) and educational establishments (8%) also contribute. The Atlas Club, judging by who they played, actually appeared to be an exclusive club. Nottingham Amateurs are the only certain example of a football club coming from a cricket club. Comparison can be made here with Williams' findings of church and works based teams in Barnsley, Bolton, Burnley, Halifax, Oldham, St. Helens, Sunderland and Wigan, though it has to be remembered that Williams' results are based on data for 1900. Church and chapel based teams, accounting for 23% of sides from Nottinghamshire by the end of 1876, though less important than in Bolton (42%) and Burnley (35%), and broadly comparable to Sunderland (24%) and St Helens (21%), formed a more significant proportion of football clubs than in Halifax (18%), Oldham (17%), Wigan and (9%) and Barnsley (0%).<sup>74</sup> Meanwhile, the 17% of sides comprising works teams in Nottinghamshire by the end of 1876 is comparable with Williams' figure for Burnley (20%), and more than he discovered for Wigan (9%), Barnsley (8%), Bolton (6%) in Oldham (5%), St. Helens (3%), Sunderland (2%) and Halifax (0%).<sup>75</sup> Budd's study of sport in Middlesbrough suggests, however, that place names were more common for football club sides there than in Nottinghamshire

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<sup>73</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, p. 27.

<sup>74</sup> Williams J., 'Churches, sport and identities in the North, 1900-1939' in Hill J. and Williams J. (eds), *Sport and Identity in the North of England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), p. 115.

<sup>75</sup> Williams, 'Church, sport and identities', pp. 123-4.

before 1900. There are occasional references to sides who were not named after localities. These was a works team from 1899, Dorman, Long and Co., a probable pub team from 1899, South Bank Royal Oak, and teams with religious connotations, Hartlepool Temperance from 1898, Church Institute from 1896 and Middlesbrough St. Johns, who merged into Middlesbrough FC in 1886. However, these are out of dozens of clubs mentioned before 1900. Budd finds, too, that ‘for the majority of sports clubs, membership remained low considering the size of the town’, that sports clubs were exclusive and that ‘shortage of land and open spaces’ hindered growth in nineteenth century Middlesbrough.<sup>76</sup> This does not appear to have applied equally to nineteenth century Nottingham and its environs.

The relative paucity of pub teams in Nottinghamshire may possibly be due to the council in Nottingham being more proactive than its counterparts in some other growing industrial towns in protecting open spaces. Moreover, cricket was already a well-established feature of the local sporting scene and it may be significant that cricket grounds were also used for football. Teams shared the pitches that were used for cricket and football at Forest Fields, The Meadows and Basford Park especially and so did not need to rely on grounds connected with public houses.<sup>77</sup> That these findings for Nottinghamshire relate to a county rather than a single town and that they are derived from an earlier period than that covered by Mason and especially those covered by Williams and Budd is also a factor that has to be taken into account.<sup>78</sup>

Though clubs from Nottinghamshire seemed to be less reliant on public houses for pitches or changing areas than in places such as those exemplified by Collins and Vamplaw – in Sunderland, Liverpool, Leeds, Tottenham, Swinton, Broughton, Kilmarnock and Pontypridd - that does not mean that public houses played no part

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<sup>76</sup> Budd, ‘Middlesbrough’, pp. 85, 87, 155, 291, 387-9,

<sup>77</sup> Beckett J., ‘Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment’, in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 391.

<sup>78</sup> See Mason, *Association Football*, pp. 21-68, Williams, ‘Churches, sport and identities’, pp. 113-136, Budd, ‘Middlesbrough’, pp. 87, 387-9.

in football's development in Nottinghamshire. Trent Bridge, where a cricket ground was developed by William Clarke on land adjacent to the Trent Bridge Inn, was used for football mainly by Notts County on various occasions between 1870 and 1910 and for other prestigious matches too.<sup>79</sup> That Trent Bridge had become an enclosed ground meant that Notts were one of the first football clubs to attempt to collect gate money from spectators on the occasion of their match with Forest in 1876. They discovered, as a local newspaper reported, that 'a charge for spectators at Trent Bridge reduces numbers'.<sup>80</sup> However, as Collins and Vamplew have argued: 'Rather than football being the adjunct of the pub, the pub almost became an adjunct of football'.<sup>81</sup> Pubs could serve a number of useful functions, not least as a place where meetings could take place and club business conducted. Nottingham Forest, as a football club, can trace its origins to a meeting at the Clinton Arms in 1865. The Maypole Inn, meanwhile, later served as the club's headquarters and a place where Forest could entertain visitors.<sup>82</sup> Notts, similarly, were formed at the George Hotel and later had their headquarters at The Lion Hotel.<sup>83</sup> However, football, if the oval-ball game is included, could sometimes serve as an adjunct to the pub. Nottingham Rugby Club, in its fledgling years from 1876, long before it first attracted the attention of the local press on the occasion of its farcical encounter with Forest in the 1885-86 season, and its first AGM in 1898, are said to have played on land behind the White Hart Inn in Lenton.<sup>84</sup>

It was a characteristic in this early phase of Nottinghamshire's developing football culture that a number of teams effectively broke out of their local networks and sought opponents from beyond the county boundaries. The Castle club, from Castle Gate, Nottingham, was especially ambitious, branching out to play Sheffield

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<sup>79</sup> Collins T. and Vamplew W., *Mud, Sweat and Beers: A Cultural History of Sport and Alcohol* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p. 10; Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 35.

<sup>80</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 March 1876.

<sup>81</sup> Collins and Vamplew, *Mud, Sweat and Beers*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>82</sup> Wright, *Forever Forest*, pp. 17, 59; *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 29 December 1876; 2 May 1879.

<sup>83</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, pp. 17, 23.

<sup>84</sup> Drapkin J., *Nottingham Rugby Football Club* (Nottingham: N.R.F.C. Publications, 1993), A2.



Wednesday and Sheffield Norfolk in 1876 and Birmingham (Aston) in 1877.<sup>85</sup> Appendix 2 lists the clubs from outside of Nottinghamshire which played matches against Nottinghamshire clubs from 1864 until the end of 1876.

Nottingham Trent, like Castle, also made a noticeable impact on the town and county football scene in this period. A letter published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in January 1877 mentioned them when complaining of unruly spectators; their games were later described as 'stubbornly contested' and they seemed to attract a large following.<sup>86</sup> Trent, like Forest, became linked to the Sheffield Association, and, like Castle, expanded their links beyond the county boundaries, playing Garrick in 1877 and both Heely and Chesterfield in 1879.<sup>87</sup>

An indication of Castle's status was that their fixtures were printed in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* alongside those of Notts and another prominent local club, Sneinton, whose games, home and away, were almost all played at Forest Fields or The Meadows. Despite their prominence locally, however, the best fixture Castle, or Sneinton, could get out of the local powers, Notts and Forest, was to play Forest reserves. A study of Trent's and Castle's fixtures reveals a tendency to play local opposition, but with some matches outside Nottinghamshire. Generally, their opponents were teams with clearly identifiable religious, workplace, educational and street or area backgrounds which link them to Nottinghamshire. Castle Gate were, for instance, listed in 1873 as playing Sneinton Institute, Hounds Gate (twice), St. Pauls (twice), Junior Lace, St. Marys (twice), St. James, Midland Railway Clerks, Church Mission, St. Andrews (Derby) and Trent College. Meanwhile, Sneinton were similarly listed as playing Castle Gate, Ockbrook and Borrowash (twice), Greenhalgh's (twice), Basford Park, St. Saviours (twice), Junior Lace (twice), Forest reserves, Atlas Club and Excelsior (Burton).<sup>88</sup> Castle had played Forest in a fourteen-a-side game at The Meadows in November 1873 with Forest winning 1-0; they played them again

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<sup>85</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 25 February 1876; 17 November 1876; 16 November 1877.

<sup>86</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 January 1877; 13 December 1878.

<sup>87</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 December 1877; 31 October 1879; 14 November 1879.

<sup>88</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 December 1873.

the following season when a thirteen-a-side game on The Forest ended 0-0.<sup>89</sup> By 1878, however, Castle disbanded and their players had joined Forest *en bloc*.<sup>90</sup> Their last appearance appears to have been in November 1878, when the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported a game against Cursham's Team.<sup>91</sup>

As Castle Football Club faded in significance, the Castle Cricket Club began to attract the attention of the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, not least, as we shall see, for its activities in relation to football. Though in existence since 1860, the cricket club was reported in 1879 to have acquired its own ground 'within the last year or two'.<sup>92</sup> The secretary, Mr Turner, was seen as instrumental in this. An 'opening match' of the season amongst members of the team was reported in April, 1877.<sup>93</sup> There appears to have been some connection between the Castle Cricket Club and Football Club. Though the football team played at the Meadows Ground and the cricket team now played at the Castle Cricket Ground, two players from the last reported Castle Football Club team, C. Caborn and W. Kerry, played for the Castle Cricket Club's 2<sup>nd</sup> Eleven in 1878.<sup>94</sup> Further evidence suggestive of a link was that Forest, who had absorbed the Castle footballers, were one of the first sides to play at the Castle Cricket ground when their first eleven played a team of thirteen local club players in 1879, winning 6-0.<sup>95</sup>

The Castle Cricket Club displayed enterprise in seeking to put their new ground to profitable use during the winter months, becoming a hub for the organisation of football competitions. In October 1879 they hosted a five-a-side football tournament where the £10 prize was enough to attract sides from Sheffield and all over The Midlands. 'Great excitement' met Forest's victory over Sheffield Hallam in the final.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 November 1873; 11 December 1874.

<sup>90</sup> Wright, *Forever Forest*, p. 26.

<sup>91</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 November 1877.

<sup>92</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 November 1879.

<sup>93</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 April 1877.

<sup>94</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 25 October 1878.

<sup>95</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 October 1879.

<sup>96</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 17 October 1879.

In December, they staged a floodlit game between Nottingham Trent and Nottingham Wanderers. The event was a disappointment though due to the bitter cold weather and the lights' power being unsatisfactory.<sup>97</sup> In this they were following the example set a year earlier by E.H. Greenhalgh and Richard Daft who had promoted a floodlit match between Notts and Derbyshire at Trent Bridge.<sup>98</sup> Perhaps, most significantly in terms of Nottinghamshire's rapidly developing football culture, the Castle Cricket Club initiated the first cup knock-out cup competition for Nottinghamshire clubs, the Castle Cup, which began in 1879. The trophy, which cost £12, was to be competed for by sides from the 'town and county'. It attracted sides mainly from localities, but also workplaces, churches and educational establishments. The first round draw, with venues, gives an indication of the strength of the association game in and around the city, and throughout the county too:

Hyson Green v Bulwell (Forest)  
Kirkby Hill v Trinity Unity (Trent Bridge)  
Basford Park v Whatton (Whatton)  
St. Helen's Stapleford v Forest (Stapleford)  
Keyworth v Forest United (Keyworth)  
Forest Amateurs v North Nottingham Institute (left open)  
St. Mary's Temperance v Burton Joyce (Burton Joyce)  
Edwinstowe v Wollaton (Wollaton)  
Forest Wanderers v Hucknall Torkard (Forest)  
Ward and Cope's v Worksop (Forest)  
High Pavement Schools v Midland Railway Co. (Meadows)<sup>99</sup>

The success of the FA Challenge Cup since 1871 had revealed that the sporting public had an appetite for knock-out competitions and it is clear that the Castle Cup generated interest for the game locally. Supporters, who would not have done so previously, travelled some distance, such as at the Hucknall Commercial versus Southwell game at Castle where, it was reported, 'many came from these towns'.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 December 1879.

<sup>98</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 December, 1878; Inglis S., *The Football Grounds of Great Britain* (London: Willow Books, 1987), p. 41. The first ever floodlit game had taken place just one month earlier in Sheffield.

<sup>99</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 December 1878.

<sup>100</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 January 1880.

Travel for supporters had become easier in Nottingham and its surrounding areas because of the improved road network after the borough extension in 1877.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, the horse-drawn tram network had been developing since the 1840s and the local rail network since 1839.<sup>102</sup>

The Castle Cup was a success and helped develop an effective local football network. With reference to Magee and Thompson's theory of what constitutes an efficient network - the presence of a common identity, inclusivity and strong leadership - it is apparent why it succeeded. The clubs that entered had the common goal of being part of and winning this competition, strong leadership was provided by the Castle Club whilst the competition appeared inclusive by including sides of various types from across Nottinghamshire, as demonstrated by the 1879 first round draw. The 'chair' of the Castle Cricket Club at their end of season dinner at the Maypole Hotel in 1879 was 'Captain Holden' whilst, perhaps most significantly, the 'vice-chair' was Richard Daft.<sup>103</sup> Daft was well-known and very much a local sporting hero, being captain of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club between 1871 and 1880. Having earlier played for Notts, he also played football for Forest Amateurs, a North Nottingham select team, against South Nottingham at Castle in February 1879 and was also a football umpire.<sup>104</sup> Daft also ran a sports goods store that provided cricket and football goods to many clubs in Nottinghamshire and throughout the rest of the country.<sup>105</sup>

Some notable sides which emerged in the 1870s termed themselves 'Amateur'. That they should want to name themselves in this way may appear a little eccentric, as the game was supposed to be amateur anyway. It perhaps signalled a reaction to the beginnings of professionalism in the game. It is also important to remember that to

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<sup>101</sup> Beckett and Oldfield, 'Greater Nottingham', p. 264

<sup>102</sup> Beckett and Brand, 'Municipal Reform', p. 228-9

<sup>103</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 November 1879.

<sup>104</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 February 1879; 22 March 1867.

<sup>105</sup> Huggins M., *Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambleton, 2004), p.136: A number of adverts for Richard Daft's 'BRITISH WAREHOUSE' for 'CRICKET, FOOTBALL AND SPORT' at 1, Lister-Gate, Nottingham ran in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in 1867.

be an amateur was to be a gentleman, an indication of higher social status. Rugby was not popular in Nottingham so those of an elite standing and with high amateur ideals could not find sanctuary within that game as in other areas. Nottingham Amateurs emerged in 1874 and they were closely linked to the Notts Amateur Cricket Club. This was an elite club whose fixture list would include the Marylebone Cricket Club, a clear indication of its social standing.<sup>106</sup> Sneinton Amateurs arrived in 1877 with Forest Amateurs, featuring Richard Daft, and St Ann's Amateurs in 1878. Forest Amateurs would later become founder members of the Midland Amateur Alliance in 1904. These Amateur clubs sought fixtures with sides from beyond their immediate locality, such as Chesterfield Rovers or Park Imperial, suggesting that they may have been aware of an emerging social divide, as the game was taken up by works teams, for example, whose social standing may have been rather different.

### **Rules, Officials, Players and Tactics: Towards Uniformity**

Football's development until the mid-1870s was a complex process and was characterised by local and regional variations in the rules under which it was played. In the 1870s the practicalities of playing in the FA Cup, a national competition requiring participating clubs to accept the Football Association's version of the game, and the beginning of inter-regional (North v South) and international (England v Scotland) matches exerted a unifying influence. Players, officials and clubs from Nottinghamshire were inevitably drawn into this movement towards convergence. Moreover, given the strength of the county's attachment to soccer – rugby having only a very minor part to play in its emerging sporting culture – they were able to exert a discernible influence in debates relating to the rules under which the game should be played. This was largely exercised off the field of play but was also evident in Nottinghamshire's contribution to the development of new tactics on the field.

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<sup>106</sup> *Sporting Life*, 7 March 1884.

Even in the 1860s and 1870s, 'football', as Collins has argued, had multiple meanings, despite the best efforts of the Football Association after 1863 and the Rugby Football Union after 1871.

Throughout the nineteenth century, football was used as a generic term for association and rugby – hence the use of 'soccer' and 'rugger' to differentiate what were seen as variations of the same game. The issue is further complicated by the fact that games called football, 'foot-ball', or similar names had been played for centuries before the codifications of the 1860s and 1870s, the playing of which bore little or no resemblance to the rules of modern soccer or rugby.<sup>107</sup>

Moreover, in practice, the game was continuously evolving and we should be aware that 'football' as played in the 1860s was often very different from what association football had become by 1880. Harvey's extensive study of the different rules applying to 'football' throughout Great Britain between 1860 and 1867 demonstrates an immense variety of game forms. He draws up four charts representing clubs from London and the Home Counties, from Sheffield, and from Scotland, and elsewhere in the provinces and attempts to determine whether the games that they played were closer to a rugby style or an association style game. By his own admission, this is an imperfect exercise in which subjectivity plays a part:

These are very broad classifications based upon the author's impression that a game was played predominantly with the hands (rugby) or feet (association) and are not restricted to the pristine varieties of each particular game such as the code established at Rugby School or the rules drawn up by the FA. On the contrary, they incorporate a wide variety of codes.

Forest and Notts are included amongst Harvey's 68 provincial clubs and listed correctly as playing an essentially association-type game between 1865 and 1867,

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<sup>107</sup> Collins, 'Early Football', p. 1136.

but with significant variations. To highlight this complexity, Harvey states: 'Both Nottingham and Nottingham Forest clubs appear to have played a hybrid of rugby and association rules'. However, he also cites a journalist from *The Field* who in 1865 contrasted Nottingham (Notts) with Lincoln, stating that the former's game was more akin to association football, the latter's rugby'.<sup>108</sup>

Though the Football Association had been formed with the intention of establishing one common code, it was at least a decade before uniformity was achieved. Kitching has used 395 match reports between 1862 and 1880 from *Bell's Life* and *Sporting Gazette* to exemplify the evolution of football in this period. The reports point to what Kitching has labelled 'oddities', that is references to incidents that happened during the course of play, such as bases, touch downs, use of hands, bullying, scrimmaging and any suggestion that weight conferred a particular advantage. Kitching describes these 'oddities' as 'observations which appear odd *from the point of view of association football today*'. On reading the reports, it seems clear that he could equally have said, 'observations which appear odd from the point of view of football by the start of the twentieth century' as the terms identified as 'odd' very rarely appeared in late-Victorian/Edwardian match reports. According to Kitching, the percentage of 'oddities' referred to drops from above 40% before 1866 to below 20% after 1874. With this in mind he is able to argue with some confidence that the standardization of football 'proceeded much more rapidly after 1872-3'.<sup>109</sup> It was around this point that the FA Cup, England-Scotland and North-South matches were initiated and association football began to assume a recognisably standardised modern form. Even so, convergence did not take place overnight. A Derbyshire newspaper in 1873 clearly viewed the idea of changing ends at half-time instead of when a goal was scored as a peculiar feature of the game as played in its neighbouring county.<sup>110</sup> In Nottinghamshire 'hacking', prohibited under FA rules ten

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<sup>108</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, pp. 189-196; *The Field*, 18 March 1865.

<sup>109</sup> Kitching G., 'The Origins of Football: History, Ideology and the Making of "The People's Game"', *History Workshop Journal*, February 2015, 79, pp. 1-27.

<sup>110</sup> *Derbyshire Courier*, 22 February 1873.

years earlier, might still be tolerated and was reported to have occurred in a match between 'Trade' and 'Profession' at Newark as late 1873, though it does not appear to have been a prominent feature of the game as played in the county at the time.<sup>111</sup>

'Nottingham Rules' were used in the first game between Notts and Forest in 1866 and this was indicative of the lack of uniformity across the country relating to the rules of the game. There were strong similarities with Sheffield, as there was no offside. Four years later this local peculiarity was still shaping Nottingham's perception of football as it should be played, a report in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* berating South Derbyshire's use of this 'most ridiculous rule'.<sup>112</sup> The absence of an offside rule meant that Nottinghamshire footballers of the 1860s and early 1870s could place themselves anywhere on the field without having three opponents between themselves and the goal when receiving the ball, as required by the FA's rules at that time. Also, in the 'Nottingham Rules', what were called 'rouges' or 'touchdowns' counted if the number of goals scored was equal. A rouge or touchdown occurred when an attacking player missed an attempt at the goal but the ball went between the rouge flags behind the goal and was then touched down by an attacking player. At the first Nottingham derby there had been 'a sort of steeple chase' when the ball went behind the goal and players raced 'over the grandstand railings' to be the first to touch the ball down. As it was a Forest player who touched it first, Forest had an attempt from the field of play at goal '15 yards at right angles from the goal line'.<sup>113</sup> This was actually very similar to the element of the FA's original rule 7 whereby 'If a player of the opposite side touches the ball, one of his side shall be entitled to a free kick at the goal 15 yards outside the goal line, opposite the place where the ball is touched'.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, pp. 143-8; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 February 1873.

<sup>112</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 February 1870.

<sup>113</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 19 October 1928; Mellor, *The Garibaldi Reds*, 15; Young P., *A History of British Football* (London: Stanley Paul, 1968), p. 100.

<sup>114</sup> See Bragg M., *12 Books That Changed the World* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2006), p. 102.



The game played in Nottingham, however, had a stricter enforcement of handball than, for example, Sheffield. A *Nottinghamshire Guardian* report of a Notts versus Sheffield game in 1871 stated that 'Sheffield Rules allowed handling and catching'.<sup>115</sup> Such local differences were highlighted in 1868 when Sheffield Norfolk were 'certainly not well acquainted with the Nottingham Rules'.<sup>116</sup> The visitor's confusion notwithstanding, a game between Forest and Sheffield Norfolk in 1870 was played according to Forest's (Nottingham) rules, which were now described as being 'similar' to Norfolk's, suggesting that a process of convergence was under way.<sup>117</sup> In 1869 Notts were reported to be 'rather at sea with the Sheffield rules' and advised 'to play more men up at their opponents goal' when required to observe them which suggests that there was some advantage to be gained if players distributed themselves around the field.<sup>118</sup> Notts found themselves at a 'slight disadvantage' when playing Sheffield Rules at Chesterfield in 1870.<sup>119</sup> It is not surprising to discover that Newark had encountered similar problems at Sheffield two weeks before. They were described as 'quite lost in the field and evidently too fond of following the ball instead of playing their respective places in the field'.<sup>120</sup>

That Nottingham Rules had less tolerance of the use of hands than Sheffield's and that the county's footballers were referred to in an 1869 press report as the 'Football kicking fraternity' indicates that the game in Nottinghamshire did include important elements that were in line with association football rules.<sup>121</sup> Richard Daft, in his autobiography, recalled that charging and dribbling 'were the key features of the game' in this period.<sup>122</sup> Yet it seems clear that getting footballers, even within the county, to agree on one set of rules was an untidy process fraught with difficulty, not

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<sup>115</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 17 March 1871.

<sup>116</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 January 1868.

<sup>117</sup> *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 18 January 1870.

<sup>118</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 December 1869.

<sup>119</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 25 March 1870.

<sup>120</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 December 1869.

<sup>121</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 12 February 1869.

<sup>122</sup> Daft, *Kings of Cricket*, p. 249; Warsop, *The Magpies* (Buckingham: Sporting and Leisure Press, 1984), p. 15.

least because the two major clubs were drawn in different directions – Forest towards Sheffield, Notts towards London and the FA which had devised its original set of rules in 1863 ‘in order to facilitate increased activity’ amongst clubs in the Metropolitan area but was now attracting clubs from further afield.<sup>123</sup> That the result of that first Nottingham derby in 1866 should be later disputed was indicative of the rather confused process of convergence that was beginning to take place. Forest claimed a 1-0 victory on the basis that they had scored a rouge, while Notts argued for a 0-0 draw, rouges having no validity under the FA rules after 1868.<sup>124</sup>

There were at least three different sets of rules being played to in Nottinghamshire in the early 1870s - Nottingham, FA and Sheffield – and games between sides used to different rules continued to be problematic for some time thereafter. It proved especially difficult to find an acceptable compromise regarding the use of hands and offside. Rugby rules were attempted in Nottingham in a game against Derby Wanderers in 1876 but this was not well received. That the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reporter at this game was confused is suggestive of the degree to which rugby was regarded as ‘alien’ in the county.<sup>125</sup> It was an external influence in the form of the FA Cup competition introduced in season 1871-72 which proved to be the catalyst, the practicalities of organising a nationwide competition for clubs that preferred a dribbling game forcing the pace of change, though it involved a good deal of compromise between competing traditions. Corner kicks and goal kicks, which had been introduced in Sheffield in 1868 were incorporated into FA rules in 1872.<sup>126</sup> By then the rouge and/or touchdown had already been abandoned, though a

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<sup>123</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p. 134.

<sup>124</sup> Murphy, *From Sheffield with Love*, p. 69; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 January 1870. The conflicting reports on this game are highlighted in Mellor, *The Garibaldi Reds*, p. 15, Wright, *Forever Forest*, pp. 18-9, citing *The Tourist's Picturesque Guide to Nottingham* that was published in Nottingham in 1871 as their source. Also see Warsop, *The Magpies*, p. 18 and Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 44 citing *The Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 23 March 1866 as their source. Attaway P., *Nottingham Forest: The Complete Record 1865-1991* (Derby: Breedon Books, 1991) also adds that it was W.H. Revis who made the touchdown.

<sup>125</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 January 1876.

<sup>126</sup> Hutton S., Curry G. and Goodman P., *Sheffield Football Club: 150 Years of Football* (Altrincham: At Heart Publications, 2007), p. 39.

touchdown was referred to once more – and for the last time in this context – in a *Nottinghamshire Guardian* report of a match between Notts and Newark in 1873.<sup>127</sup> By the mid-1870s, though the trend towards convergence was clearly evident, progress in that direction could seem haphazard and uncertain. The Notts club's alignment with the FA initially caused confusion locally. An 1873 game between Newark and Notts saw Newark 'somewhat unaccustomed to the rules as played by the Notts. club'.<sup>128</sup> This was hardly surprising as Newark, despite having committed to the FA, had seemed unaccustomed to its rules when playing at Sheffield a few years earlier.<sup>129</sup> Lincoln conceded numerous free kicks on account of 'their ignorance of the Notts rules' in an 1873 game.<sup>130</sup> In 1875, a Forest-Notts game was played 'under the rules of the Forest Club', which was then Sheffield Rules, or 'Association bar off side'.<sup>131</sup> This phrase, 'Association, bar offside' was commonly used in the Nottinghamshire press to describe Sheffield Rules.<sup>132</sup> These difficulties, it has to be said, do not appear to have inhibited the continuing expansion of the game or its increasing popularity. Moreover, as the FA Cup grew in importance throughout the 1870s, so local variations in rules continued to decline.

The FA Cup continued to be a major influence on the development of the game into the late 1870s. As members of the FA, it is not surprising that Notts were the first team from Nottinghamshire to enter the FA Cup in 1877 when they were drawn against Sheffield FC. Entering this prestigious national competition for the first time generated good interest in the local press with a sense of 'honour' being brought to the occasion and the game being described as 'characterised by great interest on both sides'.<sup>133</sup> Sheffield FC had, at an FA meeting in February of 1877, agreed to use

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<sup>127</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 February 1873.

<sup>128</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 February 1873;

<sup>129</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 December 1869.

<sup>130</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 February 1873.

<sup>131</sup> *Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express*, 9 February 1875.

<sup>132</sup> The *Nottinghamshire Guardian's* 8 December 1871 report of London v Sheffield is an example of this.

<sup>133</sup> *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 5 November 1877; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 November 1877.

the offside rule. This marked a significant step towards convergence between the FA, Sheffield, Nottingham and Scots, even if 'mis-understanding' of the rule still prevailed in Sheffield.<sup>134</sup> The FA and Sheffield also reached agreement in April 1877 over throw-ins, meaning that the Sheffield press now reported 'London and Sheffield will have one code of rules'.<sup>135</sup> When the *Nottingham Evening Post* listed all the results of London-Sheffield encounters in the 1870s, all the games until the London-Sheffield game in November 1877 were listed as having been played under Association Rules, Sheffield Rules or 'Mixed Rules'. Yet the game on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1877 was significantly listed as having been played under a 'common code'.<sup>136</sup> However, one of the further remaining sticking points was the Scots', especially Queens Park's, dislike of the English desire to throw a ball in any direction from a throw in. Queens Park did, however, allow Notts to do this in their encounter in November 1877.<sup>137</sup>

In this season of 1877-78, Notts moved to Beeston Cricket Ground and even dropped Forest from their fixtures whilst continuing to seek a higher class of opposition.<sup>138</sup> When Forest were drawn against Notts in the FA Cup in November of the following season of 1878-79, the local press reported bad feeling between the two sides. The majority of the spectators supported Forest despite the game being played in Beeston. The report of the match reveals that Forest played a passing game whilst Notts played more as individuals, demonstrating the difference in tactics the sides had developed. The detailed match report in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* made much of how Notts had dropped Forest from their fixtures and how, had it not been for the FA Cup, this fixture would not have happened:

A great deal of interest was felt in the result of the match as a certain amount of jealousy has existed for some time between the two clubs. 'Notts. v. Forest,' moreover is not found in the ordinary list of fixtures, as

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<sup>134</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 March 1877; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 10 November 1877.

<sup>135</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 21 April 1877.

<sup>136</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 3 January 1880.

<sup>137</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 November 1877.

<sup>138</sup> Warsop, *The Magpies*, p. 18.

but for the accident of being drawn together in the cup ties they would have had no chance of trying conclusions with one another. The feelings of the spectators were manifestly in favour of the Forest and their efforts were much more cheered than the Notts. men.

Furthermore, instrumental in Forest winning 3-1 was that they played more as a team and with a higher tempo, as the report concluded:

No-one could doubt that the best team won. The visitors were probably slightly superior to their opponents in every point of the game but where they gained their advantage was in the unselfish play on the part of their forwards. The Notts. forwards seldom played together; each kept the ball to himself as long as he could, and though his style of play may at times bring applause to individuals, it is sure to be ruinous to the side. The Forest forwards, on the contrary, played well together and unselfishly; they also showed more dash than their opponents and got far greater pace on the ball.<sup>139</sup>

The interest generated by the FA Cup was exemplified when, with Forest reaching the fourth round, a railway excursion, one of the first of its kind, was organised to take supporters to London to see the victory against Oxford University.<sup>140</sup> Forest lost in the next round to Old Etonians and the local press blamed this partly on missing the player Earp through injury.<sup>141</sup> Earp had become, through his skill, an early example of one of the next football phenomenon, the star player.

Melvyn Bragg has claimed that the *Rule Book of Association Football* from 1863 is one of the twelve key books that have changed the world.<sup>142</sup> Its impact was hardly felt in 1866, however, when there were only three sides remaining - Barnes, Crystal

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<sup>139</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 22 November 1878.

<sup>140</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 February 1879.

<sup>141</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 March 1879; *Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express*, 24 March 1879; *Nottingham Journal*, 24 March 1879.

<sup>142</sup> Bragg, *12 Books That Changed The World*, pp. 93-118.

Palace and NN (Kilburn) - that played by its code. Harvey claims in his pivotal work, *Football: The First Hundred Years: The Untold Story*, that, 'had it not been for Sheffield's enthusiastic endorsement of the FA at the meeting of 1867 the London based Association might well have decided to disband'.<sup>143</sup> This meeting took place on 12 February, 1867.<sup>144</sup> Collins has questioned what affect Sheffield really had and suggested that it was the strong influence of Charles Alcock who 'proposed inviting the leading public schools and universities to join' the FA whilst later going on to 'oversee the introduction of the FA Cup and international matches' that gave the FA new direction.<sup>145</sup> What is certain is that Harvey's exclusive focus on Sheffield has led to other key influences on the FA, and 'football' more generally, being overlooked. Harvey lists ten members of the FA committee in 1869, including not only W. Chesterman (Sheffield) but also A. Padley (Lincoln), C. Rotherd (Nottingham) and V. Wright (old Harrovian member of the Newark club).<sup>146</sup>

The Nottingham name should read as C. (Charles Lambert) Rothera, the Notts player, who was also secretary and an umpire. It is also significant that, despite his Rugby School background, his connection with Notts had clearly made him more an advocate of association rules. Rothera was in London at the time of the meeting as he was studying at University College London where he graduated in 1871.<sup>147</sup> He was also from a prominent family of lawyers based in Nottingham. Not only did he become a notable solicitor involved in countless newsworthy cases, but he was a prominent member of Nottinghamshire 'society', regularly giving lectures and attending dances.<sup>148</sup> Rothera was a committee member of an FA that was getting a

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<sup>143</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p. 163.

<sup>144</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p. 161.

<sup>145</sup> Collins, 'Early Football', p. 1130.

<sup>146</sup> Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, pp. 169-70.

<sup>147</sup> *Morning Post*, 6 November 1871.

<sup>148</sup> Perhaps most tellingly, on retirement, a headline in the *Nottingham Evening Post* read, 'Nottingham honours Mr. C. L. Rothera "Devoted, conspicuous service." VELLUM TRIBUTE' and stated that he had 'almost an (sic) unique record in a form of public service', *Nottingham Evening Post*, 16 October 1934. A few of his newsworthy cases can be found at *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 October 1881; 14 October 1891; 28 December 1891; 7 February, 1893; 24 August 1895; 7 December 1895; 27 December 1895; 28 April 1899; 31 May 1899. Examples of him being involved with lectures or readings can be found at *Nottingham Evening Post*, 25 October 1886; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 April 1877;

new lease of life because of the involvement of Alcock and interest in Sheffield, Nottinghamshire and Lincoln. Furthermore, it was reported in the press that C.L. Rothera organised the North side to play against the South in December 1870 in an early attempt at taking the game to a national level. Included in the North squad were three players from Nottingham, who, with Scotland, had the highest complement of players. Also in the North side were two players from Lancashire and one from each of Sheffield, Durham, Worcestershire, Newark, Lincoln, Harrow, Darlington and Yorkshire.<sup>149</sup>

The game, when it happened, received a significant coverage in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*. It seems likely that the sides reflected where the footballing talent lay in the country at the time. The public school element was dominant in both North and South. FA Secretary and Harrovian, C.W. Alcock, represented the North due to being born in the county of Durham. The Scots who played for the North (Kinnaird and Hogg) were Old Etonians and London-based, as presumably, was the mysterious civil servant ('A. Scot'). There was, however, a noticeable Nottinghamshire contingent in the North team.

Stephenson and Lubbock for the South, and Greenhalgh and Hogg for the North, as backs, were particularly efficient. Alcock, Hooman and Kinnaird also showed good form, as forward players Chenery, Vidal and Crake were most conspicuous in support of the South. The sides were:- South.- A.J. Baker (Wanderers), E. Lubbock (West Kent), R.W.S. Vidal (Westminster School), W.P. Crake (Barnes Club), C.J. Chenery (Crystal Palace Club), M.P. Betts (West Kent), C.W. Stephenson (Westminster School), A. Morten (Crystal Palace Club), F. Chappell (Brasenose College), and A.W. Howard (Weyside Club), North.- J.C. Whelan (Sheffield Club), C.W. Alcock (Durham), T.C. Hooman (North Worcestershire), E.H. Greenhalgh (Notts), G. Holden (Newark Club), E.S. Gibney (Lincoln), A.F. Kinnaird (Scotland), Q. Hogg

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1 June 1877. Examples of him being at society balls and dinners can be found at *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 January 1876; 19 January 1877; 14 February 1879.

<sup>149</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 December 1870.

(Scotland), W.E. Rowlinson (Lancashire), C.L. Rothera (Notts. Club) and A. Scot (Civil Service).<sup>150</sup>

When the first (unofficial) international between England and Scotland was played four months later, six of the South team, Baker, Betts, Crake, Lubbock, Stephenson and Vidal, and two of the North team, Alcock and Newman, represented England whilst two of the North team, Kinnaird and Hogg, represented Scotland. 'The interest generated by this match was immense', it was noted.<sup>151</sup> Even though the three local players from the earlier North-South match had not been selected the England-Scotland game featured in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, not least because W.H. Gladstone, 'junior lord of the Treasury' and son of Prime Minister William Gladstone, played for Scotland.<sup>152</sup>

One of the Nottinghamshire contingent in the North side had been E.H. Greenhalgh from Mansfield, whose 'particularly vigorous' play for Notts against Lincoln a few weeks later had been a feature of note.<sup>153</sup> Greenhalgh was the son of a mill owner and became the major shareholder in his father's company.<sup>154</sup> After the North v South game, he organised an eleven to play against Mansfield – a club that had previously played as the Nottingham Manufacturing Company - thus helping football to take root in his home town.<sup>155</sup> Greenhalgh represented England in the first recognised international against Scotland on 30 November 1872 thus becoming a very visible symbol of the extent to which Nottinghamshire was integrated into the earliest 'national' football networks. He was one of only two players outside London or the universities to represent England, Charles Clegg of the Sheffield club,

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<sup>150</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 December 1870.

<sup>151</sup> Mitchell, A., *The First Elevens: the Birth of International Football* (Glasgow: Andy Mitchell Media, 2012), p. 20.

<sup>152</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3, 11 March 1870.

<sup>153</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 March 1870.

<sup>154</sup> [http://www.ourmansfieldandarea.org.uk/page\\_id\\_150\\_path\\_.aspx](http://www.ourmansfieldandarea.org.uk/page_id_150_path_.aspx), (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>155</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 March 1871. Greenhalgh also served as 'hon.sec.' to an athletics meeting in Mansfield having learned, perhaps, from his connection with Notts, that such events could be a useful source of close season revenue for a football club; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 August 1871.



Wednesday, being the other. The game was described in the Nottinghamshire press as attracting 'a vast amount of interest amongst football players who adopt the association code'. Match reports highlighted contrasting styles between the English and Scots; England's Ottaway and Chenery demonstrated 'splendid dribbling' whilst Scotland were described as 'the whole team working together'. The same report appeared firstly in the *Nottingham Journal* and then, one day later, in the *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*.<sup>156</sup>

Greenhalgh was one of only two to be recalled for the return match the following March and also took part in a Notts versus London game later that year when the crowd at the Oval was described by the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* as 'the largest we ever saw at a football match'.<sup>157</sup> In January 1875, Greenhalgh was part of the Notts side that was heavily defeated (6-0) by Queens Park in Glasgow, the latter playing a 'passing game in style which baffles description'.<sup>158</sup> Sam Widdowson, who played for Forest as well as for Notts, also played in this match as 'cover' in a 1-2-7 formation. Forest, meanwhile, had already demonstrated 'clever and combined play' as reported in January 1873.<sup>159</sup> Confirmation that this was a style to develop came with a meeting with the Royal Engineers who, it was reported in December 1873, 'worked well together' and were noted early exponents of combination play.<sup>160</sup> Forest certainly merit a place alongside Queen's Park, Vale of Leven, Royal Engineers and Sheffield FC as tactical innovators having taken up the 'combination' style at an early date.<sup>161</sup>

Nottinghamshire's 'footballers' thus played a part in the tactical development of football, aided by their connections with other pioneering footballing centres. After

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<sup>156</sup> *Nottingham Journal*, 2 December 1872; *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, 3 December 1872.

<sup>157</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 December 1873.

<sup>158</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 February 1875.

<sup>159</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 January 1873.

<sup>160</sup> *London Evening Standard*, 26 December 1873; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 January 1907.

<sup>161</sup> Taylor M., *The Association Game: A History of British Football* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), p. 88.

the Queen's Park defeat, it seems likely that Greenhalgh was keen to shore up the defence a little more. The norm was for sides to adopt a 2-2-6 formation in the 1870s though Wilson states Wrexham used a 2-3-5 formation in 1878 and that it was probably used in the first floodlit game in Sheffield in October 1878.<sup>162</sup> Murphy claims that a 2-3-5 formation had caught on with Wednesday in 1880.<sup>163</sup> Wednesday perhaps adapted this from Forest who had played a 3-3-5 formation against them in a 12-a-side game two years earlier where Greenhalgh had played as one of three half backs.<sup>164</sup> Forest, including Greenhalgh, certainly used a 2-3-5 formation in February 1878 against Glasgow Rangers.<sup>165</sup> Using three half-backs had first been seen a year earlier in 1877 when Castle played Greenhalgh's team and adopted a 2-3-6 formation in a 12-a-side game that was not unusual for Nottingham in this period. Castle also used a crossbar, a feature Sheffield had been calling for, instead of tape, in this game.<sup>166</sup>

A careful reading of match reports suggest that Nottinghamshire teams were prepared to be flexible and were even prepared to change formation during the course of a match, as exemplified by Trent in October 1877, when they sent an extra man forward to good effect during a game against Newark Rangers.<sup>167</sup> They were open to tactical innovation; even when reverting to 11-a-side, teams from Nottinghamshire could be more defensive than was the norm. The 1-2-2-5 formation, with full-back, three-quarters and half-backs that Forest used in their Edinburgh University and Notts matches in late 1879 with Sam Widdowson as captain, exemplified this.<sup>168</sup> This formation spread locally. Nottingham Wanderers used it in their Castle Cup game against Nottingham Trent later in the same season and Notts, with E.H. Greenhalgh as captain, used a similar 3-2-5 formation, with two full backs

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<sup>162</sup> Wilson J., *Inverting the Pyramid: The History of Football Tactics* (Orion: London, 2008), pp. 25-6; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 15 October 1878; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 October 1878.

<sup>163</sup> Murphy, *From Sheffield with Love*, 83.

<sup>164</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 March 1878.

<sup>165</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 22 February 1878.

<sup>166</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 October 1877.

<sup>167</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 October 1877.

<sup>168</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 7 November 1879; 14 November 1879.

and 'cover goal', in their Queen's Park game in November 1879.<sup>169</sup> Meanwhile, the 2-3-5 formation would become the norm in football for the following three and a half decades.<sup>170</sup>

## Conclusion

Though the introduction of a national competition such as the FA Cup and the first representative matches such as North versus South and England versus Scotland, supplied the major impetus as far as unifying the various football codes were concerned it was some time before this was achieved and for much of the 1870s the situation on the ground remained complex and subject to regional, even local, variation. The Scots and Sheffield FC held on to their own rules for a brief period, in relation to throw-ins and offside. Furthermore, the picture within regions was complex. Lancashire was divided between a culture of importing players – mainly 'Scotch professors' of the kicking or dribbling game - to gain success as in Turton, Darwen and Blackburn, and a rugby culture that dominated in and around Manchester where football was not fully embraced until after 1904. Sheffield too was divided with some clubs, such as Heeley, wishing to import players and others preferring to stay amateur and recruit locally, such as Sheffield FC.<sup>171</sup> The situation in Nottinghamshire, likewise, was complex. In establishing connections, local sides operated mostly within the county with occasional forays to play neighbours just across the borders in Derbyshire or Lincolnshire, for example. The two leading clubs, however, fairly quickly established wider networks, Forest with Sheffield and, later, Birmingham, while Notts relied on their connection with the Football Association to link with like-minded socially-exclusive clubs in London and the South, especially after they entered the FA Cup for the first time in 1877-78, when they temporarily abandoned their routine fixtures with Forest. Playing in the FA Cup, however, did

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<sup>169</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 November 1879.

<sup>170</sup> Wilson, *Inverting the Pyramid*, pp. 27-8.

<sup>171</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 48.

mean that a club had to commit itself to playing any opposition that they might be drawn against. Ironically, this soon brought the two Nottingham clubs together again in 1879.

By 1879, Nottinghamshire's developing football culture, as indicated by the coverage in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* which circulated throughout the county, owed much to Nottingham's two leading clubs. The FA Cup-tie demonstrated a number of significant changes that had taken place since their first meeting in 1866, not least with regard to the rules under which it was now played. The rouge, for example, had been abandoned. There was no chasing behind the goal-line, for instance, to touch the ball down in order to be allowed a kick at goal at a right angle fifteen yards from the line and both sides had the same number of players – eleven, rather than a lopsided eleven against seventeen that was seen in the first Notts-Forest game.<sup>172</sup> Moreover, it would not have been necessary to explain local variations of the rules to a visiting spectator from London, Sheffield, or even Glasgow. The FA Cup and the need to agree on a common set of rules for representative matches established firstly a tendency towards convergence and ultimately an unanswerable case for uniformity.

Evidence of how each of the two sides had networked during the intervening period would also have been discernible. Notts' strong links with the FA and an elite group of socially-exclusive teams in the South meant that they were still inclined towards the dribbling game that the FA secretary, Alcock, was still advocating in 1879.<sup>173</sup> This brought them little success on the day of the Cup-tie. Whilst Notts backs were in 'splendid form', Cursham's 'splendid dribbling' was unable to break through Forest's defence, despite being well 'supported by Greenhalgh and Oliver'. Even more telling - 'Morse, supported by E.H. Greenhalgh, made a clever run and almost a goal, the

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<sup>172</sup> *The Story of Nottingham Football*- Brochure with regards an exhibition at the Castle Museum, Nottingham, 1992, 4<sup>th</sup> page (no page numbers given).

<sup>173</sup> Wilson, *Inverting the Pyramid*, p. 22.

failure being due to a lamentable absence of the forwards and centres to help in the passing' whilst, as for E. Jessop, 'not having a man to assist him he had to succumb'.<sup>174</sup>

Forest, meanwhile, were less socially-exclusive than Notts, a club which had once drawn nine of their team from three well-heeled Nottingham families. They were also more innovative in their playing style and were already well known exponents of the 'combination' game, which put more emphasis on teamwork than on individual skills like dribbling. They had been playing in this way since the early 1870s, even before their match against the Royal Engineers in January 1873 which may simply have confirmed a decision they had already reached to try and play in the style favoured by their opponents.<sup>175</sup> In the 1879 derby game, 'Turner, Earp and Widdowson, by judicious passing, brought the ball close to the Notts. goal' whilst 'Luntley passed to Smith, who centred to Widdowson' and there was 'good passing between the Forest rights, lefts and centre'. Moreover, Forest adopted an interesting flexible formation in achieving their 4-0 victory, playing 3-2-5 or 1-4-5 depending on whether 'sides' Holroyd and Bates were playing in midfield to support their forwards or defending. Though it did not prevail on the day, Notts set up with a 2-3-5 formation which seems to have become increasingly popular in the late 1870s – with Nottinghamshire being in the forefront of change – and was soon to become the norm in English football.<sup>176</sup>

The Football Association's expanding network, in the guise of the FA Cup, had eventually brought Notts and Forest together again after a brief hiatus when there appeared to be a danger of a rift, as well as bringing unity to the game throughout the country. As a network it operated very successfully, fulfilling the essential conditions outlined by Magee and Thompson. The development of football in the period under review here certainly was 'complicated' but it was also

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<sup>174</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 November 1879.

<sup>175</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 3 January 1873; Wright, *Forever Forest*, pp. 29-31.

<sup>176</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 November 1879; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 October 1877; Wilson, *Inverting the Pyramid*, p. 25 cites instances in Wrexham and Sheffield in 1878 where three half-backs were used, but none earlier.

'collaborative'.<sup>177</sup> This meant that Nottinghamshire's two major clubs, by engaging with and exploiting the opportunities offered by networking, were able to contribute to the development of association football as a national game, a phenomenon that was on its way to being established by the end of the decade.

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<sup>177</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 31.

## Chapter Two

### Nottinghamshire, its Press and the FA Cup:

#### 'Bringing professionalism to the front', 1880-1885

In a newspaper interview that appeared just before the 1888 FA Cup final, the Forest, Cambridge University and Corinthians player, Tinsley Lindley, a 'true-blue' gentleman amateur, observed that:

The excitement caused by such contests has undoubtedly tended to increase the popularity of the game, both among spectators and players. It has also been the means of raising what would have been second-rate clubs into notice, and bringing them into first-class company, and consequently better fixtures. The Cup, of course, has had a great deal to do with bringing professionalism to the front.<sup>1</sup>

The FA Cup had become a national competition by 1881.<sup>2</sup> In the 1870s it had proved to be a transformative influence on the development of the association game because it required clubs to agree on a common code. In the 1880s, its transforming impact was no less significant. Collins, with reference to the influence of cup competitions on rugby in Yorkshire and Lancashire, has demonstrated that '[the] sport's growth in popularity and its identification with inter-town rivalry meant that clubs, on the whole, were no longer formed to be private recreational associations for young gentlemen but were created to represent towns or districts'. Attending

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<sup>1</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette*, 24 March 1888.

<sup>2</sup> Taylor M., *The Association Game: A History of British Football* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), p. 41.

rugby games, Collins argued, was a method of 'expressing local pride'.<sup>3</sup> This change was brought about even though the cup competitions in rugby were organised on a regional basis only. Not surprisingly, the impact of a national cup competition in football had a similar galvanising effect with local clubs increasingly being seen and seeing themselves as representatives of what Richard Holt has referred to as 'the territory of the crowd'.<sup>4</sup> The knock-out format generated excitement and intensified emotions more generally while facilitating the expression of local patriotism by placing teams representing different communities in direct opposition on the field with an important prize at stake. The process identified here – with competitive sport generating 'extreme feelings' - seems comparable to that which has been identified by Klugman in relation to Australian Rules football and in recent work by Taylor.<sup>5</sup> In the context of late nineteenth century Nottinghamshire it was especially evident in the excitement leading up to and during an FA Cup match, in the elation of victory or the bitter disappointment of defeat. Throughout this chapter, the local press is a vital resource. 'The press', as Hill has argued, 'is not simply a passive reflector in local life and thought but an active source in the creation of local feeling'.<sup>6</sup>

Notts and Forest, when playing in the FA Cup, were transformed like their rugby-playing contemporaries in northern industrial towns, from being recreational organisations patronised largely by local middle-class young men into clubs employing professionals who then effectively represented town and county on the field of play. The FA Cup generated larger than normal crowds – along with larger than normal gate receipts - and increasing excitement as the rounds progressed. Winning it created euphoria. Holt, Williams, Taylor and Hill have pointed to the

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<sup>3</sup> Collins T., *Rugby's Great Split: Class, Culture and the origins of Rugby League Football* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), pp. 16-24.

<sup>4</sup> Holt R., *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 171.

<sup>5</sup> Klugman, M., 'Loves, Suffering and Identification: The Passions of Australian Football League Fans', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26, 1, 2009, pp. 21–44; Taylor M., 'History and Football' in Hughson J., Moore K. Spaaij R. and Maguire J. (eds), *Routledge Handbook of Football Studies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 12-3.

<sup>6</sup> Hill J., 'Rite of Spring: Cup Finals in the North of England', in Hill J. and Williams J. (eds), *Sport and Identity in the North of England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), p. 86.



extraordinary scenes of celebration when an FA Cup victory was achieved and the trophy was brought back to the winner's home town.<sup>7</sup> The importance of success in the FA Cup had led to clubs exploring ways in which it could be achieved. Collins, again in relation to rugby, has demonstrated how the Yorkshire Cup, from 1877, 'brought with it an influx of new players, new spectators and new playing methods'.<sup>8</sup> In football, it was Lancashire clubs especially who brought in new players and playing methods. This generated controversy at a time when socially-elite amateurs – the gentlemen who had learned how to play the game at their public schools and universities – were still well-represented at the highest levels of the Football Association, the game's governing body. They found themselves playing against ambitious clubs whose approach was essentially professional.

By the early 1880s Lancashire was awash with illicit payments and players were being imported from Scotland and elsewhere with a view to improving a team's chances of achieving success, especially in the FA Cup. Other contentious issues were a growth in the practice of clubs using guest players in important matches, clubs poaching each other's players and clubs offering various inducements – such as the offer of a sinecure appointment with a local firm – to improve the quality of their team. It also became clear, especially in connection with the FA Cup, that players were undergoing special training which was not just a breach of FA rules but contravened the gentleman amateur's view that to practice seriously was somehow unsporting. Looking back on the 1880s from 1926, the journalist J. A. H. Catton recalled that 'Prestonian players posed as amateurs, but everyone knew they were not', before explaining how Suddell, the Preston manager, 'confessed how elaborate means were taken to hoodwink the Football Association'.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, it was an FA Cup

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<sup>7</sup> Holt, *Sport and The British*, pp. 170-1; Hill, 'Rite of Spring', p. 86; Williams J., "'One Could Literally Have Walked on the Heads of the People Congregated There": Sport, the town and Identity', in Laybourn K. (ed.), *Social Conditions, Status and Community, 1860-c.1920*, (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1997); Taylor M., *The Leaguers: The Making of Professional Football in England, 1900-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), p. x.

<sup>8</sup> Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> Catton J.A.H., *The Story of Association Football* (Cleethorpes: Soccer Books Ltd, 2006; first published 1926), p. 9.

game that provided the catalyst for the beginning on debates on how professionalism could be legalised. Upton Park, very much a team of gentlemen amateurs, accused Preston North End of professionalism after defeat in an FA Cup-tie in 1884 and their opponents were expelled from the tournament.<sup>10</sup> Burnley and Great Lever were then thrown out of the FA Cup the following season for similar reasons. The response of the principal Lancashire clubs, together with Sunderland, Aston Villa and Walsall Swifts, was to threaten to form a breakaway organisation, the British Football Association, though they were eventually persuaded to remain with the FA while a resolution to the problem of professionalism was sought.<sup>11</sup> This chapter adds to our knowledge of the debate surrounding the legalisation of professionalism with stringent conditions by the FA in 1885 by showing how Nottingham and Nottinghamshire were drawn into the controversy that had begun in Lancashire and how the FA Cup competition played an important part in this.

Mason has highlighted how, when the Lancashire FA tried to impose a ban on imported players, 'the clubs threw out the recommendation of the committee'. He also argues that the Birmingham FA and Sheffield FA were stricter than Lancashire with regards to expenses and inducements respectively.<sup>12</sup> The London, Middlesex and Surrey FAs – where the number of public school 'Old Boys' and other middle-class clubs was proportionately stronger – were bastions of gentlemanly amateurism, however, and remained so even after professionalism was legalised in 1885 by not allowing professional clubs into their membership.<sup>13</sup> Significantly, Mason describes the Sheffield and Birmingham FAs as 'powerful', but not 'Nottingham and Walsall', which are mentioned in the same sentence.<sup>14</sup> This chapter examines this assessment further and argues that the Nottinghamshire FA was less 'powerful' than some of its

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<sup>10</sup> Morris T., *In a Class of Their Own: A History of Amateur Football* (Sheffield: Chequered Flag, 2015), p. 68.

<sup>11</sup> Russell D., *Football and the English: A Social History of Football in England, 1863-1995* (Preston: Carnegie, 1997), p. 25.

<sup>12</sup> Mason T., *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), pp.71-2.

<sup>13</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 27.

<sup>14</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, p. 74.

counterparts on account of the influence exercised by the county's two major clubs which tended to overpower the county association. That Notts and Forest had become so well established prior to the formation of the Nottinghamshire county association in 1882 is a significant factor to be taken into account.

This leads onto a discussion of attitudes towards professionalism in Nottinghamshire and the position taken by its representatives on the FA Council and elsewhere as the debate took its course nationally. It was quite clear by March 1882 that the senior Lancashire clubs favoured a change in the FA's regulations to allow players to be reimbursed for wages lost – so called 'broken-time' payments – a significant step towards professionalization. This was considered of sufficient importance to be reported in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*.<sup>15</sup> Sentiment in Nottinghamshire tended initially to be against professionalism but became more accommodating with key figures in the Nottinghamshire sporting community being able to draw on the well-established local tradition of amateurs and professionals playing together in cricket as a model. Once again, the county's press played an important part in this process. Its football coverage raised expectations, especially when following the progress of Notts and Forest in the FA Cup, but this provided a context in which the issue of professionalism could be openly discussed in connection to opponents gaining an unfair advantage by bending or ignoring the rules, thus frustrating the desire to see the FA Cup brought back to Nottingham. Ultimately, as the FA determined its attitude to professionalism in the 1880s, the stance taken by Nottinghamshire helped to make it possible for amateurs and professionals to play together under the rules of a single governing body, as was already the case in cricket.

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<sup>15</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 March 1882.

## The Press, Local Patriotism and the FA Cup

Writing of the football hotbed that was Central Lancashire in the 1870s and early 1880s, Lewis identified four defining aspects of covert professionalism before it was legalised in 1885: importations, guest players, poaching and popular players who were invariably connected with importations.<sup>16</sup> Russell has also identified payments above regulation rates for broken time, using guest players and importing players with the promise of off-field inducements such as work opportunities.<sup>17</sup> Training regularly and a win-at-all-costs mentality were also seen as important markers and were an increasingly noticeable feature of English football – especially in Lancashire - in the short period covered in this chapter as clubs became more desperate for success. Hughson has argued recently that '[any] semblance of Corinthian spirited amateurism faded rather quickly as the FA Cup transformed to take in professional clubs dotted around the country'.<sup>18</sup> However, this section and the one that follows demonstrate that the FA Cup did not simply expand to absorb clubs that were already professional in practice and outlook but that the new competition acted as the catalyst which encouraged professionalism to grow.

C.B. Fry, who played football alongside Forest's Tinsley Lindley for the Corinthians, later recalled in his memoirs a time when payment of players was 'entirely illegal, but everybody knew that in the Midlands and the North there was any amount of professionalism and surreptitious persuasion'.<sup>19</sup> After Darwen and Manchester became the first sides from Lancashire to enter the FA Cup – they were among amongst 43 entrants in 1877 - the intensity of competition rose to a new level.<sup>20</sup> Thereafter the proportion of Lancashire entrants rose dramatically. By 1882-83,

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<sup>16</sup> Lewis R.W., 'The Genesis of Professional Football: Bolton-Blackburn-Darwen, the Centre of Innovation, 1875-85', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 14, 1, April 1997, pp. 21-54.

<sup>17</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 23.

<sup>18</sup> Hughson J., *England and the 1966 World Cup: A Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> Fry, C.B., *Life Worth Living* (London: Pavilion Library, 1986), p. 264; first published 1939.

<sup>20</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 31 August 1877.

there were 21 from Lancashire from a total of 82 in the first-round draw.<sup>21</sup> Inevitably matches between Lancashire clubs and those from other parts of the country where the game was played along rather different lines became a source of friction. Importations were one contentious issue. Darwen had already reached the quarter-finals of the FA Cup in 1879 after signing two players from Scotland and when neighbouring clubs followed their example it attracted unwelcome attention. When Blackburn Rovers played Forest in a third-round tie in 1880, they attracted criticism in the Nottingham newspapers because they were expected to include Campbell, who had just arrived from Scotland. He did not play but Blackburn were 'palpably weaker' on account of his absence, losing 6-0.<sup>22</sup> By 1882, *The Scotsman* newspaper had published evidence which proved that Lancashire clubs were actively engaged in poaching players from clubs north of the border and this information was soon made available to readers of the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*.<sup>23</sup> Soon after this, when Forest played Bolton Wanderers, the local press was critical of the fact that Bolton had seven Scots in their side, only one member of which was a native of the town. This had been condemned as 'outrageous' by the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* before the match but the Lancashire clubs seemed quite happy to ignore their critics.<sup>24</sup> In 1884-85 season, Burnley could field a side including ten Scotsmen and Preston North End regularly included nine. Moreover, closer to home, Preston North End were known to have 'lured George Wilson from Blackburn Olympic by offering him the tenancy of the Black-a-Moor-Head public house'.<sup>25</sup>

Higgins has pointed out that sports journalism played a vital role in shaping attitudes to football in this period, not least because it 'underlined and reinforced

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<sup>21</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 September 1882. There were eventually 84 starters with Grimsby, Sheffield Heeley, Sheffield FC and Haslingden replacing Rotherham and Trinity by the time the first round had begun, <http://www.fchd.info/cups/facup1882-83.htm> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>22</sup> *Nottinghamshire Evening Post*, 2 February 1880; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 February 1880; *Athletic News*, 4 February 1880.

<sup>23</sup> *The Scotsman*, 16 February 1882; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 20 February 1882.

<sup>24</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 October; 17 November 1882.

<sup>25</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 23.

regional rivalries and popular prejudices'.<sup>26</sup> Matches between Lancashire clubs were characterised by a peculiar intensity and Nottinghamshire readers were made aware of this. When Blackburn Rovers played Darwen in 1880 in front of a crowd of 10,000-12,000 local rivalry was heightened on account of star player Fergie Suter, one of the Scots who had played for Darwen in their 1879 FA Cup run, having recently signed for Rovers. Widespread illegal gambling among the spectators did not help to calm the situation and there was what the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* called an 'extraordinary scene' when the match was eventually abandoned after fighting broke out amongst the players.<sup>27</sup> The behaviour of Lancashire teams often prompted critical comment: Blackburn Rovers were described as 'conceited' when they pulled out of a fixture in early 1883; Bolton Wanderers' approach to football was described as 'win at all hazards'.<sup>28</sup> Blackburn Olympic walked off the field in protest after an offside decision went against them when playing Forest in October 1882 and were labelled 'childish in the extreme'.<sup>29</sup> Lancashire sides were described sarcastically as 'Scottish' or 'Scotch', or a mixture of 'Lancashire and Scotland where Scots predominate'.<sup>30</sup> In 1884 the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* listed Preston North End's side thus:

Goal, doubtful; backs, Ferguson (Hearts of Midlothian) and Forbes (Vale of Leven); half-backs, Russell (Stewarton), Robertson (St. Bernard's), and Graham (Ann-bank); forwards, Drummond (St. Bernard's), Dewhurst (Preston), Belger (Glasgow South Western), Gordon (Port Glasgow), and Thompson (Glasgow Rangers).<sup>31</sup>

It was also noted in Nottinghamshire that Lancashire clubs took training seriously. In this respect they were more like professionals than amateurs because, as Holt has

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<sup>26</sup> Huggins, M., *The Victorians and Sport*, (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), p.142.

<sup>27</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 December 1880; see also *Lancashire Evening Telegraph*, 9 September 2000.

<sup>28</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 December 1882; 18 January 1884.

<sup>29</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 20 October 1882.

<sup>30</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 March 1884.

<sup>31</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1884.

explained, 'amateurs were above all gentlemen, and gentlemen were not supposed to toil and sweat for their laurels'.<sup>32</sup> The implication was that training gave the opposition an advantage. It was said to be the reason why teams from Lancashire had been in better 'playing condition' than Nottingham Forest at the start of 1882-83 season. In this instance, with progress in the FA Cup now regarded as being of the utmost importance, the local press in 1884 signalled approval when Notts, with a difficult Cup-tie at Bolton coming up, were reported to have taken 'a leaf out of Wanderers book with regular hours and plenty of exercise'.<sup>33</sup> Animosity towards Lancashire notwithstanding, the FA Cup, it seems, helped to change Nottinghamshire attitudes in this respect as the debate on professionalism began in earnest.

Huggins has claimed that Yorkshire papers led the way for their 'sporting intelligence' in the late nineteenth century but that Nottingham was close behind.<sup>34</sup> Tate, meanwhile, has argued that when the celebrated sports journalist James Catton, moved from Preston to work at the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* in 1883, he found Nottingham to be 'a city with a more established tradition of football with what was probably a more knowledgeable readership'.<sup>35</sup> A journalist or journalists, writing as 'A Correspondent', covered Nottinghamshire sport, with an emphasis on football, in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* and its daily version, the *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, from January 1882.<sup>36</sup> From 1883, possibly a little earlier, it seems that Catton - who later became well-known as 'Ubique' and 'Tityrus' in the Manchester-based weekly *The Athletic News* - undertook this role. Tate points out that it was Catton who, in 1885, covered the crucial professionalism debate at the Football Association for the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* and indeed the relevant article is by 'Correspondent'.<sup>37</sup> Catton immersed himself in the sporting culture of Nottingham,

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<sup>32</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 100.

<sup>33</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 February 1884.

<sup>34</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 155.

<sup>35</sup> Tate S., 'James Catton, 'Tityrus' of Athletic News (1860-1936): A Biographical Study', *Sport in History*, 25, 1, April 2005, p. 109.

<sup>36</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 January 1882.

<sup>37</sup> Tate, 'James Catton', p. 102; *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 24 January 1885.

establishing a close working relationship with the Notts Olympic secretary, A. G. Hines, who represented the county on the FA Council, which was indicative of a scenario where journalists and clubs co-operated for their mutual benefit.

Wherever Olympic played on a Saturday Mr. Hines would bring to the office of the Daily Guardian (sic) on Sunday night a carefully-written account of the match and ask for its insertion in Monday's issue.

He did all this work and went to so much trouble without any fee or reward beyond seeing that the Olympic obtained publicity.<sup>38</sup>

Sports journalists, like Catton, valued such connections. Some other officials from Nottingham clubs with whom Catton is likely to have had close links also had important roles at the FA in this critical period. Sam Widdowson, like Hines, was a member of the FA's general committee and also served on the disciplinary committee; and, as we shall see, W.R. Lymbery, who was associated with Forest, played a key part in the FA's debates on the legalisation of professionalism in 1884 and 1885.<sup>39</sup>

The role of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire newspapers in promoting football in this period was evident in a number of ways. In particular, the *Nottingham Journal*, the *Nottingham Evening Post* and the *Nottingham Daily Express* (called the *Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express* until July 1883) helped to project the idea that the principal Nottingham clubs were highly regarded. When Forest played Darwen in 1880, both sides were described as 'holding leading positions in the football world'; when they drew Aston Villa in the FA Cup in 1881, both Forest and their opponents were described as 'crack Midlands clubs'.<sup>40</sup> Notts enjoyed

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<sup>38</sup> Catton, *Association Football*, p. 27.

<sup>39</sup> Wright D., *Forever Forest: The Official 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Original Reds* (Stroud: Amberley, 2015), p. 33; *Blackburn Standard*, 1 March 1890; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 2 October 1889; 30 September 1890; 10 November 1891; 12 September 1893.

<sup>40</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 October 1880; 11 November 1881.



similar favourable attention. After a defeat by Queen's Park in Glasgow in January 1883, the *Nottingham Evening Post* reflected that 'they [had] lost a game in which they had far the best play throughout'.<sup>41</sup> This view was echoed a few days later in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* which proudly cited 'the Glasgow papers' in support of its claim that Notts had demonstrated 'greater staying powers than any team who had ever appeared at Hampden Park'.<sup>42</sup> When Notts lost to Old Etonians in the FA Cup semi-final in March 1883, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reporter could not hide his disappointment and there may have been some justice in his claim that the choice of Kennington Oval as the neutral venue for the semi-final had given the Old Etonians an advantage as it was a ground where they regularly played. He went on to predict - incorrectly as it turned out - that Old Etonians, having beaten Notts, would surely now win the final.<sup>43</sup> The performances both Forest and Notts provided were now routinely celebrated as conferring distinction on the town. 'It would be difficult to find another town in England which at the present time possesses two such strong Association clubs', claimed the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* after Notts' creditable showing in Glasgow.<sup>44</sup> Later in the same year it boasted '[that] there is no town in England, and the statement might also include Scotland, which could place two representative club teams on the field with any certain chance of beating both the leading Nottingham clubs on one and the same afternoon'.<sup>45</sup>

Notwithstanding the understandable bias of the local press, there was some substance to the claim that Nottingham was now a football centre of some considerable importance. By now its senior clubs had earned a formidable reputation far beyond the county boundaries. As early as 1880, the compiler of 'Scotch Football Notes' in the Manchester-based *Athletic News* observed that 'for precision, accurate kicking, and brilliant dribbling I have seen no English club to equal the Nottingham

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<sup>41</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 29 January 1883.

<sup>42</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 February 1883.

<sup>43</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 March 1883.

<sup>44</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 February 1883.

<sup>45</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 December 1883.

Forest'; a few years later Notts were identified as a 'crack club' by a York newspaper.<sup>46</sup> Another significant indication of Nottingham's importance as a centre of football was that the town was chosen by the London-based Football Association as the venue for FA Cup semi-finals in 1884, 1885 and 1887, these matches being staged at Trent Bridge, Castle Cricket Ground and Trent Bridge respectively.<sup>47</sup> Before 1884, only two semi-finals had been played outside London. Nothing more reflected Nottingham's stature in the football world, though, than the fixture lists. By the end of 1884, Nottingham's two leading clubs were regularly pitted against the leading clubs of Lancashire, Scotland, Sheffield, Staffordshire, Birmingham and London.

Without doubt local patriotism played a part in determining how matches were reported and how the game was covered more generally and it is likely that this helped to shape readers' perceptions of the emerging football scene and Nottingham's place within it. 'There *is* a great deal of bias in these stories', as McDowell has observed in his study of Scottish football, 'but one should not proceed on the basis that there is *nothing* to be learned from them'.<sup>48</sup> Favouritism was evident in match reporting in local newspapers throughout the country. According to the *Blackburn Standard* in 1882, Blackburn Rovers' 7-2 defeat by Forest owed much to having an 'unfriendly umpire to contend against'.<sup>49</sup> Nottinghamshire's newspapers displayed a similar tendency claiming, for example, that Oxford University were 'lucky' to beat Forest in the FA Cup semi-final of 1880 and that a goal scored by Aston Villa against Forest had been 'flukey'.<sup>50</sup> Local newspapers were not

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<sup>46</sup> *Athletic News*, 15 December 1880; *York Herald*, 15 January 1884.

<sup>47</sup> Numerous sources including <http://www.englishfootballleaguetales.co.uk/cup/C-1885sf.html> (accessed 3 April 2017) claim the 1885 semi-final was played at Trent Bridge. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 March 1885, clearly states this was played at Castle Cricket Club in front of a disappointing crowd of 2,000 which was attributed to the admission charge of one shilling being too much; see also *Nottingham Daily Express*, *Nottingham Evening Post*, 9 March 1885.

<sup>48</sup> McDowell M., *A Cultural History of Association Football in Scotland, 1865-1902: Understanding Sports as a Way of Understanding Society* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2013), p. 340.

<sup>49</sup> *Blackburn Standard*, 18 November 1882.

<sup>50</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 April 1880; 19 November 1880.

inclined to use these terms to describe victories achieved or goals scored by local favourites.

In its coverage of football, the Nottinghamshire press also found reasons to criticise opponents for the way in which they conducted affairs off the field, especially at this time if they were from Lancashire and were importing players from north of the border. The previously used quotation - 'Lancashire and Scotland where Scots predominate' - was actually the description in one Nottingham newspaper of the Blackburn Rovers side for the 1884 FA Cup final. It was one way of reminding readers that Rovers' semi-final victory over Notts had been achieved with the assistance of Inglis, said to be living in Glasgow while playing for Blackburn, whose expenses had been brought into question.<sup>51</sup> When, at a critical point in the controversy over professionalism, a breakaway British Football Association was threatened, 'Mercurio' of the *Nottingham Daily Express* made it clear to readers that the troublemakers were to be found in Lancashire. With reference to the British Football Association, he sarcastically stated 'I had nearly written "Bolton Association"'.<sup>52</sup> To be fair, there were some occasions when the local clubs were subjected to critical comment. Thus Forest's win over Trent in the Nottinghamshire Cup final of 1884 was 'justified' on account of their opponents, Trent, having three Notts players - Harry Moore, Herbert Emmitt and William Gunn - guest for the occasion.<sup>53</sup> Significantly, when Bruce Wright, the first imported Scot to play football in Nottingham, arrived from Glasgow Rangers to play for Notts at the start of the 1884-85 season, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* detected 'a disposition to be hypocritical', amongst the club's supporters.<sup>54</sup>

It was clear by the early 1880s that the FA Cup had added considerably to the appeal of association football both as a spectator sport and as a sport that could be followed

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<sup>51</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 4 March 1884.

<sup>52</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 8 November 1884. For the proposed British Football Association see Russell, *Football and the English*, p.25.

<sup>53</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1884. It is clear that this was a particularly feisty affair, the match report indicating that Forest players were 'jostled' by Trent supporters.

<sup>54</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 October 1884.

via reports in the newspapers. The Nottinghamshire press reflected *and* added to the excitement which it generated. Local and regional newspapers included significant reports of FA Cup games even when they did not involve Nottinghamshire clubs and they revelled in shock results, such as when Manchester FC - from what was then considered to be a rugby town - beat Stoke and Hendon beat Old Etonians in 1883.<sup>55</sup> The form of local sides was regularly discussed with specific interest aimed at how Forest and Notts would cope against upcoming opponents. Notts and Forest, by this time, tended to measure the success of a season in how far they progressed in the FA Cup. In 1882, the Forest end-of-season meeting was concerned with the loss of fixtures due to the early exit from the cup.<sup>56</sup> This issue, which impacted on revenue, was re-addressed at the start of the next season in the following September.<sup>57</sup> A major cup-tie could by the mid-1880s draw spectators to Forest and Notts matches from far afield and have a significant impact on revenue derived from gate money. When a sixth-round replay between Notts and Queen's Park was staged at Derby in 1885 it was reported to have attracted a large contingent from Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Sheffield. Indeed, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* noted that some so-called 'gentlemen' from Birmingham had 'hooted' the Notts team.<sup>58</sup> These factors contributed, each in its own way, to the emergence of the FA Cup competition as a significant cultural phenomenon in its own right. The Cup heightened the emotional appeal of the game to the levels identified by Klugman in his work on Australian Rules football.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, press coverage began to reflect *and* enhance this by the way in which football was reported. Supporters who travelled by train to watch Notts at Bolton in 1884 – a match which attracted a crowd of 20,000 – were said to have been consumed by 'feverish anxiety'. Queen's Park fans who made the

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<sup>55</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 November 1883.

<sup>56</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 May 1882.

<sup>57</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 September 1882.

<sup>58</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 March 1885.

<sup>59</sup> Klugman, 'Loves, Suffering and Identification', pp. 21–44.

journey from Glasgow to Nottingham for a match in 1885 were said to be ‘suffering from “football fever”’.<sup>60</sup>

In this atmosphere of heightened emotion the controversy and drama which any match had the potential to generate was enhanced. With clubs increasingly anxious for success, protests about particular incidents and even the outcome of matches had become a feature of the game by the early 1880s and many FA Cup-ties were disputed. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* complained that ‘season 82-83 will be known hereafter as the period of protests. Never in the North of England was there such an aversion to taking a defeat like men as in the course of the present competition’.<sup>61</sup> An early example of such tension in Nottingham was in February 1880 when Forest and Sheffield FC disagreed at the end of an FA Cup-tie over whether to play extra time. It was a measure of the importance attached to this fixture that it was refereed by FA secretary Charles Alcock who had refereed the Cup Final at the end of the previous season.<sup>62</sup> At the end of the match, Alcock subsequently explained in a letter to the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, it had been impossible for him to make a decision about extra time as the crowd was over-excited. After retreating to the referee’s tent with the two match umpires Alcock decided that extra time should be played but Sheffield refused. Alcock then hurriedly left the ground leaving the players and the crowd in an agitated and confused state. Though Sam Widdowson was criticised for his conduct - he had appealed for extra time in an ‘unsatisfactory way’ - Forest were eventually awarded the match.<sup>63</sup> A match with Bolton also ended controversially. As Catton later recalled, ‘Of course, Bolton Wanderers protested. I forget what it was all about, but some trumpery

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<sup>60</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 February 1884; 27 February 1885.

<sup>61</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 January 1883.

<sup>62</sup> For Alcock’s refereeing career see Booth K., *The Father of Modern Sport: the Life and Times of Charles W. Alcock* (Manchester: Parrs Wood Press, 2002), pp. 58-9.

<sup>63</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 February 1880. For other accounts of this match see *Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express*, 19 and 26 February 1880; *Nottingham Journal*, 20 February 1880; *Nottingham Post*, 20 February 1880; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 25 February 1880; *Leeds Mercury*, 2 April 1880.

matter, a trifle, and they lost their case'.<sup>64</sup> Arguably, such events and the coverage they attracted in the press simply made the competition even more appealing as far as the public was concerned.

Press attention and club anxieties and hopes were underpinned by a wider public interest in the FA Cup. The desire for cup success was fuelled by ideas of civic pride and the kudos that would accrue to the town that could boast of having the best team in the country. This found expression in a letter to the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in 1881 from someone calling themselves 'Spectator', claiming to have affection for both Forest and Notts, who urged that the city should be represented by a new club, to be called Nottingham Borough, so that footballing resources could be pooled thus increasing the chances of bringing the FA Cup to the town:

No Nottingham man who saw the well contested football match of Saturday last, between the Notts. and Forest clubs, could help feeling the desirability, now so patent to all, that out of the two clubs a team might be selected which would, as the Americans express it, "lick all creation". As a spectator of nearly every important match played by our most two favoured clubs, it is most galling to see friends in both playing with such pluck and skill, so nearly succeeding, yet never quite successful, in bringing home the much-coveted Cup. I would therefore respectfully suggest that the time is now come when the honour of our old town in this athletic game should be higher consideration than those feelings of assumed superiority which at present keep the two clubs apart. Each has licked the other; let the captains now join hands and combine to produce a team which shall be thoroughly representative of Notts. and call it the Nottingham Borough Football Club. No one doubts the probable results and all will heartily wish them success.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Catton, *Association Football*, p. 71.

<sup>65</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 March 1881.

What this letter suggests is that at least some of Nottingham's football public were not exclusively attached to either Notts or Forest and were prepared to support either club - or even a new club - if occasion demanded. It is a popular common misconception that followers of football in Nottingham or, indeed, in other towns and cities where conditions were similar, were inevitably divided. Russell, for example, has argued that local rivalry in the Blackburn area faded into insignificance if a team from London came to the town.<sup>66</sup> Many people in Nottingham presumably took the opportunity to watch both teams. Thus it is not surprising to find that Notts supporters joined their Forest counterparts to watch the latter's semi-final with Queen's Park at Derby in 1885.<sup>67</sup>

The interest and excitement prompted by the FA Cup amongst a significant proportion of the Nottinghamshire public was reflected in the increased attendances for Cup-ties. The average attendance for non-FA Cup home matches played by Notts and Forest between 1880 and 1885 was a modest 1,323 whereas the average attendance for home FA Cup-ties was 5,964. Interest was generally higher when Notts or Forest played one of the recognised elite clubs of the day, such as Aston Villa, Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers or Queen's Park and when Notts or Forest played each other, with the average attendance in these games being 4,633.<sup>68</sup> When Notts and Forest were drawn together in the FA Cup in 1883, the press reported that it was 'a great topic of conversation'.<sup>69</sup> Before Notts victory over Bolton Wanderers in 1884, 'there was one topic of conversation amongst many people in both Bolton and Nottingham'.<sup>70</sup> And when Notts drew Queens Park in the 1885 competition,

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<sup>66</sup> Russell D., *Looking North: Northern England and the National Imagination* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 245.

<sup>67</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 20 March 1885. It was not uncommon for supporters in England to attach themselves to more than one local or regional team even as late as the mid twentieth century. See Mellor G., 'The Social and Geographical Make-Up of Football Crowds in the North-West of England, 1946-1962', *The Sports Historian*, 19, 2, 1999, pp. 34-9.

<sup>68</sup> See Appendix 4 for data relating to these figures with regards non Cup-ties, Cup-ties and matches against elite clubs.

<sup>69</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 November 1883.

<sup>70</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 February 1884.

‘people congratulated each other upon having the prospect of witnessing the most exciting tie of the series at home’.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, ‘Cup fever’ was not confined to Nottingham alone. The crowds at big matches were boosted by spectators drawn from ‘surrounding districts’, as, for example, when Notts played Sheffield Wednesday in the fourth round in 1882-83. An excursion train was organised from nearby Derby to bring spectators to the Notts versus Forest second-round tie in the following season. Excursion trains brought in spectators from Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, and Manchester - as well as from Blackburn - when the semi-final between Blackburn Olympic and Queens Park was staged in Nottingham in 1884.<sup>72</sup> Without the lure of the FA Cup – and with no league competitions yet up and running – the public’s interest could wane dramatically. When Notts played Walsall and Forest played Sheffield Wednesday in March 1884, it was observed that, ‘[after] the fever of the cup contests, it mattered little’. Only 800 had turned up for the Forest match.<sup>73</sup> For matches not involving either of the two principal Nottingham clubs the contrast could be stark. ‘After the excitement of the Blackburn Olympic and Queens Park match at Trent Bridge on Saturday’, the *Athletic News* noted, ‘the inter-Association contest between Notts and Surrey on the Park-side ground fell very flat’.<sup>74</sup>

Two matches that highlight the feverish excitement the FA Cup could generate in the early 1880s and attendant controversies linked to professionalisation are the Forest-Sheffield Wednesday and Notts-Aston Villa ties in season 1882-83. When Forest played Sheffield Wednesday, 700 travelled from Sheffield to see the game. A ‘very excited’ crowd saw Forest play an effective passing game; when Forest equalised through Earp, the cheering apparently was said to have lasted for two or three minutes. Before the game, Forest had requested that Malpas not play for

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<sup>71</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 February 1885.

<sup>72</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 February 1883; *Derby Mercury*, 28 November 1883; *Nottingham Daily Express*, *Nottingham Post*, 3 March 1884; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 7 March 1884.

<sup>73</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 March 1884.

<sup>74</sup> *Athletic News*, 6 March 1884.



Sheffield Wednesday, accusing him of being a professional.<sup>75</sup> It was claimed that he had been paid thirty shillings for playing for a team called Olympic FC in Bolton and had also guested for Nottingham side, Trent, who had also included future professional Emmett in their side, when they played at Heeley.<sup>76</sup> Ill-feeling between the clubs continued before the replay; Forest 'objected to the qualification of one or two of the Yorkshiremen' and put up placards seeking information on the status of some Sheffield Wednesday players. Sheffield's response was to accuse Forest of 'ungentlemanly conduct' and complain to the FA.<sup>77</sup> *The Nottingham Post* reported the placard incident in some detail:

Yesterday placards were posted on the walls of Sheffield announcing that Mr. S.W. Widdowson, of Nottingham, would give a reward of £20 to any person or persons who can prove that W. Harrison, of Redcar, W. Betts, of Pyebank, and J. Bentley, of Walkley, were not members of the Sheffield Wednesday Football Club before the 6<sup>th</sup> of last December.<sup>78</sup>

Widdowson and Luntley, of Forest, inspected the Wednesday minute book and found that two of the Wednesday players were not members of the club.<sup>79</sup>

Arguments preceding the Notts-Aston Villa game also reflected anxieties about the rising tide of professionalism in the game and the intensified rivalry between clubs that the FA Cup brought in its wake. The origins of the controversy could be traced back to 1882 when the Nottinghamshire professional cricketer, William Gunn, had played for Notts at Aston Villa, prompting press comment to the effect that his status

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<sup>75</sup> *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 8 January 1883; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 12 January 1883; *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, 8 January 1883; *Nottingham Journal*, 8 January 1883.

<sup>76</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 December 1882.

<sup>77</sup> *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, 15 January 1883; 17 January 1883; *Nottingham Journal*, 15, 20 January 1883; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 19 January 1883; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 20 January 1883; see also Vamplew W., *Pay Up and Play the Game- Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 343.

<sup>78</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 15 January 1883.

<sup>79</sup> Catton J.A.H., *Wickets and Goals: Stories of Play* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1926), pp. 214-5.

as a cricketer should effectively have ruled him out of consideration for an FA Cup-tie, association football being at the time a game for amateurs. 'Argus' had raised the question in *The World* newspaper:

The presence of the professional element in football is, unfortunately, no new thing, and, although much displeasure has been expressed at the hateful thing, it has made its re-appearance thus early in the season. In the match, Notts County v. Aston Villa, played on Saturday, Gunn, the Notts. professional cricketer, made his appearance, of course on the side of the county. It is scarcely probable that he would play without remuneration. With such practices as these in vogue, it is no matter for surprise that the 'Varsities' do not care to enter for the Association Cup.

The *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, which republished Argus's complaint made it clear that it did not agree, stating that Gunn's status as a cricketer was of no relevance to his status as a footballer. Writers like Argus were 'meddling with subjects about the merits of which they know exactly nothing'. The view from Nottinghamshire was that it was 'importing' players that constituted 'the only difficulty in football'.<sup>80</sup>

This dispute raised the level of interest when Notts drew Aston Villa in the FA Cup in the following year. The press reported that, 'The one topic at present engrossing the attention of all those who take an interest in the Association Game is the match to be decided on the Castle Ground this afternoon in the 5<sup>th</sup> Round of the Cup ties between Aston Villa and Notts. Club'. There was, it seemed, an 'extra-ordinary amount of interest in the game'; nearly all other games in Nottingham were cancelled, and the excitement was 'indescribable'.<sup>81</sup> Subsequent reports suggested that the crowd, officially estimated as 10,000, could have been as many as 15,000, including the 5,000 who travelled on 'heavily laden trains from Birmingham' and the many 'sightseers' who broke into the ground. Notts won a 4-3 thriller with local press reports describing it as '[the] most exciting and keenest game ever decided in the

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<sup>80</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 October 1882.

<sup>81</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 March 1883.

neighbourhood of Nottingham'. Aston Villa, as was becoming customary, lodged an objection to the result.<sup>82</sup>

Controversies involving the major Nottingham clubs and rivals from Birmingham and the West Midlands continued to be a source of tension. There was clearly a good deal of bad feeling and this found an outlet in spectator behaviour. Not surprisingly, Notts had resisted the idea that their 1884 semi-final tie against Blackburn Rovers should be played at Aston Villa. They wanted to play in Sheffield or Manchester but this was refused. Forced to play at Aston they were confronted by what the Nottinghamshire press saw as 'rowdiness of the basest type', with the Notts team being booed and hissed by the Birmingham football public. 'The crowd hooted and chaffed Notts County', Catton later recalled, 'and it was said that they even threw sods of turf and packets of yellow ochre at some of the players as they left the ground'.<sup>83</sup> When Forest played Aston Villa at the end of the 1883-84 season in Nottingham, the press unusually reported a 'large police presence'. With 6,000 in attendance, Aston Villa turned up with only seven players, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reporting that the missing four were 'perhaps a little diffident about the reception that rumour said awaited them'. Forest players had to guest for Aston Villa in what became a farce.<sup>84</sup> Friction further intensified when the Birmingham Football Association debated professionalism in November 1884 and their secretary, Crump, stated openly - much to the 'horror' of those present from Nottingham that - there was 'every reason to believe it exists in Nottingham'.<sup>85</sup> When Notts played at Walsall Swifts in the FA Cup in 1885, many travelled to the West Midlands by excursion train from Nottingham. The behaviour of the estimated 4,000 crowd was described as 'neither good tempered nor polite' and 'a few fights were indulged in'. It was after

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<sup>82</sup> *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, 3 March 1883; 5 March 1883; *Nottingham Journal*, 5 March 1883; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 5 March 1883; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 March 1883.

<sup>83</sup> Catton, *Association Football*, p. 70.

<sup>84</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 April 1884.

<sup>85</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 November 1884.

this that Notts were 'hotted' at by Birmingham 'gentlemen' when they played Queen's Park at Derby.<sup>86</sup>

The souring of relations between the top clubs in Birmingham and Nottingham seemed to arise directly from FA Cup-related disputes over the vexed question of professionalism in the early- to mid-1880s. Prior to that date, footballing relations between East and West Midlands had been reasonably amicable. Forest had networked with Birmingham sides since the late 1870s and, despite the bad feeling that had arisen, were toasted and thanked for their participation at the presentation of the Wednesbury Charity Cup, a competition in which they had regularly competed, in 1884.<sup>87</sup> The controversy, though intense while it lasted, did not appear to do any permanent damage. It did not deter Notts Rangers from taking part in the Birmingham Senior Cup in 1884-85 and supplying the association with players for representative matches. Forest also took part in the Birmingham Senior Cup between the 1887-88 and 1889-90 seasons whilst Notts Olympic took part between the 1887-88 and 1890-91. Most significant, however, was that Priestley of Notts Rangers was heavily involved with the Birmingham FA from at least May 1886 until the end of the 1892-93 season, serving as a council member, a member of various sub-committees and as a referee.<sup>88</sup> What this suggests is that the breach in good relations between Nottingham and Birmingham, albeit of relatively short duration, had arisen directly out of the intensified rivalry that the FA Cup seemed to encourage. It was also significant that the controversy had focused on the status of an individual player, William Gunn, whose professional status as cricketer, those in Nottinghamshire believed, should not have affected his status as a footballer.

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<sup>86</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 January 1885; 6 March 1885.

<sup>87</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 June 1884.

<sup>88</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 14 January 1885; *Birmingham FA Minute Books*, Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham City Library, MS519/1; MS519/2; MS519/3. Priestley appears to have severed his connection with debt-ridden Notts Rangers for the 1891-92 season. He is listed as being affiliated to Notts Olympic for the 1892-93 season though, by then, no Nottinghamshire teams were in the Birmingham FA.

## The Clubs, the County FA and Professionalism

Taylor has pointed out that the creation of local Football Associations (FAs) was reflective of the way in which football spread. After the Football Association had been established in 1863, the powerful Sheffield and Birmingham FAs followed in 1867 and 1875 respectively. Other local FAs to be formed in the 1870s were Staffordshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Durham and Northumberland.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, both Taylor and Russell have demonstrated how the cup competitions of local FAs boosted the game by generating interest, excitement and local and civic pride.<sup>90</sup> Nottinghamshire was unusual, however, in that it already had two well-established and powerful clubs long before the Nottinghamshire Football Association (Notts FA) was formed in December 1882 and this led to a power struggle in the county. The Notts club, having come close to folding in 1881, were primarily concerned with establishing and maintaining financial viability. Forest were more secure - and more co-operative - but were keen to pursue their ambitions within a wider national framework. This meant that their interests, especially those of Notts, did not always coincide with those of the Notts FA which was anxious to ensure that its prime competition, the Notts Cup, was a success and that the representative sides that it put into the field performed creditably against other county sides. The intention here is to explore the relationship between the two leading clubs and the Notts FA as it attempted to exert its influence over them after 1882.

The difficulties that were to sour the relationship between the local association and Nottinghamshire's two major clubs were quickly evident. In October 1883, the Notts FA played a Lincolnshire XI at Parkside in Lenton, Forest's recently-opened ground. A team dominated by Forest players won 10-3 in front of a poor crowd. At the same time, a respectable 2,500 spectators were watching Notts beat Wednesbury 3-0. It was the same story a week later when a Notts FA team beat Hancock's XI 6-2 while

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<sup>89</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 41.

<sup>90</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, pp. 19-20; Taylor, *Association Game*, pp. 41-2.

Notts were beating Attercliffe by the same score, again in front of 2,500.<sup>91</sup> Later that month, when Notts FA were due to play London, a prestigious fixture, Notts were 'disinclined to assist' and instead tried to hastily arrange a match for themselves. The Notts FA side lost their match with London by 3-0 and at the association meeting, Sam Widdowson, as vice-president, initiated a discussion of the problem of Notts arranging games that clashed with county representative matches.<sup>92</sup>

Further problems arose when Notts pulled out of the inaugural Notts Cup competition in 1883. Though remaining affiliated with the Notts FA and with their first round tie with Pioneers predicted to be one-sided, Notts did not feel the competition worthy of playing in. It lacked the prestige of the already well-established equivalent competitions in Lancashire, Sheffield and Birmingham and, unlike the FA Cup, was clearly not a priority for the Notts club. Thus, from the start, the Notts Cup was somewhat compromised. Moreover, when the first final was played, as has already been noted, three Notts players - William Gunn, Herbert Emmitt and Harry Moore - controversially guested for Trent. Morley, on behalf of the Wanderers club, another junior Notts club like the Pioneers, wrote a letter of complaint to the Notts FA, focusing, in particular, on Emmitt and Moore, the letter subsequently being published in the local evening press.

Dear Sir, - On behalf of the above-named club I write, firstly, to protest against H. Moore for playing with the Trent club on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup> in the Notts. Association Cup competition, for being a professional player, engaged by the Notts. Football Club; secondly, that H. Moore and H. Emmett (*sic*) being members of the Notts. Club *did* scratch to The Pioneers in the first round of this competition, showing that they did actually take part in the competition, and are therefore

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<sup>91</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 12 October 1883.

<sup>92</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 27 November 1883; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 November 1883.

disqualified from playing with the Trent Club, - I remain,  
yours faithfully, C. MORLEY<sup>93</sup>

What this meant was that the first Notts FA Cup Final was something of an embarrassment for the county association, especially as nobody from Notts turned up at the relevant meeting. This embarrassment was compounded on account of 'disgraceful behaviour' of some spectators at the final; there was a pitch invasion and some of the Forest team had been manhandled after they refused to play extra time.<sup>94</sup> Interestingly, when professionalism was legalised in July 1885, Emmit and Moore, along with Gunn were three of the six players immediately registered as professionals by Notts.<sup>95</sup>

Notts did seem a little more committed the following season, however, though Trent and Pioneers, along with Strollers and Vernon Rangers, had by then left the county FA. Notts predictably reached the final with Forest, though this time Forest dropped out, refusing to play on the date that had been arranged. Notts played Preston North End instead, raising £67 for the Notts FA. However, nobody from Notts could be bothered to turn up at the end of season Notts FA meeting to receive the gold medals that they had been awarded. At this meeting the continuing problem of getting players for representative matches was discussed. In October 1884, Notts had refused to release any players for the Notts FA game with Renfrewshire choosing instead to have all their best players available for their match with Blackburn Olympic.<sup>96</sup> They did, however, allow players to play in the Notts FA versus London game later that month. Similar problems occurred the following January. Whilst Notts were beating Acton 5-0 in front of a disappointing crowd of between 800 and 1,000, the Notts FA were losing 5-2 to Cambridgeshire in front of even fewer. Despite

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<sup>93</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 18 March 1884.

<sup>94</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 March 1884.

<sup>95</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 March 1884; Warsop K. and Brown T., *The Definitive Notts County* (Beeston: Tony Brown, 2007), p. 48.

<sup>96</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 October 1884.

these poor crowds, however, receipts from the Notts Cup finals meant finances were satisfactory.<sup>97</sup>

An explanation of Notts' lack of commitment to the Notts FA rests on an understanding of the club's recent history. Disastrous losses were incurred when the club staged athletics sports events in 1867 and 1869 and these were still being paid off twelve years later.<sup>98</sup> At times, it had seemed very likely that the club would close. In February 1872, the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* had announced the 'imminent demise of the Notts Club'. Towards the end of 1881, Notts having lost 10-1 to both Blackburn Rovers and Queens Park, a crisis meeting was held at the Lion Hotel where a rousing speech from committee member Arthur Ashwell, backed by playing stalwarts Arthur and Harry Cursham persuaded members to soldier on rather than wind up the club. This particular crisis in the club's affairs appears to have prompted Notts' officials to adopt a more business-like approach with the focus on finding a suitable and permanent home ground, attracting and retaining quality players, and arranging an attractive programme of fixtures.

By the time that the Nottinghamshire FA was established in 1882 Notts were already moving in this direction. After playing at the Park Hollow, Meadows Cricket Club, Beeston Cricket Club and Castle Cricket Club, the club was in the process of establishing itself at Trent Bridge, eventually moving there in 1883 (see Appendix 3 for locations).<sup>99</sup> Notts were now recruiting players on playing merit rather than with reference to their social background. These included future professionals, Gunn and Emmitt, who first appeared in Notts colours soon after the 1881 crisis meeting. Whereas, in the 1870s, socially-exclusive Notts had been reluctant to play Forest because they were not of the right social class, the club now aimed to play the best sides, such as those from Lancashire, incurring the displeasure of the FA in 1884 for

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<sup>97</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 17 July 1885.

<sup>98</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 February 1884.

<sup>99</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p.17.



seeking fixtures with Bolton Wanderers who were suspected of having already embraced professionalism, albeit covertly.<sup>100</sup> Having set itself on this new course, the club's interests were clearly at odds with the county FA. Notts, therefore, were reluctant to play one-sided Notts Cup fixtures in front of paltry crowds at the direction of the new county association; neither were they willing to release their best players for representative matches when they needed them to play against illustrious opponents from Lancashire and elsewhere.

Though Forest, like Notts, were seeking to establish themselves at a new home in the early 1880s - they played at Parkside in Lenton from September 1883 after spells at Forest Fields and Trent Bridge (see Appendix 3 for locations) - the club's early years had been less traumatic than those experienced by Notts. Thus, though its interests did not always coincide with those of the Notts FA, relations were more amicable and they were well represented at meetings. Forest stalwarts Walter Lymbery and Sam Widdowson made their presence felt in a variety of roles, including secretary, chairman and vice-chairman, at meetings between 1883 and 1885. Unlike Notts, Forest seemed amenable to working within the new structure which had, after all, been sanctioned by the FA. Indeed, by 1885, comment in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* suggested that Forest exercised a significant influence within the Notts FA.<sup>101</sup> There was, however, a recognition that the newly efficient, focused and well-run Notts club had in many important respects succeeded in establishing an advantage over Forest by the mid-1880s. In a report of Forest's end-of-season meeting in May 1884, 'A Correspondent' of the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* advised that:

It would be...idle to disguise the fact that the affairs of the Notts. Club have been managed with a skill and in a business-like fashion which has been by no means so remarkably evident in previous seasons. A selection was made in the gentleman appointed to the post of

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<sup>100</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 October 1884.

<sup>101</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 March 1883; 30 November 1883; 28 March 1884; 16 January 1885.

paid secretary, and backed up with a wonderful winter for weather, Notts have drawn all the public patronage to their doings. This same popularity's of a fickle character, however, and with a little good fortune the Forest might again occupy their old position.<sup>102</sup>

The rivalry between the two senior clubs was undoubtedly fierce at times. Supporters may in some circumstances have been happy to back either or both in Cup-ties against opponents from Lancashire or Birmingham, but local derbies tended to arouse 'angry passions', as in October 1883.<sup>103</sup> In general, the local press was well aware that what the *Nottingham Evening Post* referred to as 'healthy rivalry between two good clubs' was something in which town and county could take pride as long as 'the behaviour of supporters' remained within reasonable bounds.<sup>104</sup>

Though Notts may have been attracting a greater share of 'public patronage' than Forest by the mid-1880s, the position occupied by both clubs in Nottinghamshire football circles was secure. It was clear by then that they had no rivals of comparable standing. The inferiority of other clubs in Nottinghamshire, even those that seem to have been firmly established and clearly ambitious, can be demonstrated by what happened when they attempted to play sides from outside the county. Notts Rangers could only attract 150 spectators for their Birmingham Cup tie-against Wellington in 1881 and when they attempted a game against an illustrious Lancashire opponent, they were trounced 9-0 by Bolton.<sup>105</sup> When Trent attempted to branch out, they lost 8-1 at Walsall. Similarly, when other Nottinghamshire clubs, such as Notts Rangers, Notts Wanderers and Notts Olympic, attempted a run in the FA Cup in 1884-85, all were beaten in the first round. The same fate befell Newark and Mellors in 1885-86. Moreover, even if there was an attractive fixture between two local clubs on offer, it was clear that 'public patronage' was more likely to be attracted to either Notts or

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<sup>102</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 May 1884.

<sup>103</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 October 1883.

<sup>104</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 22 October 1883.

<sup>105</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 30 December 1881.

Forest if they were playing at home. A poor crowd at Castle for Notts Rangers versus Notts Wanderers in 1884 was blamed on what the press described as the 'main attraction', Notts playing Darwen on the same day.<sup>106</sup>

Furthermore, the relatively high status of Notts and Forest in and around Nottingham was reinforced by the capacity of these two clubs to recruit the most talented local players. If a player did shine for another club, such as Earp at Beeston, they would soon be tempted away by either Forest or Notts.<sup>107</sup> 'Correspondent' in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in December 1883 observed that:

The two big clubs...absorb nearly all the best players which the county produces. Skilful opponents of the game are attracted from the other organisations by the opportunities that are offered of playing against the strongest eleven such districts as Blackburn, Birmingham, Glasgow and Sheffield can produce.

It was clear that he believed that money was also a factor. 'There may be other inducements', he explained, 'but if so, they are not of a character to make publicity eminently desirable'.<sup>108</sup> At the FA's 'special general meeting' where professionalism was debated in January 1885 Ball of Notts Rangers complained that it was unfair that clubs stole away the better players and how his club had 'struggled on unaided'.<sup>109</sup> It was also significant that, when Notts FA representative sides were chosen, players attached to Notts and Forest were in the majority, despite the Notts club's initially lukewarm attitude to such honours as the county association could bestow. To summarise, it was clear by the mid-1880s that the two major clubs held the advantage in their relationship with the Notts FA. This was demonstrated by a *Nottinghamshire Guardian* article in January 1884 which raised the possibility of Forest not entering the county cup, thus denying the local association and the

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<sup>106</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 31 October 1884.

<sup>107</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 November 1878.

<sup>108</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 December 1883.

<sup>109</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 January 1885.

county's smaller clubs an important source of revenue. 'Talk of Forest not entering the Notts Cup', it observed, 'That would be a loss for teams like Rangers and Swifts who would not then be able to pit themselves against England's finest'.<sup>110</sup> Rangers had lost 7-0 to Forest in the Notts Cup earlier that season - a demoralising defeat perhaps - but this was not the point. Forest's stature was such that the club was thanked by the Notts FA in May 1884 for standing by the association 'at the most critical point of its career' and for entering that season's Notts Cup because, without Forest, it 'would have been a comparative failure'.<sup>111</sup>

### **'It works in Cricket, why not Football?' Nottinghamshire and Professionalism**

The tensions that were created by ambitious Lancashire clubs adopting covert, albeit increasingly blatant, professionalism methods to achieve success would lead to the threat of a breakaway British Football Association by around 40 clubs in the North of England in the autumn of 1884. This followed efforts by the Football Association, where the influence of the gentleman amateur was still strong, to ensure that the FA Cup would be contested only by *bona fide* amateurs. As Morris has observed perceptively in his recent history of the amateur game:

The professional footballer ... and the men who paid him and protected him ... [had] gone their own way. Football, therefore, had to develop new forms of control if it were not to pass from the control of the gentleman amateur. It fell to the Football Association to find these new strategies, not only because it claimed to be the governing body of all English football, but because it was the FA's own 'flagship' competition, the FA Challenge Cup, which had precipitated direct

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<sup>110</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 January 1884.

<sup>111</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 May 1884; *Athletic News*, 16 April 1884.

confrontation between amateur and professional in the mid-1880s.<sup>112</sup>

After a series of meetings aimed at resolving the issue, a compromise was reached in July 1885 whereby the FA effectively recognised and legalised professionalism but with 'stringent conditions'. As Morris has noted, 'Those two words, "stringent conditions" were to remain central to the issue of amateur status in English football for the next ninety years'.<sup>113</sup>

Russell has provided the most detailed account to date of how this was achieved.<sup>114</sup> He argues that in January 1885 when division was at its most critical point, 'Most press commentators agreed that clubs from Birmingham (Aston Villa apart), Nottingham and Sheffield were universally opposed to legalization'.<sup>115</sup> The argument to be developed in this section suggests that Nottinghamshire's attitude to the legalisation of professionalism and its role in the debates of 1884-85 was more complex. Russell is right in arguing that Nottinghamshire initially supported amateurism as the prevailing view in county football circles was generally hostile to the importation of players yet the situation was actually more nuanced than being simply pro-amateur. In determining its position in this debate, the county came to rely heavily on Walter Lymbery, a prominent lace manufacturer, who became secretary of the Nottinghamshire FA in October 1884, and its principal representative at the meetings of the FA. Clearly his own man, his appointment followed an unhappy period when he had served as one of two joint secretaries, an arrangement he refused to continue. Lymbery had close connections with cricket as well as football. He had been a Forest player, captain, secretary, vice-president and

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<sup>112</sup> Morris, T., *In a Class of Their Own: A History of English Amateur Football* (Sheffield: Chequered Flag Publishing, 2015), pp. 63-71.

<sup>113</sup> Morris, *In a Class of their Own*, p. 69; also Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years: the Untold Story* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 216-217; Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 50.

<sup>114</sup> Russell D., 'From Evil to Expedient: The Legalization of Professionalism in English Football, 1884-85', in Wagg S. (ed.), *Myths and Milestones in the History of Sport*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), pp. 32-56.

<sup>115</sup> Russell, 'Evil to Expedient', pp. 44-5.

chairman but was also involved with Nottingham Forest Cricket Club, thus embodying the links between football and cricket in Nottinghamshire, a factor that was to prove very important.<sup>116</sup> Lymbery had refereed the London-Nottinghamshire game at Kennington Oval in 1883 and had already attended a number of meetings at the FA, including a conference of secretaries held in Glasgow in March 1884. The Notts FA was delighted to be able to appoint a secretary who was 'well known throughout the country'.<sup>117</sup> Lymbery was well respected both locally and nationally and could be expected to provide influential leadership.

There is evidence that Lymbery was providing this even before he took on sole responsibility as secretary and that the Nottinghamshire cricket connection was already helping to determine the county FA's position in English football's great debate. Professionals had played cricket alongside amateurs for Nottinghamshire since the 1860s, Alfred Shaw (1864 to 1886) and Arthur Shrewsbury (1875 to 1902) enjoyed particularly successful careers as professional cricketers.<sup>118</sup> William Gunn, Herbert Emmitt, and Mordecai Sherwin played first-class cricket for Nottinghamshire as professionals in the early 1880s and were among the first six players registered as professionals by Notts County Football Club in 1885. Arthur and Harry Cursham and John Dixon, also played for Notts first elevens at both football and cricket in the same period.<sup>119</sup> Thus, when in March 1884 it was agreed that Lymbery, the Notts FA representative at the next Football Association meeting, should oppose any attempt to exclude professional cricketers from participation in the association game it simply

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<sup>116</sup> *Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express*, 17 February 1872; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 22 August 1884; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 September 1882; [http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~lymbery/cricket\\_intro\\_page.html](http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~lymbery/cricket_intro_page.html) (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>117</sup> *The Times*, 5 November 1883; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 22 February 1884; 14 October 1884; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 17 October 1884.

<sup>118</sup> Wynne-Thomas P., *The History of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club* (London: Christopher Helm, 1992), pp. 62-116.

<sup>119</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 16.

reflected an awareness of the well-established arrangements in Nottinghamshire cricket where amateurs and professionals had played together very successfully.<sup>120</sup>

This pointed to a possible solution to the difficulties that the gentlemen of the FA were confronted by in dealing with professionalism. English county cricket by the late nineteenth century had largely come to terms with professionalism or, at least, had found ways of managing the relationship between the amateur and the professional. In Yorkshire, as Light has pointed out, the county team, though always captained by a gentleman amateur, was 'dominated by professional players, who were produced and often subsequently employed by the myriad of clubs that had been established in communities across the county'. Moreover, matches 'were still staged on a semi-commercial basis at independently owned grounds in the West Riding where resources were maximised to increase revenue'. Light highlights that this 'took on a distinctively different complexion in the region than it did elsewhere in the country'. The emphasis was on the pursuit of success and the profits that came with it.<sup>121</sup> Thus cricket in Yorkshire, both at county and club level, had developed an advanced commercial ethos similar to that which would have been found in the more ambitious Lancashire football clubs of the early 1880s.<sup>122</sup>

In Nottinghamshire, however, as professional cricketer and footballer Richard Daft observed, different attitudes prevailed.<sup>123</sup> Compared to Yorkshire there was a more even balance of gentlemen amateurs and professional players in the county side. At the same time, however, it was clear that the gentlemen remained in control. In 1881, when Shaw and Shrewsbury had sought improvements in their contracts, Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club had resisted them, their valuable contribution to the success of the team notwithstanding.<sup>124</sup> As Hill has argued, '[the] pursuit of

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<sup>120</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 26 March 1884.

<sup>121</sup> Light R.F., 'Cricket's Forgotten Past: A Social and Cultural History of the Game in the West Riding of Yorkshire 1820–1870', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, June 2008, p. 265.

<sup>122</sup> See Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp. 177-8.

<sup>123</sup> Daft R., *Kings of Cricket* (Bolton: Tillotson and Son, 1893), pp. 14, 152.

<sup>124</sup> Wynne-Thomas, *History of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club*, pp. 84-6.

commercial profit through cricket was secondary to the maintenance of a club ethos at Trent Bridge'.<sup>125</sup> Cricket was deeply embedded in the sporting culture of the county, perhaps even more so than football, and by the mid-1880s, appeared to have found a way of maintaining the *status quo* while simultaneously acknowledging professionalism and containing it. At the close of the third season after professionalism had been legalised by the FA, Tinsley Lindley (Forest, Cambridge University, Corinthians and England), whose footballing and social credentials were impeccable and whose views might be expected to carry weight in Nottingham, expressed the opinion that 'if properly managed, I don't think professionalism a trouble. You see, at cricket they don't define the distinctions so badly as at football, and the amateur and professional have each their place'.<sup>126</sup> The experience of cricket was, after all, particularly influential in Nottinghamshire and it helped to shape the way its football leaders and its newspapers approached the crisis that engulfed the FA in 1884-85.

In February 1884, Lymbury was on his own at a Notts FA meeting in arguing that professionalism be legalised but that professional clubs be banned from the FA Cup, a motion that was defeated by a majority of one.<sup>127</sup> It might be suggested that this particular attempt to resolve 'the professional difficulty' - though it might have gone some way towards satisfying the gentlemanly amateur faction - failed to gather momentum because it would not have been in the interests of the Lancashire faction or of those amateur clubs who would thereby be denied attractive cup-ties against professional opposition. Less than year later Lymbury supported the legalisation of professionalism subject to the stringent conditions then being proposed by the Football Association. How is this to be explained? What were the circumstances that

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<sup>125</sup> Hill J., 'Leisure', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 535.

<sup>126</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette*, 24 March 1888.

<sup>127</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 22 February 1884.



drove Lymbery, the Nottinghamshire FA and its clubs towards the centre ground of compromise?

In part, movement in this direction was prompted by what was happening elsewhere. Though the crisis of 1884-85 had originally been prompted by Upton Park's protest against Preston North End after an FA Cup-tie in January 1884 it was the FA's attempt in October 1884 to introduce new measures to put an end to the perceived evil of importation 'that was the defining moment in the protracted debate'. The FA proposed barring entry to the Challenge Cup to clubs which played fixtures against any club that used 'imported players' who had not been approved by the FA committee or could be proved to have 'remunerated their players in any way beyond that permitted'. It was intended to apply this regulation to players registered by clubs since the beginning of the 1882-83 season, which would clearly have caused havoc in Lancashire. In addition, club secretaries were required to submit a formidable amount of paperwork if players were 'of different nationality' or from 'another district', giving details of residence, occupation and wages. This prompted the Lancashire clubs to contemplate breaking away from the FA and brought the British Football Association into the picture. It was this threat that forced the gentlemen amateurs at the FA into hasty retreat and within weeks it had formed a sub-committee to reconsider the whole question 'of professional and imported players'. Its members included Lymbery alongside Smith (Derbyshire), Crump (Birmingham), Hughes (Cheshire), Slaney (Staffordshire), Beardshaw (Sheffield), Bette (Old Harrovians), Jackson (Finchley), Lawrie (Queen's Park) and Forrest, Suddell and Gregson (Lancashire). It resolved on 12 November, by seven votes to four that 'it was now expedient to legalise professionalism under stringent conditions'.<sup>128</sup> This was the position that Lymbery supported at the critical FA meetings in January, March and July 1885 which finally resolved the contentious issue.

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<sup>128</sup> *Athletic News*, 12 November 1884; Russell, 'Evil to Expedient', pp. 36-7.

Nottinghamshire football, however, though it eventually fell into line, did not simply swim with the tide of football opinion. It took some time before the county were persuaded to fall in behind Lymbery. In part this was because of the importance attached to recruiting players locally; clubs - like many in Lancashire - that brought players in from Scotland and elsewhere were looked upon unfavourably. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* had often commented critically on Lancashire clubs filling their sides with Scottish imports. In an ironic rant following Notts' unsuccessful protest against Blackburn Rovers importing Inglis from Glasgow and paying him excessive expenses, it called for 'Notts to get a Queens Park forward, Forest to fraternise with Dumbarton, Nottingham Rangers with Pollockshields and Long Eaton with Hibs'.<sup>129</sup> In January 1884 Notts, the most commercially-minded of the county's two major clubs, were happy to arrange a fixture with Bolton Association, who had been recently formed as a protest against the 'win at all hazards' approach of Bolton Wanderers.<sup>130</sup> When Forest played Sheffield Wednesday in January 1885 the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* took great pleasure in proclaiming them to be 'purely local and thoroughly amateur'.<sup>131</sup> Perhaps this explains why, as late as December 1884, the *Athletic News* could describe the Notts FA as anti-professional.<sup>132</sup> There was also the question of showing solidarity with the FA, the very existence of which was threatened by the breakaway movement. In November 1884, indicating support for what Lymbery amongst others was now proposing, 'Mercutio' in the *Nottingham Daily Express* explained:

As I have on a previous occasion pointed out, the British Association by no means appeals to the Midlands, and if the Football Association will only legalize professionalism after the manner so much desired, all their popularity will be at once returned, and there will be no need to divide the government of the glorious winter game.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 March 1883.

<sup>130</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 January 1884.

<sup>131</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 January 1885.

<sup>132</sup> *Athletic News*, 10 December 1884.

<sup>133</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 8 November 1884.

Yet, if there was no appetite for the breakaway movement in Nottinghamshire, there were other factors that would have made the middle ground attractive.

When the British Football Association met in Blackburn in October 1884, the claim was made that professionalism was not confined to Lancashire but was advancing across the country.

Professionalism in football exists on every hand, as it does in almost every other class of sport; the same cry comes from Scotland, from Lancashire, Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield, aye and even the South; then why not make the way open for a player to come out in his own true colours.<sup>134</sup>

Whatever the truth of this accusation as far as Nottingham is concerned it is clear that there seemed to be little objection *in principle* to professionalism. Notts, as has been seen, were already selecting players who were paid to play cricket in the summer as professionals employed by the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club. This had been the cause of the dispute when Gunn was chosen to play against Aston Villa in 1882.<sup>135</sup> As for importing players even Forest, seen by the Nottinghamshire press as more amateur than Notts at this time, pushed the boundaries on occasions. Like Notts, they supported the Bolton Association team by playing them in October 1884 but included Wilkinson, recently acquired from Chesterfield side Spital, who could only loosely be described as local.<sup>136</sup> The *Derby Mercury* was able to state though that, whilst Forest would have to get permission to play Wilkinson and the Notts player Stuart Macrae should be asked searching questions about his wages, Nottingham clubs were fortunate that the FA was more concerned about importations than it was paying players:

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<sup>134</sup> Lewis R.W., 'The Development of Professional Football in Lancashire, 1870-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Lancaster, 1993, p. 153.

<sup>135</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 October 1882.

<sup>136</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 October 1884.

It is just a little lucky for some of the Nottingham organisations that the movement of the Association is apparently directed against imported players, rather than against local men, who are known to receive a weekly sum for their services.<sup>137</sup>

This suggests that it was not necessarily surprising to find the Notts FA and its senior clubs eventually lining up with the compromise solution that emerged in 1884-85. It may have kept its distance from the British Football Association but it was not especially attracted to the pro-amateur position supported by the likes of Jackson of the London FA and Crump of the Birmingham FA.<sup>138</sup> Indeed, Crump was criticised in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* for voting against professionalism at the Football Association meeting in January 1885; his 'arguments were as flimsy as a gossamer web'. Crump's principal reason for opposing professionalism was that to do so would be to encourage gambling but this was dismissed; 'Mr Crump assumes a blissful ignorance of betting'.<sup>139</sup> By this advanced stage in the crisis the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* was prepared to cite arguments in favour of professionalism, highlighting baseball in the United States and lacrosse in Canada as examples of where it had been introduced successfully.<sup>140</sup> 'Mercurio' of the *Nottingham Daily Express* was also a supporter of legalisation with some reservations.<sup>141</sup> Most significant, however, was the *Nottinghamshire Guardian's* claim that if professionalism worked in cricket, it could also work in football. 'We have professional cricketers in England', it noted in January 1885, 'and who would say they as a body have debased the best of summer pastimes?'<sup>142</sup>

Nottinghamshire delegates to the series of meetings held by the FA to resolve the issue in 1885 gradually fell in behind the compromise position that Lybery had

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<sup>137</sup> *Derby Mercury*, 29 October 1884.

<sup>138</sup> Morris, *In a Class of Their Own*, pp. 68-70; Russell, 'Evil to Expedient', p. 36.

<sup>139</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 January 1885.

<sup>140</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 January 1885.

<sup>141</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 17 January 1885.

<sup>142</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 January 1885.

helped to formulate in November 1884. At the first of these meetings, in January, Sudell of Preston North End, supported by Gregson of Blackburn Rovers, won over some doubters by urging the FA to face the reality of the situation. Catton later recalled:

‘Gentlemen’, said he, ‘Preston are all professionals, but if you refuse to legalise them they will be amateurs. We shall all be amateurs, and you cannot prove us otherwise’.<sup>143</sup>

At this meeting the Nottinghamshire representatives - from Notts, Forest, Notts Olympic and Notts Wanderers - voted with Lymbery. Only Ball of Notts Rangers opposed the compromise solution supporting Crump’s view that ‘the introduction of professionalism will be the ruin of the pastime’, his stance reflecting his club’s close ties with the Birmingham FA.<sup>144</sup> 113 voted for change with 108 against, but this fell short of the two-thirds needed to win.<sup>145</sup> Dix, of Sheffield, then proposed an amendment urging tight controls on importing. This was seconded by Proctor from Nottinghamshire reflecting strong anti-importation sentiments in the county but, again, the two-thirds majority was not achieved.<sup>146</sup> Proctor was vice-president at the Notts FA and regularly chaired Notts FA meetings. It was Proctor, incidentally, who had been joint secretary with Lymbery at the Notts FA before Lymbery took on the role solely.<sup>147</sup>

At this point, the FA could neither legalise professionalism nor tighten controls on it. When the FA considered the issue again in March, a resolution that professionalism should be sanctioned ‘under stringent conditions’, proposed by

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<sup>143</sup> Catton, *Association Football*, p. 10.

<sup>144</sup> *Birmingham FA Minute Books*, September 1885 to September 1893, Wolfson Centre for Archival Research, Birmingham City Library, MS519/1; MS519/2; MS519/3; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 January 1885.

<sup>145</sup> *Athletic News*, 27 January 1885; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 January 1885.

<sup>146</sup> *Athletic News*, 27 January 1885.

<sup>147</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 16 March 1883; 7 September 1883; 14 September 1883; 30 November 1883; 28 December 1883; 10 October 1884; 17 October 1884; 19 December 1884; 16 July 1886; 30 July 1886,

Gregson and seconded by Sudell was passed, with many who had previously been hostile to change - Betts of Old Harrovians, Morley of Blackburn Rovers, Jackson of the London FA and Alcock of Wanderers - speaking in its favour. Again the necessary two-third majority was not secured and Lymbery was among those recruited to a further sub-committee that would report to the next meeting that would discuss the issue in July.<sup>148</sup>

By the time of the deciding meeting in July 1885, the opposition to legalising professionalism was gradually melting away. Russell's analysis of the critical vote at which the necessary two-thirds majority was finally achieved indicates that 'the majority, and perhaps even all the London clubs, 'voted in favour of legalisation'.<sup>149</sup> Certainly, the delegates in attendance from Nottinghamshire - from the Notts FA, Notts, Forest and Notts Wanderers - all voted in favour.<sup>150</sup> The stringent conditions were that all professional should be registered, that professionals should not be allowed to sit on club committees, and that in FA Cup-ties, players had to have been either born within six miles of their club headquarters or have been in residence there for a period of two years. These new arrangements were very similar to those that applied in county cricket.<sup>151</sup> It was no doubt significant that Alcock, who as secretary had steered the FA through these difficult waters, was also an important figure in cricket administration, serving as secretary of the Surrey County Cricket Club. Given that cricket was so deeply embedded in Nottinghamshire's sporting culture it seems likely that this was an underlying factor in persuading Lymbery and other delegates from the county that the proposed compromise would help to promote harmony between amateur and professional. This is what their experience

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<sup>148</sup> *Birmingham Daily Post*, 24 March 1885; *London Standard*, 24 March 1885; *Surrey Mirror*, 28 March 1885.

<sup>149</sup> Russell, 'Evil to Expedient', pp. 48-9.

<sup>150</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 24 July 1885.

<sup>151</sup> On the similarities between the arrangements in county cricket and football see Martin-Jenkins C. and Warwick F., *The Wisden Book of County Cricket 1873-1980* (London: Queen Anne Press, 1981), p. 17; also see Mason, *Association Football*, p. 70 Williams, G., *The Code War: English Football under the Historical Spotlight* (Harefield: Yore, 1994), p. 93; Booth, *Father of Modern Sport*, p. 190; Morris, *In a Class of Their Own*, pp. 70-71.

would have taught them. It was well known that Emmit, for example, who served both Nottinghamshire cricket and Notts football with distinction, had ‘the same unvarying character, whether he has been a professional or an amateur’.<sup>152</sup>

Moreover, whereas, it was often said Lancashire liked to think, ‘What Lancashire says today, England says tomorrow,’ the compromise arrived at probably suited the Notts FA and its major clubs very well.<sup>153</sup> The breakaway Association was stopped and, as a sign of good intent, Preston North End were thrown out of the FA Cup in the following season for breaking the residence qualification rule. Some things did not change, however, with the legalisation of professionalism. Notts claimed at an end of season meeting in May 1885 that they would ‘not fail to preserve their efforts to win the international trophy’ [the FA Cup] which drew entrants from England, Wales and Scotland in 1885 and Ireland too in 1886.<sup>154</sup> When Forest were knocked out of the FA Cup by Staveley in December 1885, they duly protested that their opponents had been time-wasting.<sup>155</sup> The pressure of wanting to win the FA Cup continued to raise the emotional temperature and lead to ungracious defeat.

## Conclusion

In the early 1880s winning the FA Cup, and all the glory that came with it, seems to have been what clubs, players, press and supporters desired above all else. Teams from the North and Midlands especially were now seen to represent in some way the communities in which they were based thus creating a sense of attachment which could be very powerful. The FA Cup gave the opportunity for a local side to be national (even international) champions. With civic pride at stake there was great

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<sup>152</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 March 1889.

<sup>153</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 21 November 1884. This was a party cry at the General Election and was related to how Lancashire was trying to affect football during this period.

<sup>154</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 19 June 1885.

<sup>155</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 January 1886.

excitement as the rounds of the FA Cup progressed as supporters longed for their club to be victorious. It seemed to possess the capacity to turn spectators into fans. Notts and Forest became ambitious clubs, making success in the FA Cup a priority and treating their local FA as if it were an inconvenience. In these conditions it is difficult to underestimate the importance of Blackburn Olympic's victory over Old Etonians in the 1883 FA Cup final. It was a pivotal moment in English football's history, opening the door to professionalization and increasing friction between the gentlemen amateurs who had controlled the FA since 1863 and the new clubs, especially those based in Lancashire, for whom sport was becoming a branch of commercial entertainment supplied by paid performers, some of whom were recruited from far afield.

It is important, however, not to overestimate the influence of Lancashire, critical though it was, in shaping the game and the rules under which it was played. FA secretary Alcock's influence in ushering in a compromise solution to 'the professional difficulty' was clearly critical, not least in persuading the middle-class clubs clustered in London and the Home Counties that change was inevitable but that it could be controlled. In this respect his position as secretary of the Surrey County Cricket Club meant that he was a man who could be trusted. 'Perhaps', as Holt has observed, 'Alcock had learned something from cricket in his handling of the issue in soccer in the 1880s: professionalism was all right provided professionals knew their place'.<sup>156</sup> The prospect of such an outcome was enough to win support from Lymbery and other leading figures in Nottinghamshire football circles.

From the start of the controversy over professionalism in English football, the prevailing view in Nottinghamshire was that there should be no discrimination against professional cricketers who wanted to play football as amateurs. As the controversy over Gunn's appearance for Notts at Aston Villa demonstrated, this could not necessarily be taken for granted at the time. In 1883, for example, the

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<sup>156</sup> Holt, *Sport and The British*, p.107; see also Russell, 'Evil to Expedient', p. 47.



Amateur Athletic Association ruled that a professional cricketer could not compete in track and field sports as an amateur.<sup>157</sup> It helped that cricket and football in Nottinghamshire had very close links and that these were embodied in Lymbery who was able to play a significant, if minor role, in the FA's affairs as it struggled to find a solution that all contending parties could accept during 1884-85. Lymbery and the FA secretary had much in common. Throughout the professionalism debate, Nottinghamshire's Lymbery and others could justify the view that professionalism should be legalised subject to 'stringent conditions' by pointing to their county cricket club where such arrangements had operated very successfully for many years. Consequently, that professionalism in football was administered from 1885 in a similar way to cricket meant that the transition from the amateur to the professional era was relatively straightforward for the Notts FA and the county's senior football clubs.

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<sup>157</sup> See Booth, *Father of Modern Sport*, p.187.

## Chapter 3

### A Footballing Culture, c. 1885-1892

Reflecting assumptions about 'England's national game' in the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century, Holt observes that cricket was 'the true national sport of the English. Football was the property of industrial workers, rugby of the middle class. Only cricket was universal'.<sup>1</sup> McKibbin, in his study of *Classes and Cultures*, though referring to the early twentieth century, was broadly in agreement, stating that 'so far as cricket was played and followed throughout the country by both men and women, it was the most "national" of all sports'. Referring to football, he notes that, even in the early twentieth century, it was 'not as "national" as cricket'; moreover, it was not played in all parts of the country, 'but it was played by more people more enthusiastically than any other game'.<sup>2</sup> As far as Nottinghamshire was concerned, both sports were embedded within the county's sporting culture by the late 1880s. 'Cricket and football had found their home in Nottinghamshire to a greater extent almost than any other county in England', was the view of the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in 1887.<sup>3</sup> Football and cricket in Nottinghamshire was engaged in by the working class *and* middle class whilst rugby was almost non-existent. The famous Forest, Cambridge University, Corinthian and England footballer, and Nottinghamshire cricketer, Tinsley Lindley reflected this cross-class aspect of football in the county in the 1880s when, in a response to a question as to whether he favoured class distinctions in football, he stated, 'No!

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<sup>1</sup> Holt R., *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> McKibbin, R., *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 332; 339-340.

<sup>3</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 February 1887.

Certainly not. I have no opposition to social position whatsoever'.<sup>4</sup> After all, whereas at the Corinthian club he was amongst elite amateurs only, playing at Forest and at Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club meant playing alongside working class players too.

*The Times*, in 1880, claimed that rugby players outnumbered soccer players by two to one.<sup>5</sup> Collins with reference to the North of England, observed that 'soccer' was only dominant at this time in eastern Lancashire and southern Yorkshire.<sup>6</sup> Nottinghamshire, therefore, was unusual in that its common footballing code was soccer rather than rugby in the 1880s. In reply to a reader's letter in 1882 complaining about the absence of a rugby team in the area, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* recalled that '[an] attempt was made a few years ago to form a Rugby Union team in Nottingham but it met with little success'.<sup>7</sup> The balance, however, was changing nationally in the 1880s due partly to the popularity of the FA Challenge Cup competition. Lindley, reflecting on soccer's increasing popularity in 1888 claimed that 'many people joined the Association because they thought Rugby dangerous'. Significantly he also thought that it was an easier game for spectators to enjoy; soccer 'was much more pretty to look at. And the rules are simpler, so that an outsider can enter into them thoroughly. Preston North End were once a rugby team'.<sup>8</sup> Historians differ in assessing the rate at which soccer advanced nationally but are in broad agreement that it was making rapid strides. Harvey claims that the association game had already become the dominant footballing code in the country by the end of the 1880s; Walvin cites C.B. Fry's claim that football had become the national game by 1895; whilst Russell claims that it had become the dominant code 'by 1914, and perhaps as early as 1906'.<sup>9</sup> This chapter argues that in Nottinghamshire soccer was

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<sup>4</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette*, 24 March 1888.

<sup>5</sup> *The Times*, 12 November 1880.

<sup>6</sup> Collins T., *A Social History of English Rugby Union* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), pp. 24-5.

<sup>7</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 January 1882.

<sup>8</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette*, 24 March 1888.

<sup>9</sup> Harvey A., *Football: The First Hundred Years: The Untold Story* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), p. 210; Walvin J., *The People's Game: A Social History of British Football* (London: Allen Lane, 1975), p. 50;

the dominant football code by the early 1880s; that it consolidated itself as a significant constituent element of local culture between 1885 and 1892; and that this had wider implications for the development of the game in the county and elsewhere.

Russell argues that it was education, the Football League's expansionist philosophy and, significantly, the press, both national and local, that were the key factors in football becoming the nation's dominant footballing code, observing that 'local papers employing soccer enthusiasts did much to advertise soccer'.<sup>10</sup> The Nottinghamshire press is certainly an excellent source in this respect. Analysis of its content - and this is not just confined to the sports pages - sheds light on the extent to which football became part of the culture of the county and also on the way in which the development of the game locally contributed to the emergence of soccer as England's national game. Players moving from Nottinghamshire were instrumental in spreading the popularity of soccer - some, for example, were involved in the foundation of Woolwich Arsenal, the first Southern team to join the Football League. The Nottinghamshire press followed local sportsmen as they took the game to other parts of the country, and then beyond. The sporting pages of the local press not only reflected the strong footballing culture in its area; they were also a key element in the making of that culture, effectively promoting the game through the publicity that they gave it.<sup>11</sup> It was outside the sports pages, however, that football really demonstrated its deep penetration into local life and culture. Not only did football dominate the sporting landscape between September and April, it became part of the routine discourse of the press.

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Russell D., *Football and the English: A Social History of Football in England, 1863-1995* (Preston: Carnegie, 1997), p. 36.

<sup>10</sup> Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 36.

<sup>11</sup> Johnes M., *Soccer and Society; South Wales 1900-1939* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002), p. 10.

This chapter demonstrates how football had become embedded in local culture by the mid-1880s and goes on to argue that this was consolidated between 1885 and 1892. There were many aspects of life in Nottinghamshire on which football made an imprint and, conversely, ways in which Nottinghamshire left its imprint on the game. The fact that football was played by middle-class young men, such as Tinsley Lindley, is likely to have helped its wider growth in that it could be regarded as a respectable pastime and thus be played by working-class men and boys without risking social disapproval. Masters has recently suggested in his study of York that historians to date have underestimated the link between football and respectability and it is explored here in the Nottinghamshire context.<sup>12</sup> Football's respectability was then reinforced by the part played by various institutions – the army (especially the local volunteers), the schools, the churches and chapels. The association between football and fundraising for charitable causes also helped in this respect. All this helped to ensure that football by the early 1890s had secured a place alongside cricket as a commercial entertainment and popular pastime. The extent to which Nottinghamshire football was able to influence the wider development of the game in England is explored in the final section of this chapter. One important theme running throughout the sections that follow is that the Nottinghamshire's newspapers played a vital role in reporting and promoting the game but also assisted, as Walker has demonstrated in relation to the *Lincolnshire Echo*, in helping to forge a regional footballing identity. Along with the Lincoln Cathedral and its Imp, Lincoln City became a recognisable component of Lincoln's and Lincolnshire's identity.<sup>13</sup> This chapter demonstrates that football, alongside the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club and the Nottingham 'Lambs' were becoming synonymous with Nottingham and its county.

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<sup>12</sup> Masters C.W., *Rugby, Football and the Working Classes in Victorian and Edwardian York*, Borthwick Paper 123 and 124, University of York, 2014, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Walker A., 'Reporting Play: The Local Newspaper and Sports Journalism, c.1870- 1914', *Journalism Studies*, 7, 3, 2006, pp. 452-462.

## The Press and Football in Nottinghamshire

The newspaper that represented 'Nottinghamshire' in the latter half of the nineteenth century was the once-weekly *Nottinghamshire Guardian* which first appeared on May 1, 1846. The talented printer and successful businessman, Thomas Forman, effectively took control of the Conservative-supporting paper in March 1849 before taking actual ownership in March 1852. The paper was put on a sound financial footing by Forman and was noted for its 'agricultural and sporting intelligence' as well as containing popular serials and features for children. Mitchell's *Newspaper Press Directory* of 1885 stated: 'As a family reader it is unrivalled in the Midland Counties'.<sup>14</sup> Forman also established the *Midland and Counties Observer* in 1857, which was mainly written for followers of cricket, and the *Midland Sporting Chronicle* in 1852, which focussed on horse racing. The *Nottingham Daily Guardian* was established by Forman in 1861 and this was noted for the cricket coverage in its 'Sporting Intelligence' section from 1875. Thomas' sons, John and Jesse, were involved in the running and ownership of the newspaper from the 1870s. Thomas also then created the *Nottingham Evening Post*, which ran from May 1, 1878. Jesse was the first editor and claimed this newspaper would be 'the exclusive organ of no religion or political party'.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, another prominent Nottingham newspaper, the *Nottingham Daily Express* was described in 1885 as a Liberal newspaper which 'in addition to local intelligence and correspondence' contained 'the latest news, political, commercial, agricultural, sporting cricket, football and general supplied by electric telegraph and special correspondents throughout the country'.<sup>16</sup> Another

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<sup>14</sup> *The Newspaper Press Directory and Advertisers' Guide* (London: C. Mitchell and Co., 1885), pp. 97-8.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.thorotonsociety.org.uk/publications/articles/thomasforman.htm> ;  
<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/nottinghamshire-guardian> ;  
<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/nottingham-evening-post> (all accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>16</sup> *Newspaper Press Directory*, 97. Called the *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express* until July 1883.

Nottingham newspaper, the *Nottingham Journal* was incorporated into the *Nottingham Daily Express* on 22 August, 1887.<sup>17</sup>

Association football featured heavily in the sporting sections of the Nottinghamshire press alongside cricket and horse racing. By the 1880s, reports of Notts and Forest games were the most prominent and detailed reports within the football sections. There were, however, slight variances between each of the papers' sporting coverage. In the first week of 1885, the *Nottingham Evening Post* was regularly running a column of football reports and results that was essentially nationwide in scope on the third of its four pages. This was interspersed with occasional football stories such as coverage of Notts FA or Football Association meetings. A similar pattern was evident for the first weeks of 1890 and 1892, but with the addition of more coverage of local games. The coverage simply reported the incidents that occurred during play or gave a verbatim account of what was said at a meeting without much opinion being offered.<sup>18</sup>

The *Nottingham Daily Guardian* normally dedicated most of the seventh of its eight pages to sport. This paper provided a detailed and balanced coverage of local and national football news. From January 1882, 'Correspondent' (who was James Catton from at least 1883), provided a more opinionated angle on football events, local and national, within a regular lengthy feature. The weekly *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, meanwhile, was running two columns of football news during the season within its 12 pages by 1885 and was recycling Catton's column from its daily counterpart.<sup>19</sup> This format was still in place in both papers in January 1892.<sup>20</sup> Being part of the Thomas Forman and Son group, who also published the *Nottingham Post* and *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* was certainly well resourced locally,

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<sup>17</sup> Denison G.M., *A Brief History of Nottingham Newspapers* (no publication details), p.2.

<sup>18</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 1-7 January 1885; 1-7 January 1890; 1-7 January 1892;

<sup>19</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 1-7 January 1885; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2, 9, 16, January; 6, 13, February 1885.

<sup>20</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2, 9, 16, 23 November 1889; 2, 9, 16 January 1892; *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 25 January 1890; 1-7 January 1892.

regionally and nationally for providing its weekly digest.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, the *Nottingham Daily Express* had a stronger focus on local games whilst, by 1890, their football columnist, 'Julius Cesar', provided lengthy accounts of matters relating to football more generally. This sometimes stretched to three columns of the page normally dedicated to sport within the newspaper's eight pages.<sup>22</sup> The four-page *Nottingham Evening News* began on October 21, 1885. It followed a similar pattern to the other Nottinghamshire newspapers by dedicating its penultimate page to sport, with particular emphasis on football, cricket and horse racing. Of the football news, Notts and Forest typically provided the main focus with local and national reports also featuring.<sup>23</sup> A significant development came when the *Nottingham Evening News* introduced the *Football News* on September 5, 1891 which followed the pattern of similar football-dedicated newspapers that had appeared in the 1880s in Blackburn, Bolton, Birmingham, Sheffield and Derby.<sup>24</sup> Reflecting the impact these papers had made in Lancashire, the *Football News* proclaimed in its first issue that 'we begin the challenge to provide for Nottingham and the Midlands the same football information as is circulated on Saturday nights in the large towns of Lancashire and the North of England'.<sup>25</sup> There had clearly been a hunger for dedicated football news as the *Nottingham Evening News* was able to advertise on the following Friday:

Football News  
Enormous success  
Gigantic Sale of First Number  
Acknowledged to be the  
Best football paper in the North-Midland counties.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Sell's Directory of the World's Press* (London: Sell's Advertising Offices, 1885), p. 481.

<sup>22</sup> *The Nottingham Daily Express*, 1-7 January 1885; 1-7 January 1890; 1-7 January 1892.

<sup>23</sup> *Nottingham Evening News*, 21-27 October 1885; 1-7 January 1890; 1-7 January 1892.

<sup>24</sup> Mason T., *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), pp. 192-3.

<sup>25</sup> *Football News*, 5 September 1891.

<sup>26</sup> *Nottingham Evening News*, 11 September 1891.



The *Football News* provided detailed coverage of the local scene which extended from Nottinghamshire into Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. Lengthy reports of Notts and Forest games appeared as well as coverage of important matches played elsewhere in the country, along with other sports such as cricket or horse racing.<sup>27</sup>

Football was at least, if not more than, on a par with cricket in sporting status in Nottinghamshire by the middle of the 1880s. During the months from September to April, football coverage dominated the sporting pages of the Nottinghamshire press.<sup>28</sup> In late April 1884, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* only made cricket its focus once the Notts FA Cup Final had been decided.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, when comparing the *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express* issues from the first Monday of April 1882 with the corresponding Monday of 1883, there appears to have been a change of tack. For the 1882 edition, cricket news dominated football news in the sport section of the newspaper despite reports of three Forest games.<sup>30</sup> A year later, it was football that dominated, however, with reports of the FA Cup final, Lord Wharncliffe's Charity Cup final in Sheffield and contests between Aston Villa and Glasgow Rangers, Sheffield FC and Manchester Association and, more locally, St. Luke's and Greenhalgh's Team.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, when comparing the *Nottingham Journal's* editions from the same period, local cricket stories took precedence over football in 1882, despite there being reports of the FA Cup final, Scottish Cup final and a game between Forest and Accrington, whilst, for the corresponding week in 1883, football led cricket.<sup>32</sup> Here, there was news on local games, the various cup winners throughout the country, a Blackburn Rovers-Darwen contest and, like the *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, reports of Lord Wharncliffe's

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<sup>27</sup> *Football News*, 5 September 1891, 2 January 1892.

<sup>28</sup> The *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express* and *Nottingham Journal* were all studied from 1880 onwards with regards to the prominence of cricket or football.

<sup>29</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 25 April 1884.

<sup>30</sup> *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, 3 April 1882.

<sup>31</sup> *Nottingham and Midland Counties Daily Express*, 2 April 1883.

<sup>32</sup> *Nottingham Journal*, 3-10 April 1882.

Charity Cup final and, more significantly, the 1883 FA Cup final.<sup>33</sup> The *Nottingham Journal* reported 'the wildest enthusiasm prevailed amongst the vast crowd' as Blackburn Olympic returned home with the FA Cup.<sup>34</sup> The first victory of a northern side over southerners, with Blackburn Olympic defeating Old Etonians, could well have been the catalyst for football maintaining its prominence over cricket until the end of its season in the Nottinghamshire press by the mid-1880s as football, at least, now gained parity with cricket in coverage.

Football had enjoyed extremely close ties with cricket since the 1860s in Nottinghamshire. By the 1880s, however, football's growth in the county was beginning to influence cricket and articles in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reflected this. The most important impact was financial. It was reported that Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club was able to benefit from considerable rents paid by football clubs to use Trent Bridge. For instance, at the club's annual meeting of 1887, it was revealed that Notts were paying £150 a year rent whilst Notts Rangers also contributed £5.<sup>35</sup> Links between football and cricket were evident in other routine reporting in the Nottinghamshire press as when the secretary of the Mansfield Football Club was toasted at the Mansfield Town Cricket Club annual dinners in 1886 and 1887.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the Football Alliance was quoted as being the model for the Notts Cricket Alliance, founded in 1889.<sup>37</sup> Ironically, Cricket's County Championship had been an inspiration for the Football League.<sup>38</sup> Arguably, news reporting of this

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<sup>33</sup> *Nottingham Journal*, 2-9 April 1883

<sup>34</sup> *Nottingham Journal*, 9 April 1883.

<sup>35</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 February 1887. Similar mutually beneficial arrangements between football clubs and county cricket clubs were in place at Northampton, Sheffield, Kennington Oval and Derby; see Pendleton, D., 'Sport and the Victorian City: the Development of Commercialised Spectator Sport: Bradford, 1836-1908', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2016, p.103; Booth, K, *The Father of Modern Sport: the Life and Times of Charles W. Alcock* (Manchester: Parrs Wood Press, 2002), pp.183-4; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 May 1887.

<sup>36</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 December 1886; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 December 1887.

<sup>37</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 December 1889

<sup>38</sup> Inglis S., *League Football and the Men Who Made It* (London: Willow Books, 1988), p. 6.

kind helped to raise the status of football to the same level as cricket. It could no longer be regarded as a poor relation of the most traditional of English sports.

Kitching has highlighted the meanings that football holds and ‘the tantalizing vague descriptions in which it is employed for some 600 or more years’.<sup>39</sup> So, what did ‘football’ mean to someone from Nottinghamshire in the 1880s? It is highly unlikely that it referred to rugby as may have been the case in other areas. ‘In Nottingham and Sheffield’, according to *The Times* in 1880, ‘the Rugby game is regarded with contempt’.<sup>40</sup> In the case of Nottingham this was an exaggeration. A rugby club did exist in Nottingham in the mid-1880s, though it had little impact or success locally despite attempts to incorporate well-known soccer players. In 1886, the Notts Rugby Club’s president was Mr T. I. Birkin, of the well-known Birkin family, lace manufacturers, who had links with Rugby School and were the club’s principal benefactors through founder and committee member Alick Birkin. Among the first of the club’s vice-presidents to be elected was Forest’s Sam Widdowson, a clear indication that, in Nottingham at least, soccer was highly-regarded and not incompatible with respectable, middle-class social status.<sup>41</sup> In the following year, another famous Forest character, Tinsley Lindley, appeared for the rugby club as a player. This followed a game of rugby between Notts. Rugby Club and Forest in the 1885-86 season which was ‘very laughable throughout’.<sup>42</sup> The contribution of the Nottinghamshire football stalwarts to the club was not successful however as, by the 1888-89 season, the rugby club, now called Nottingham Rugby Club, was behind in fixtures that were ‘somewhat confused’ because of it ‘being so late that the revival of the organisation was attempted’.<sup>43</sup> The relative failure of the rugby club notwithstanding, reports of such events would have helped to underpin the idea of

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<sup>39</sup> Kitching G., ‘The Origins of Football: History, Ideology and the Making of ‘The People’s Game’’, *History Workshop Journal*, February 2015, p. 21.

<sup>40</sup> *The Times*, 12 November 1880.

<sup>41</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 September 1886; Drapkin J., *Nottingham Rugby Football Club* (Nottingham: N.R.F.C. Publications, 1993), A 1.

<sup>42</sup> Drapkin, *Nottingham Rugby Football Club*, A 2.

<sup>43</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 February 1889.

soccer as a respectable pastime played by friends and acquaintances of one of Nottingham's most important families.

News involving football also regularly featured outside the sporting sections of Nottinghamshire's newspapers and this reflected further how deeply rooted it now was in Nottinghamshire life. Football was become embedded in the language used by newspapers. The resource of being able now to search digitally for the word 'football' within newspapers has highlighted how the word was commonly used *throughout* the local press in the latter part of the 1880s. This 'bottom up' approach, though, has to be combined with 'close reading' to understand the wider context of how the word 'football' was used.<sup>44</sup> As this section demonstrates, football was present in the discourse of those who discussed various aspects of Nottinghamshire life. Even those who did not read the sports pages of the Nottinghamshire press were unable to escape its pervasive presence.

In November 1887 an article, 'The Physical Characteristics of the Athlete', first published in *Scribner's Magazine*, and reprinted in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, provoked a discussion about what 'football' meant locally. The article, which was referring to how football was played in America, concluded that, 'Of all the athletic sports, football is the best game to test a man physically. In the pushing and hauling, jostling, trampling struggle for supremacy, few muscles of the body are inactive'.<sup>45</sup> The Nottinghamshire slant on this was that: 'Despite the differences in rules - for we don't believe in hauling and trampling in Association Rules - these remarks are quite true of the dribbling game as pursued in this country'. The reference to 'we' and 'dribbling' indicate that soccer was dominant over rugby in Nottinghamshire.

Though Johnes has highlighted how football was used as a metaphor in political cartoons in South Wales, there has been little investigation of football's penetration

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<sup>44</sup> Phillips M.G., Osmond G. and Townsend S., 'A Birds-Eye View of the Past: Digital History, Distant Reading and Sport History', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32, 15, 2015, pp. 1725-1740.

<sup>45</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 19 November 1887.

into other sections of newspapers elsewhere.<sup>46</sup> 'Football', however, seeped into the language of the Nottinghamshire press as a simile. It could be mentioned to help describe an assault such as when a victim was kicked 'as if she were a football'. Football was also mentioned in an article on astronomy where use of 'great telescopes' apparently made what was being observed the 'bulk of a grain of sand as compared with the bulk of a football'. Also, in a 'Children's Hour' article a type of Madagascan bird's egg is described as being the size of a football.<sup>47</sup>

Football also featured in stories and 'columns' that appeared in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*. It was used in serialised fiction in the newspaper, such as the reference to a football match in 'Like and Unlike' by Miss Braddon.<sup>48</sup> Likewise, there was the character James Spelter who was 'a great don at football' in John Coleman's 'Hesba's Husband'.<sup>49</sup> Football appeared in a short story 'Reading for Boys and Girls' by Andrew Lang when referring to boyhood and the urge to kick a ball.<sup>50</sup> There was also a footballing anecdote which championed the honesty and fighting qualities of the Liberal MP, John Bright. Given how well admired Bright was and his reputation for high-mindedness and moral probity, this lent football itself a degree of respectability:

One day John and his brothers and some other boys in the neighbourhood were indulging in a game of football on the common near to the old family residence of the Brights-Greenbank. All at once the ball was seen spinning into one of the dining-room or drawing-room windows of Greenbank. Windows were windows in those days, and Mrs Bright came out of the house, somewhat agitated, to ascertain the cause of the damage. "Who broke that window?" quietly inquired Mrs Bright, addressing herself to the now somewhat crestfallen group of boys. "I did mother," said John,

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<sup>46</sup> Johnes, *Soccer and Society*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>47</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 20 August 1886; 9 November 1889; 20 April 1889.

<sup>48</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 April 1887.

<sup>49</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 October 1887.

<sup>50</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 September 1889.

running forward as brave as a young lion and as honest-looking as daylight. "And what did *thou* do it for?" asked Mrs Bright. "Because," replied the boy with charming ingenuousness, "*I didn't like to miss my punce.*" "And," continued the old narrator of the story, "John Bright throughout his life has never yet, to my knowledge, if he could help it, "*missed his punce.*"<sup>51</sup>

Football also appeared in the 'puzzles' section of the *Nottingham Guardian* as a charade in Omega's 'Transposition':

A football party, brave and ready,  
In no sense rough, but always steady;  
This when you dine, is set before ye,  
And a bosom friend winds up my story.<sup>52</sup>

Football also found its way into an 'Our Ladies Column' where, along with skating, it was promoted as an outdoor winter sport for men and, possibly, women. The column refers to 'Cricket and lawn tennis in the summer, football and skating in the winter; in most of which sports both sexes take part and share alike'.<sup>53</sup> This certainly contrasted in tone with *The Scotsman's* report of a ladies football match in Edinburgh which had appeared in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in 1881 and declared the event as 'a most unfeminine exhibition'.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps the author of 'Our Ladies Column' had foreseen future events. 'Gatekeepers of feminine respectability', according to Williams, believed that football was 'too rough for girls', though this did not deter a Nottingham High School team from playing in 1894 and 1895.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 April 1889. 'Punce' means kick.

<sup>52</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 March 1889; 23 March 1889. The answer to this puzzle was 'Team-tame-meat-mate'.

<sup>53</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 October 1886.

<sup>54</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 May 1881.

<sup>55</sup> Williams J., *A Game for Rough Girls: A History of Women's Football in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 29.

As we have seen, Catton was impressed by the 'knowledgeable' readers that he found in Nottingham when he arrived there in 1883.<sup>56</sup> With regard to the 'history of sport', a local dignitary, Mr Henry Smith-Wright claimed in a speech to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Nottingham Mechanics' Institution in 1887, 'we have a good deal to do with the literature of cricket and football in this town'.<sup>57</sup> If this was the case, then Catton may or may not have enhanced Nottingham's reputation in this respect while he was at the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* from 1883 to 1891. Tate claims that 'Catton's football and cricket reports for the *Daily Guardian* offer little out of the ordinary for the time, following a standard format with an introductory description of the weather, the state of the pitch and the ground, the arrival of the visiting team, the build-up of fans, and incidental points concerning the fixture, before a blow by blow, timetable report of the action'. However, Tate cites Mason, who pointed out in his seminal study of English football in this period that Catton also indulged in 'the literary excess associated with some sports reporting of the time' with reports 'put together by men of some literary aspirations who had drunk deeply of the Greek classics and Shakespeare whom they were particularly fond of quoting'. Catton and his contemporaries were 'keen to avoid repetition and the frequent use of common or garden words'.<sup>58</sup> Reflecting this style of being explanatory and opinionated but with a touch of literary exuberance was Catton's report of a Forest-Sheffield Wednesday game which appeared in the *Athletic News*, to which Catton contributed from a Nottinghamshire perspective from 1886.<sup>59</sup>

The passing of the Sheffield forwards was not up to the mark, nor was their shooting at goal so accurate as it might have been. Winterbottom and Ingram were the most prominent pair. They thoroughly understood each other and both knew how and when to shoot - Ingram

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<sup>56</sup> Tate S., 'James Catton, 'Tityrus' of Athletic News (1860-1936): A Biographical Study', *Sport in History*, 25, 1, April 2005, p. 109; Tate S., 'The Professionalisation of Sports Journalism, 1850 to 1939, with particular reference to the career of James Catton', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Central Lancashire, 2007, p. 224.

<sup>57</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 3 November 1887; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 November 1887.

<sup>58</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, pp. 189-90.

<sup>59</sup> Tate, 'Professionalization of Sports Journalism', p.231.

being a very dangerous man within a reasonable distance of goal. Carl Hillier, the centre-forward, was the weakest man in the Wednesday team, and I shall say no more of him. Cawley and Mosforth were moderate, and the old International, who has donned his war-paint ten times for his country, did very well in his own style, but surely it is time the little wonder dropped gallery touches.<sup>60</sup>

Even more colourful was Catton's report of the Notts-Forest game of 1890:

The fierce partisans of each side rubbed their shoulders together, and as I looked round the parallelogram the words of Herate, in MacBeth, were brought vividly to mind:

Black spirits and white,  
Red spirits and grey,  
Hingle, mingle, mingle,  
You that mingle may.<sup>61</sup>

It might be suggested that such displays of erudition were another way of conferring respectability on what was increasingly becoming 'the people's game'.

### **Establishing Respectability**

Indicative of how football had become ingrained in Nottinghamshire society was that it had become an accepted and respected game by many sections of society by the 1880s. As a contrast to older styles of football being outlawed from the streets in 1835 and viewed with hostility by business and religious leaders, football was now an accepted part of education, the church and army-life in Nottinghamshire.<sup>62</sup> Masters has rightly argued that: 'Historians charting the rise of football and seeking

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<sup>60</sup> *Athletic News*, 10 January 1888 as cited in 'Professionalisation of Sports Journalism', p. 233. Tate claims the game was Nottingham Forest-Sheffield United but Forest's opponents were Sheffield Wednesday. This is confirmed by the report which appeared in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 11 January 1888.

<sup>61</sup> *Athletic News*, 29 December 1890.

<sup>62</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp. 37-38.



to explore the issue of the social diffusion of football have underplayed this link between the “reformed” game of football and respectability’.<sup>63</sup> This section seeks to address this from a Nottinghamshire viewpoint. In 1887 ‘reformed’ football could be viewed in the local press as a marker of civic progress. An article in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reflected that:

In 1800 the Forest, although pleasantly dotted with thirteen windmills, was the rendezvous of the idle and vicious, who sought pleasure in dog-fighting and badger-drawing. But how changed the picture in 1887! Instead of brutal scenes, we behold playful children on its slopes, the athlete engaged in cricket or football and the aged resting on a seat musing on past scenes and departed friends. Since the present century commenced, the increase of population and wealth in Nottingham has been marvellous.<sup>64</sup>

Football’s reputability in Nottinghamshire was demonstrated by the degree to which it was promoted in its schools and colleges. Mason has pointed out that most of the early school associations were the work of teachers and that it was ‘not until 1900 that the new Board of Education instructed Her Majesty’s Inspectors that games were a suitable alternative to Swedish drill or physical exercises’ to be followed by the formation of the English Schools’ Football Association in 1904.<sup>65</sup> Kerrigan adds, with regards to London, that ‘schoolboy football was played by boys outside school hours and supervised by teachers, not as part of their teaching load, but additional to it, and without expectation of additional remuneration’ whilst demonstrating how it was the enthusiasm of teachers which drove the schoolboy game in the elementary schools.<sup>66</sup> The Nottingham Schools’ FA was formed in 1891 with the ideal of promoting ‘the mental, moral and physical development of

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<sup>63</sup> Masters, *Rugby, Football and the Working Classes*, p. 10.

<sup>64</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 June 1887.

<sup>65</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, p. 85. Early schoolboy associations were South London (formed in 1885), Sheffield (1887), Manchester (1890), Liverpool (1891) and Nottingham (1891).

<sup>66</sup> Kerrigan C., *Teachers and Football: Schoolboy Association Football in England 1885-1915* (Abingdon: Routledge Farmer, 2005), p. 9, pp. 178-9, pp. 183-6.

schoolboys through the game of football'. It was certainly teachers that took the initiative. Sixteen teachers were present at the first formal meeting at Clarendon Street School on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 1891. Thirty-two schools competed in the first competition in 1891-92 which was for under-13s (on September 30<sup>th</sup>) only. They were divided into eight groups of four with two progressing to a knockout stage. Lenton Board School and All Saints from Radford played in the first final with All Saints winning 2-0 at Forest's Town Ground. Two days before this, the Nottingham City Boys select team played their first game against Sheffield which resulted in an easy victory for the more experienced Sheffield side. Gates were taken from the final rounds of the cup games and the Sheffield game contributed to most of the £16-19-1d that was made during the season. Of this, £4-4-0d was donated to the Nottingham Children's Hospital whilst £1-5-3d went to the Orphan Fund of the National Union of Teachers aiding football's reputation in the wider community. A new senior league for 13 year olds (under 14 on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1892) was then introduced in September 1892.<sup>67</sup>

As football spread in the elementary schools, the vast majority of whose pupils left at the age of thirteen, it helped that prestigious Nottinghamshire institutions like Southwell Grammar School also held football in high esteem. Between February and December 1889, for instance, the school ran a series of twenty four advertisements in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* where it boasted of an 'Excellent football and cricket ground' as one of its main attractions.<sup>68</sup> Football was mentioned, too, in school prize-giving ceremonies. One speaker at the Nottingham School of Art

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<sup>67</sup> *Nottinghamshire Schools FA Minutes and Papers, 1891-2001, Nottinghamshire Archives DD1705/1; Nottinghamshire Schools FA Papers, including minutes, scrapbooks and handbooks 1891-2012, Nottinghamshire Archives ACC 8621; Chaplin R.F., Evans P.C., Holmes P., Mills G.D., Moore D., Simpson J., Smith B.C. (compilers), 100 Years of Schools' Football: A History of the Nottingham Schools' F.A. 1891-1991* (Nottingham: Nottinghamshire County Council, 1991), pp. 3-8.

<sup>68</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 February to 21 December 1889.

described football as being an essential part of education 'which brought out other muscles into play'.<sup>69</sup>

An excellent indication of football's significance in school life can be found when studying issues of *The Forester*, the magazine of Nottingham High School. That this was an elite school in Nottingham and that it was 'soccer' that they preferred ahead of rugby highlights how entrenched the association game was in Nottinghamshire. 'Dribbling races' were for instance part of an examination contest for football as stated in the review of 1886. That the school held tests for a footballing skill exemplifies the high esteem in which the association game was held. A 'Cambridge Letter' featured Tinsley Lindley, a 'representative' (an Old Boy) of the High School, who had 'distinguished himself in many a hard-fought match on the football field, and nobly bore his part in the defeat we gave the Oxford men'. Football, with cricket, dominated the sporting section of the magazine with details of a 6-a-side tournament, and a review of the season.<sup>70</sup> The 1887 edition followed the same pattern and featured reports on four games in which 'combined play' - a feature of Forest's style - 'secured us four goals' in the game against Leicester Wyggeston.<sup>71</sup> The 1888 edition then saw reports on eleven matches in a comprehensive football section whilst the 1889 edition saw thanks given to Nottingham Forest for use of their Gregory Ground for a nominal fee, ten reports, a full results chart and a review of nine players' performances for the season.<sup>72</sup> The High School's link with Forest was indicative of an ongoing relationship that had been present when the Forest Club had been founded in 1865. The 1890 edition of *The Forester* also saw a comprehensive football section whilst the 1891 edition highlighted what a formal organisation the football team was with President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Captain, Secretary and Committee named. This edition also had seventeen reports, nine player reviews and

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<sup>69</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 March 1887.

<sup>70</sup> *The Forester*, July 1886, p.37, pp. 41-2. 1886 to 1891 editions of *The Forester*; Nottinghamshire Archives, S/BX388/3/2-7.

<sup>71</sup> *The Forester*, July 1887, p. 81.

<sup>72</sup> *The Forester*, July 1888, 56-8, April 1889, pp. 45-8.

a second-eleven section as football, along with cricket, continued to impact strongly on the High School's year and dominate its sporting life.<sup>73</sup>

The close ties between Nottingham High School and Forest are comparable to the links between elite schools and other major clubs in this period such as between Brentwood, Felsted and Aldenham School and Upton Park in East London. Brentwood and Felsted provided 'most of Upton Park's ex-public schoolboy recruits in the 1870s' whilst the 1880s 'saw a decrease in Felsted and increase in Aldenham'.<sup>74</sup> Like Nottingham High School and Nottingham Forest, Upton Park forged links locally by playing other local clubs as well as nearby schools. As with Nottingham High School, the strength of Brentwood and Felsted, and their role in providing Upton Park with players, can be traced back to football becoming a serious part of school life. Upton Park, unlike Forest, were not open to all levels of society, though, and this proved to be their downfall in 1887. Kerrigan states how 'Commitment to amateurism and the Corinthian idea of sportsmanship, imbibed at the public schools, carried with it an undercurrent of exclusivism' before stating how 'Upton Park made little direct contribution to promoting the skills of local youths'. Furthermore, former player N.L. Jackson had recalled how the club was 'compelled to disband because younger and more energetic rivals had encroached upon their recruiting ground'.<sup>75</sup> Kerrigan claims however that by 1915, 'there is evidence that the elementary school was a recognised and esteemed part of the community and that schoolboy football may have been partly responsible for this'.<sup>76</sup> Football, over time, was actually itself able to raise the prestige of other schools too, not just elementary schools, and this was almost certainly the case with regards to the High School in Nottingham.

The interweaving of football and organised religion was also reflective of the game's social acceptance in Nottinghamshire. McLeod has highlighted how temperance

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<sup>73</sup> *The Forester*, Easter 1890, pp. 47-9, April 1891, pp. 63-9.

<sup>74</sup> Kerrigan, *Teachers and Football*, pp. 32-3.

<sup>75</sup> Kerrigan, *Teachers and Football*, pp. 25-35

<sup>76</sup> Kerrigan, *Teachers and Football*, p. 181.

played a role in religion's impact on football. He states how the 'cult of Temperance in later Victorian Nonconformity' – this embraced Salvationists (connected to Nottingham through their founder William Booth) and Methodists (Wesleyans were behind the origins of the current Mansfield Town) - promoted 'healthy and wholesome sports like cricket and soccer rather than games of chance, contests of brute strength, or sports involving animals, in all of which in the main focused on the associated gambling'.<sup>77</sup> Huggins, meanwhile, has highlighted how William MacGregor, the Football League's founder, C.E. Sutcliffe, a key figure in the Football League, and Charles Clegg, the chairman of Sheffield Wednesday, 'were all teetotallers'.<sup>78</sup> Significantly, football often featured as part of the entertainment at temperance society events, such as the Nottingham Temperance Mission outing to West Bridgford in July 1886, a 'Temperance Demonstration' at Bulwell in June 1887 and at the Sawley Church Institute sports and temperance fete where 'the principal event was a football competition for youths under 19 years of age'.<sup>79</sup>

Masters has demonstrated in relation to York how the support of football by an esteemed clergyman or lay preacher was often enough to convince a congregation that football, even if it was rugby football in this case, was now a respectable pastime.<sup>80</sup> At the St. Catherine's Institute in Nottingham, the association code was seen as one of the 'good things' about the centre and at Emmanuel Church in Nottingham, the preacher was grateful to the congregation for their assistance in the harvest festival football match.<sup>81</sup> The St Catherine's Institute annual meeting of 1886 actually highlighted their team's excellent record for that season.<sup>82</sup> Clubs not connected with a church could also become part of a church service such as when a

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<sup>77</sup> McLeod H., *Religion and The Working Class in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1984), p. 34.

<sup>78</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 106.

<sup>79</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 June 1886; 30 July 1886; 3 June 1887; 10 September 1887.

<sup>80</sup> Masters, *Rugby, Football and the Working Classes*, p. 10.

<sup>81</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 April 1887; 15 October 1886.

<sup>82</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 April 1886.

wreath from Long Eaton Rangers was laid at the funeral of their vice-president.<sup>83</sup> Football also found its way into sermons and speeches. Readers of the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* were told that the Bishop of Richmond preached enthusiastically about football claiming that Christ himself would have rejoiced in the game and that St Paul would have 'stepped into the field'.<sup>84</sup> He then warned of the evils of gambling as did the vicar of St. Marys, Northampton, who preached a sermon a few weeks earlier classifying football as a 'purifying' form of entertainment. Significantly, this had been reported in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*.<sup>85</sup> At a church conference in Ilkeston, Rev. R. Fawkes showed concern about how football was being tainted in another way, as he 'deplored the tendency exhibited in the present day to introduce politics into almost everything - even into their sports of football and cricket'.<sup>86</sup>

The strong interest in football in the Nottinghamshire church community was evident in 1887 when the Notts Church Football Association was created.<sup>87</sup> Mason notes this event and estimates that the church or chapel connection accounted for up to a quarter of clubs playing regularly at this time.<sup>88</sup> The Notts Church FA was able to form its own cup competition with twenty-two sides and wield significant influence within local footballing circles. That year, it was incorporated into the Notts FA and promised that it would be able to send a representative to a Football Association meeting in London once every three years.<sup>89</sup> By 1889, the Notts. Church FA was raising a representative side to play the Notts second eleven whilst also planning a junior cup competition for those aged fifteen or under.<sup>90</sup> This

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<sup>83</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 May 1889.

<sup>84</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 November 1889.

<sup>85</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 12 October 1889.

<sup>86</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 October 1887.

<sup>87</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 October 1887.

<sup>88</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, pp. 24-6.

<sup>89</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 6 October 1887; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 October 1887.

<sup>90</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 August 1889; 12 October 1889.

corresponded with the Notts FA's own plans for a junior cup competition for those aged eighteen or under that year.<sup>91</sup>

The formation of so many church and school soccer teams in such a short period shows vividly the popular appetite for football and, perhaps, soccer in particular. After all, schools and churches were, in an important sense, 'popular' institutions, with church and chapel leaders reactive as well as proactive in the community services their institutions offered.<sup>92</sup>

Masters' assessment of the situation in York could equally be applied to Nottinghamshire.

Mason and Riedi have examined how football impacted on military life and stated that 'football was, without doubt, the most popular game to play and to watch among the other ranks of all three services' between 1880 and 1960. They argue that 'it was the formation of the Army Football Association in 1888 which gave the process real organisational impetus, while reflecting grass-roots developments already in progress'. The Royal Engineers, based in Chatham, had been playing since 1868 and had, as stated, been influential on Forest to some extent with their passing style. The Royal Engineers had appeared in four FA Cup finals between 1872 and 1878, winning it in 1875. Other Army sides who entered the FA Cup were 2/King's Own Light Infantry, based in Sheffield, and the Volunteer Regiment of the 1<sup>st</sup> Surrey Rifles. The Army Cup stimulated competition between Army sides with the Leicestershire Regiment claiming that it was the 'only thing one particularly wishes to win'. The first final in 1889 was a very British affair. 2/ Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders beat 2/ South Staffordshire at The Oval in London 2-0. The Duke of Cambridge presented the

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<sup>91</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 August 1889.

<sup>92</sup> Masters, *Rugby, Football and the Working Classes*, p. 52.

cup and medals whilst the referee was Major Francis Marindin of the Royal Engineers, President of the Football Association between 1874 and 1890.<sup>93</sup>

‘Sport was one of the attractions of the nineteenth century volunteers’, according to Mason and Riedi, though this connection is left largely unexplored.<sup>94</sup> As seen, early Notts County players had links with the Robin Hood Rifles. Furthermore, references in the Nottinghamshire press certainly indicate that football was played at camp by this military unit, the 1<sup>st</sup> Nottinghamshire (Robin Hood) Rifle Volunteer Corps, in July 1886. Also, at the annual prize distribution in December Colonel Crealock defended football against those who could not see its value arguing that it helped to produce ‘strong-bodied soldiers’.<sup>95</sup> This appears to have been an issue for some critics. At the Trent College volunteer meeting in April 1886, Colonel Evans felt that he had to make the point that football should not be forsaken for the sake of drill and that the cadets there could be ‘proficient in both’, an argument which was greeted with ‘Hear, hear’.<sup>96</sup> By the end of the 1880s, it seems, football was very much integrated into volunteer regiment’s activities, certainly in the East Midlands. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported in 1889 that teams from the Hinckley and Market Harborough Companies had played each other at annual camp of the Leicestershire volunteers.<sup>97</sup> That the game had been embraced by the patriotically-motivated volunteers enhanced its claim to respectability in the county.

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<sup>93</sup> Mason T., and Riedi E., *Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces 1880-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 9-22; Mason, *Association Football*, p. 245.

<sup>94</sup> Mason and Riedi, *Sport and the Military*, p. 39.

<sup>95</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 July 1886; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 2 December 1886; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 December 1886.

<sup>96</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 April 1886.

<sup>97</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 August 1889.



## Popular Culture and Fundraising

As McDowell has argued in relation to Scotland, the 'social standing of clubs - earned or unearned - was maintained by their presence in the social scene'.<sup>98</sup> This section explores ways in which football interacted with other aspects of popular culture in Nottinghamshire, especially the theatre and concert hall, and examines the important link between football and charitable fundraising. It was reported that at the Nottingham Theatre Royal's pantomime (*Dick Whittington*) in 1889, the Boxing Day performance was made 'inaudible, and the football element reigned supreme'. This was due to the commotion caused by the presence in private boxes of the Forest and Notts teams. Football was represented not only in the audience but on the stage where well-known Nottinghamshire sporting celebrities were depicted, with Notts and Forest players wearing their club colours.<sup>99</sup> A year later Forest players were actually on the stage at a crowded Assembly Rooms, when a 'smoking concert' was held 'to celebrate the "coming of age" of the famous football organisation whose red shirts are familiar upon the principal football enclosures of the United Kingdom'. The Mayor of Nottingham was present and the 'musical portion of the proceedings left nothing to be desired'.<sup>100</sup> Concerts were often used by football clubs to raise funds; in 1885, they were part of various 'Christmas Festivities' in Lowdham staged to raise funds for the local cricket and football clubs.<sup>101</sup> Nottingham Olympic benefitted from a performance by the 'Nottingham C.C.C.C. Minstrels' as did the Zingari Cricket and Football Club after a concert in Sutton-in-Ashfield by the Nottingham Select Glee Party.<sup>102</sup>

Patrons of the music halls in this period would have been reminded of the connection between Nottingham and football by locally-born comedian, Billy

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<sup>98</sup> McDowell M., *A Cultural History of Association Football in Scotland, 1865-1902: Understanding Sports as a Way of Understanding Society* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2013), pp. 199-223.

<sup>99</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 December 1889; *Nottingham Evening Post* 27 December 1889.

<sup>100</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 February 1887.

<sup>101</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 January 1886.

<sup>102</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 February 1886; 25 February 1887.

Merson. A catch phrase 'Mind my velour, it's on the floor!' had come to him as he played in an exhibition match against Aston Villa during which his hat kept falling off. Apparently, 'the gag rushed through the Midlands like a flash of lightning'.<sup>103</sup> Nottingham audiences, like others in the North and Midlands, would certainly have been expected to appreciate the 'sensational' musical drama, *The Football King*, featuring the well-known Preston player Dave Russell, which visited Nottingham in 1896.<sup>104</sup> However, there were other ways in which football, itself increasingly a commercialised entertainment, was becoming integrated into the wider entertainment industry. It was a sign of the extent to which football had removed itself from its rough and rowdy origins that people were now prepared to pay to see it played both outdoors and indoors.<sup>105</sup> Litherland has argued that the indoor football tournament staged at Olympia in London in 1905-06 was 'spectacle and entertainment above everything else'.<sup>106</sup> Nottingham audiences were already familiar with this phenomenon as the Alexandra Marble Rink in Talbot Street, which was primarily used for roller skating, promoted itself by staging football matches during the Christmas season in 1884 and 1886. It had already staged a 'football race' and various football games during Goose Fair week.<sup>107</sup>

J.J. Bentley, president of the Football League from 1893, opined that 'no sport subscribes more to charity than does football'.<sup>108</sup> In Nottinghamshire, as elsewhere, football's links with fundraising were a further indication of its respectable status. Charities would have been highly unlikely to associate themselves with activities likely to bring them into disrepute. Vamplew and Kay have demonstrated how

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<sup>103</sup> Horrall, A., *Popular Culture in London c.1890-1918; The Transformation of Entertainment* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 164-5.

<sup>104</sup> Huggins M., *Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambleton, 2004), p. 165.

<sup>105</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 38.

<sup>106</sup> Litherland B., 'Sporting Entertainments, Discarded Possibilities and the Case of Football as a Variety Sport, 1905-1906', *Sport in History*, 35, 3, September 2015, pp. 391-418.

<sup>107</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 October 1882; 3 June 1884; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 January 1885; 31 December 1886.

<sup>108</sup> Vamplew W., *Pay Up and Play the Game- Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 79, 86 citing Bentley J.J., *Is Football a Business?* (1912), p. 390, n.45.

football-related events in Glasgow, Birmingham, London, Lancashire and Yorkshire supported charities such as relief funds, hospitals and benevolent funds. They estimate, however, that football's contributions often only accounted for around one per cent of the total donations to these funds once expenses were taken into account and that increasing commercialisation connected with League football especially meant that the number of charity matches decreased, not least because there was less space for them in increasingly crowded fixture lists.<sup>109</sup> Thus Forest, who had played, for instance, in the Wednesbury Charity Cup competition and organised a match at Trent Bridge against a Nottinghamshire XI in aid of local hospital in the early 1880s were less active in this respect a few years later.<sup>110</sup> However, the link between football and charitable fundraising continued. County Football Associations were known to make donations to charities.<sup>111</sup> Local derbies between less illustrious clubs than Forest and Notts provided good opportunities to raise money as when Beeston and Hyson Green played neighbours Long Eaton Rangers, just over the border in Derbyshire, with the gate receipts going to the Clay Cross mining disaster relief fund.<sup>112</sup> Novelty events, such as a match between chimney sweeps and bakers to raise funds for the Nottingham Children's hospital were not uncommon and the blind of Ilkeston, Derbyshire, were aided by a football match at a fete and sports day in which visitors from Nottinghamshire participated.<sup>113</sup> Football was thus appropriated by different groups as a way of helping those less fortunate.

Sports days, incorporating football contests of various kinds, were a well-established feature of fundraising, charitable or otherwise, by the mid-1880s. These were routinely reported in the local press but might easily be overlooked as they happened so often. Such events could provide much-needed revenue to finance a club's activities. The Notts club, which had by then 'obtained a firm and popular

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<sup>109</sup> Kay J. and Vamplew W., 'Beyond Altruism: British Football and Charity 1877-1914', *Soccer and Society*, 11, 3, May 2010, pp. 181-197.

<sup>110</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 April 1881; 24 March 1882; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 March 1882.

<sup>111</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 September 1889, reporting on donations by the Derbyshire FA.

<sup>112</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 December 1882.

<sup>113</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 July 1886; 6 May 1887; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 9 April 1887.

footing amongst the gentlemen athletes, both in town and county' were probably the first go down this route when they organised such an event in 1868. It was judged to have been a great success, leaving visitor William Prest of Sheffield FC 'utterly astonished at the capital arrangements which had been made' and that year there were a host of similar events held in and around the county.<sup>114</sup> Forest followed in 1870 to be followed themselves by Trent College and the football clubs in Newark and Mansfield.<sup>115</sup> Such events were a regular part of the social calendar by the end of the 1880s. They signified the integration of football into respectable society whoever the ultimate beneficiaries might be. An annual sports day which incorporated a football tournament was held at the Castle cricket ground to raise money for orphans.<sup>116</sup> A similar event in Mansfield, Messrs. Greenhalgh and Sons' Athletic Sports, raised funds for the company's cricket and football teams.<sup>117</sup> Forest benefitted enormously from the 12,000 that turned up at Trent Bridge for their twentieth Sports Day in 1889, an event that 'enriched the coffers of the club'.<sup>118</sup>

### **'Lamb-like' Nottingham**

Despite the fact that football was increasingly seen as a respectable activity in Nottinghamshire, it was not all sweetness and light. There was another side of football that manifested itself there. Nottingham was represented in the nineteenth century as a tough and violent city and that reputation transferred to the followers of its two major football clubs. Beckett describes Nottingham as a 'radical, frequently disturbed and riotous town' that was not tamed until the end of the nineteenth

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<sup>114</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 April; 15 May 1868.

<sup>115</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 March; 29 April 1870; 25 August 1871; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*; 2 May 1873.

<sup>116</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 20 August 1886.

<sup>117</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 July 1886.

<sup>118</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 May 1889.

century.<sup>119</sup> He argues that the 'electoral struggles of the 1850s and 1860s point towards a tradition of riotous behaviour rather than birth pains and adolescence of a "class" society'.<sup>120</sup> As in many other towns, elections - both national and local - were often accompanied by violence and disorder and Nottingham attracted attention in this respect on account of the 'infamous "lambs"' who 'were called out to persuade voters, sometimes by browbeating, and by "cooping"- confining them to public houses until the election was over'.<sup>121</sup> The Lambs held no loyalty to a political cause and were 'in reality a group of bullies willing to sell their services as required - prominent on both sides'. Those siding with Sir Robert Clifton in the 1865 Parliamentary elections, 'Clifton's lambs', attacked supporters of the opposition as they arrived at the station, burned down the platform for speakers in the town centre and 'engaged in a spectacular display of window smashing'. Troops were called from Sheffield and it was after midnight before order was restored.<sup>122</sup> The famous Nottingham bare-knuckle boxer, Bendigo, was a local hero and also a member of the Lambs, who could cause havoc if a fight was not going Bendigo's way.<sup>123</sup> Bendigo later became a religious preacher, for which The Lambs mocked him, though this was nothing Bendigo could not handle as he would resort to violence himself, if necessary, to retain order.<sup>124</sup>

Regarding riots which occurred in 1885, 'A Birmingham View' reflected on The Lambs' continued violence and how this was being addressed:

The Birmingham Post says:- Nottingham has earned an unenviable reputation for political "lambs," and the

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<sup>119</sup> Beckett J., 'Radical Nottingham', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p.312.

<sup>120</sup> Beckett, 'Radical Nottingham', p. 285.

<sup>121</sup> Bean J.P., *Bold as a Lion: The Life of Bendigo- Champion of England* (Sheffield: D&D Publications, 2002), p.13; Beckett, 'Radical Nottingham', p. 307.

<sup>122</sup> Beckett, 'Radical Nottingham', pp. 305-6.

<sup>123</sup> Bean, *Bold as a Lion*, pp. 12, 58, 73-5, 134-5, 156. 12; Beckett J., 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 393.

<sup>124</sup> Bean, *Bold as a Lion*, pp. 183-201; <http://www.nottinghampost.com/Prize-fighter-good-fist-preaching/story-12198017-detail/story.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

new enlarged franchise apparently has not changed their nature; but even “lambs” are entitled to fair play, and it is quite right, therefore, that the responsibility for the disgraceful riots which signalled the late Parliamentary election in the lace capital should be fixed on the proper shoulders. The disturbances in question were the most violent and destructive which have been experienced even in Nottingham for many years, resulting in injuries more or less serious to sixty-four civilians, in addition to many members of the police, and considerable damage to property; and the local authorities adopted a wise and proper course in causing a public enquiry to be made into the matter by an independent Commissioner like Mr Horace Smith, the Recorder of Lincoln, whose report was presented to the Nottingham Watch Committee yesterday.<sup>125</sup>

By the 1880s the Lambs, with their reputation for violence, had attached themselves to football. From their early years until 1890, when they changed kit to black and white stripes and became more commonly known as ‘The Magpies’, Notts were nicknamed ‘The Lambs’ because of the notoriety that this gang had throughout the nation.<sup>126</sup>

It has to be acknowledged that part of the attraction of football by the 1880s was that it had the capacity to generate a great deal of excitement amongst its followers. What was effectively a ‘friendly’ between Notts and Bolton Wanderers was the ‘principal attraction’ at Christmas 1886 and drew ‘fully 10,000 persons’.<sup>127</sup> As we have seen, the FA Cup tended to raise the emotional temperature and Forest’s FA Cup semi-final appearances in 1879, 1880 and 1885 together with Notts’ semi-final appearances in 1883 and 1884 really captured the attention of the Nottinghamshire press and public.<sup>128</sup> So, when Notts and Forest were drawn to play each other in the third round in 1887, the excitement that would have been generated by a local derby

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<sup>125</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 12 January 1886.

<sup>126</sup> Warsop K. and Brown T., *The Definitive Notts County* (Beeston: Tony Brown, 2007), p. 44.

<sup>127</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 January 1886.

<sup>128</sup> *Nottingham Journal*, 9 April, 1883; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 20 March 1885.

anyway was intensified, especially as gambling was involved. The *Athletic News* was under no illusions as to the importance of the occasion and what it meant to the people of Nottingham.

I question whether any of the matches will provide quite so much excitement as the impending tie between Notts. and Forest ... Judging from recent form, some of the Notts supporters have been laying substantial odds on their Trent Bridge pets; but so far as I am able to sum up the situation, even money fairly represents the chance of either club. These rivals have met for many years, and the difference between them is that of a single goal. The fact of the matter is the improved form of Notts against Aston Villa, Blackburn Rovers and Preston North End at a time when the "Reds" have been rather disorganised for want of regular players, has tended to turn the heads of their more sanguine supporters. Club feeling is beginning to run very high and the Nottingham public will witness one of the most exciting matches they have ever seen on the Forest Ground on 26<sup>th</sup> November.<sup>129</sup>

Furthermore, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* also quoted from the same *Athletic News* edition:

To my mind one of the best, if not the very best, match in the third round of the English Cup ties is that which brings Notts. and Nottingham Forest together. It will stir the blood of the "lacy" town like nothing else could. For several years past now the rivalry between the teams has been of the keenest, and, when the clubs meet, Trent Bridge is a sight that would do the heart of any sportsman good to see. Whatever fox-hunters, grouse shooters, and pheasant slaughterers may say there is no true sport as that when men meet men in honest struggle with a fair field and no favour. And they breed men in Nottingham.

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<sup>129</sup> *Athletic News*, 15 November 1887.

The author - it could well have been Catton on this occasion – was wrong here about the venue of the game, which was Forest’s Gregory Ground, was also wrong in his prediction that Gunn’s Notts would win.<sup>130</sup> Arguably, in a situation like this the Nottinghamshire press both reflected the intense excitement surrounding an upcoming match and helped to encourage it. ‘Men of mature years could not control their feelings’ and were ‘wild with delight’ when Notts defeated Blackburn Rovers 4-2 in 1887.<sup>131</sup> Similarly, ‘football fever’ was said to prevail in Nottingham when Aston Villa were due to visit Trent Bridge for a Football League fixture in 1889.<sup>132</sup> In such conditions, especially in a town with a reputation for ‘breeding men’, big matches supplied opportunities for a new generation of Nottingham Lambs to assert their masculinity.

The physicality of football as played in the 1880s and 1890s ensured that matches generated incidents to which the crowd responded and not always in a polite fashion. ‘By the mid-1880s’, as Huggins has observed, ‘northern soccer and rugby supporters were regularly described as being “partisan”’.<sup>133</sup> Moreover, events on the field of play often provided good cause to express this partisanship vehemently or even, sometimes, violently. Notts (‘The Lambs’) earned a reputation for rough play and their spectators in Nottingham for being excitable and partisan. Its players were described ironically when they had played Derby in 1889 as ‘not in a very lamb-like mood’ during ‘a hard game’ where ‘the charging was at times somewhat heavy’. Derby player Goodall was left ‘lame’ whilst their goalkeeper, Pitman, was rendered unconscious during a goalmouth scramble. During the second half, Derby got revenge with Notts players Shaw, Daft, Shelton and Oswald all struggling to finish the game in an injured state.<sup>134</sup> Players did not always behave well. A few years later, Oswald, the Notts captain, provoked controversy when he fought on the pitch with

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<sup>130</sup> *Athletic News*, 15 November 1887; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 19 November 1887.

<sup>131</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 17 December 1887.

<sup>132</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 November 1889.

<sup>133</sup> Huggins M., *The Victorians and Sport*, (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), pp. 200-1; see also Johnes, *Soccer and Society*, pp. 130-1.

<sup>134</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 December 1889.



Preston's Drummond.<sup>135</sup> The behaviour of Notts' supporters could be equally intimidating. In 1889, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* fuelled the town's reputation for extreme football partisanship by relaying to its readers the hostile criticism that had appeared in 'a Birmingham newspaper': 'The Notts spectators, both at cricket and football, have earned an unenviable reputation for partiality, and they can never take a beating like other English-men'.<sup>136</sup> There was an element of irony here given criticisms that had been made of crowds in Birmingham in particular.<sup>137</sup>

The original article recycled by the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* from the Birmingham press in December 1889 had described how the referee in a Notts versus Wolverhampton Wanderers Football League match had been subjected to 'the threats and menaces of the howling and yelling "lamb's"', how the 'crowd broke into the enclosure and "went for" both referee and visiting players' before suggesting that Notts should be deprived of home fixtures for 'a certain period'. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* commented: 'This will give Notts people some slight idea of how the way in which their doings are viewed even in Birmingham'.<sup>138</sup> A few years later, Forest had serious problems with crowd behaviour. At a game against Derby on Goose Fair Saturday 1896, there was disorder in the crowd, which numbered at least 15,000, after between two and three thousand spectators tried to get from the cheaper part of the ground into the stands. According to the *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 'a scene of the wildest disorder prevailed' and a 'free fight ensued for some minutes with the police being absolutely powerless'. After subsequent incursions on to the pitch, the referee had to abandon the game. On this occasion Forest – usually known as 'The Reds' or 'The Foresters', were referred to as the 'Lamb's', the Derby

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<sup>135</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 7 January 1892; *Nottingham Daily Express*, 7 January 1892.

<sup>136</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 December 1889.

<sup>137</sup> See Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 200.

<sup>138</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 December 1889.

newspaper observing that ‘the rivalry between the “Rams” [Derby] and the “Lambs” was never keener’. All this was reprinted in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*.<sup>139</sup>

There were occasions when misbehaviour by spectators, players and even match officials arose in connection with matches played at lower levels. At a Notts Cup game, Sneinton versus Kegworth, in December 1884, a player was struck in the eye by a spectator whilst a goalkeeper had a stone thrown at him.<sup>140</sup> A policeman was assaulted by a Somercotes Working Men’s FC player in Codnor Park after a game at Marlpool and a long standing feud came to a head with an assault after a match at Elvaston.<sup>141</sup> It was alleged in 1886 that crowd interference and ‘threatening behaviour’ marred a Notts Junior Cup game between Sutton and Arnold Olympic. Yet Arnold’s protest to the Notts FA was considered ‘frivolous’, an indication either that the allegations were unfounded or that a degree of misconduct had become tolerable.<sup>142</sup> Clearly, some players were difficult to deal with; Knight of Nottingham Rangers, having previously been charged for misconduct on the field, was suspended for the rest of the season in January 1886 for using threatening language to an umpire.<sup>143</sup>

Though bearing in mind that some minor teams, like their senior counterparts, were inclined to protest in the FA Cup almost as a matter of course in order to get a match replayed or a result overturned, it is instructive to examine the compilation of irregularities arising from matches played in the second round of the Notts Cup in November 1886. In two instances the impartiality of match officials was questioned by teams whose decisions went against them. The tie between Sneinton Swifts and Hucknall Amateurs had ended in confusion when a late Sneinton goal was not given; Sneinton claimed the referee was ‘incompetent’ and made ‘wrong decisions’ whilst

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<sup>139</sup> Beckett, *A Centenary History of Nottingham*, p. 407 dates this event as 1886 but it was 1896; *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 5 October 1896; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 October 1896.

<sup>140</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 6 January 1885.

<sup>141</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 December 1886; 3 September 1886.

<sup>142</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 1 November 1886; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 12 November 1886.

<sup>143</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 January 1886.

one of the umpires 'ran about all over the field waving his hat and delaying play'. This umpire had to be replaced resulting in the confusion over how much time was left when the disputed late goal was scored. The Notts FA sympathised with Sneinton, and ordered the game to be replayed and put one of their top officials, Proctor, in charge. Meanwhile, Sherwood Rangers would not play extra time in their tie with Mansfield because they claimed the referee had been unfair. This time, the Notts FA were unsympathetic and awarded Mansfield the game.<sup>144</sup>

While it would be misleading to wrong to infer that most games played under the aegis of the county FA on any given Saturday ended in dispute or disorder it is clear that football had the capacity to generate incidents and controversies that its followers could read about in the local press and talk about at home and at work, on weekdays and Sundays as well as match days, throughout the season. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* and its contemporaries ensured that football knowledge was available to all their readers; Catton may have been right in claiming that his Nottingham readers were particularly well informed. It is clear that large numbers of people, men and boys in particular, found it to be a topic of absorbing interest. That football-related news sometimes appeared elsewhere in the newspaper and not just on the sports pages was a sign of the extent to which it had become embedded in local life and popular culture. The theft of goalposts belonging to New Radford club Christ Church Rangers suggests that the perpetrators had a use for them, or more probably a customer.<sup>145</sup> One victim of crime was defrauded of his watch and chain in a card game having been distracted by a discussion about the Excelsior versus Nottingham Trent Wanderers match where a parachute descent had supplied additional entertainment.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 November 1886.

<sup>145</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 January 1887.

<sup>146</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 October 1889; 21 September 1889.

Football coverage in the Nottinghamshire press reflected the role of schools, churches and the local volunteers – all respected social institutions – in spreading the game. Publicity which might have brought the game into disrepute, such as the ‘Lamb-like’ behaviour of spectators, seems to have had little impact in terms of hindering the game’s increasing popularity in this era. Whether playing or watching, it could be generally regarded as a respectable pastime. Lord Belper in 1887, when speaking to a Nottingham Social Guild annual meeting, claimed that both cricket and football had found their home in Nottinghamshire to a greater extent almost than any other county in England.<sup>147</sup> There was an element of local patriotism here - a Lancastrian or a Scotsman, or even a Londoner, might have said something similar - and Belper may have been simply telling a Nottingham audience what they wanted to hear. However, as far as association football was concerned, it had become socially acceptable and widely popular, so there was real substance to this claim.

### **Nottinghamshire and Developments in English Football**

By the mid-1880s, therefore, it could be argued that football was deeply embedded in Nottinghamshire culture and society and that it helped to give the county a distinctive sporting identity which its two major football clubs, Notts and Forest, along with the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club, effectively carried with them when they began to engage with rivals from other parts of the country in national competitions. In some ways Nottinghamshire anticipated the powerful trend which became evident elsewhere in the late 1880s and early 1890s as football replaced rugby as the most popular football code. This was a period in which football pulled ahead of rugby. Arguably, the FA Cup had already given it an advantage over the oval-ball game; in the decisive period between the mid-1880s and mid- 1890s, professionalism in football became firmly established and league competitions were

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<sup>147</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 February 1887.

introduced following the establishment of the Football League in 1888, all this at a time when rugby was struggling to avoid the disastrous split which eventually arrived in 1895 and ultimately proved so damaging.<sup>148</sup>

Football's popularity in Nottinghamshire was reflected in the increase in the number of clubs. Despite lukewarm support from Forest and Notts, the Notts FA continued to expand. Twenty-six clubs were in membership in 1885; thirty-six a year later.<sup>149</sup> This resulted in the establishment of a Junior Challenge Cup in 1886 to run alongside the more prestigious Notts FA Cup, which had been established three seasons earlier.<sup>150</sup> It was decided that any player that had appeared in an FA or Notts FA Cup fixture could not play in the Notts Junior Challenge Cup in the same season and that any side winning the Junior Cup twice consecutively would then have to compete in the Notts FA Cup.<sup>151</sup> By the time the draws were made for both cup competitions in 1886, there were fifty-one sides competing, including nine second elevens in the Junior Cup.<sup>152</sup> Another important competition was established in Nottinghamshire in 1889. Taking inspiration from the success of the Football League's first season that commenced in 1888, the Nottinghamshire Football League was created with eight sides - Notts Jardines, Notts Amateurs, Notts Swifts, Beeston St. Johns, Mansfield Town, Bulwell United, Ruddington and Basford.<sup>153</sup> A strong football infrastructure therefore appears to have developed in Nottinghamshire beneath the senior clubs. Other competitions emerged during this period too such as the Newark Cup in 1887 and, just over the border into Lincolnshire, the Gainsborough Cup in 1889.<sup>154</sup> Nationally, an increasing number of clubs from Nottinghamshire entered the FA Cup. In 1887, the first round draw had nine regional divisions of which one was dedicated to Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire with Notts, Forest, Basford Rovers, Notts

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<sup>148</sup> Collins, *English Rugby Union*, pp. 42-5.

<sup>149</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 July 1886.

<sup>150</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 July 1886; 19 October 1886.

<sup>151</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 August 1886.

<sup>152</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 September 1886.

<sup>153</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 July 1889; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 July 1889.

<sup>154</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 17 December 1887; 9 February 1889.

Jardines, Notts Rangers, Notts Swifts, Mellors and Notts Olympic.<sup>155</sup> The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reflected on how this expansion had been facilitated by having regional divisions and how, on a national scale, the FA Cup had, in twelve years, gone from having thirty-seven to 149 entrants.<sup>156</sup> In addition, having come through a difficult period when the commitment of Notts and Forest could not be guaranteed, the Notts FA ‘congratulated themselves’ on putting the association on a sound financial footing in 1889.<sup>157</sup> The county association was learning now how to run itself successfully, with or without the assistance of Notts or Forest.

Nottinghamshire continued to play a part in the game’s national development. Following the county FA’s role in the legalisation of professionalism in 1885 it was, according to the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, ‘Northern and Midland’ clubs which exerted a powerful influence for further changes to the regulations, effectively eroding the ‘stringent conditions’ which had been intended to restrain the further advance of professionalism. By 1889 the restrictions imposed in 1885 were formally abandoned, notably the rule which required professionals to have been born or lived for two years within six miles of their club.<sup>158</sup> ‘At last the flood gates were opened officially to the unrestricted movement of professional players’, as the official history of the Football Association observed.<sup>159</sup> In effect, these changes reflected the emergence of a powerful lobby of elite professional clubs, twelve of which, Notts included, had come together to form the Football League in 1888.<sup>160</sup>

It is clear that the Football Association, though based in London, recognised Nottingham as a significant football centre in this period. The link between Nottingham and London in these years being embodied in senior figures in

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<sup>155</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 13 September 1887; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 17 September 1887.

<sup>156</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 September 1887.

<sup>157</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 August 1889.

<sup>158</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 June 1889.

<sup>159</sup> Green, G., ‘The Football Association’, in A.H. Fabian and G. Green, (eds), *Association Football* (London: Caxton Publishing Co, 1960), vol 1, p. 65.

<sup>160</sup> Taylor M., *The Association Game: A History of British Football* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), pp. 65-7.

Nottingham and Notts football circles who were members of the new FA Council. In 1887 Jessop of Notts was elected unopposed as one of nine divisional representatives on the FA Council.<sup>161</sup> A year later year, Widdowson and Hines represented the county on what Taylor calls this 'decision making forum'.<sup>162</sup> Widdowson and Proctor took up these roles in 1888, Widdowson being one of ten Divisional Representatives whereas Proctor was one of twelve Association Representatives who reported back to their counties.<sup>163</sup> It was unlikely that Nottinghamshire would be overlooked: the town had already received recognition when it had staged FA Cup semi-finals in 1884 and 1885. When one of the 1887 semi-finals (Preston North End versus West Bromwich Albion) was staged in Nottingham, the £478-17-6d gate receipts proved to be greater than for the Final itself or any of England's home international matches that year, even when expenses of £164 4s 7d were taken into consideration.<sup>164</sup> In 1891, the North versus South representative match was played at Forest's Town Ground in front of many 'football notabilities'. It was the first occasion that goal nets were used. Thus Nottingham had been chosen to host a prestigious match at which a significant development in the game was being trialled.<sup>165</sup>

The Notts and Forest clubs continued to be the dominant forces in Nottinghamshire football. This was reflected in the celebrated sports journalist James Catton being able, in 1926, 'without much trouble' to select a Notts side and a Forest side made up entirely of internationals from this era:

From Notts County we could take George Toone (goal); Harry Moore, Alfred T. Dobson (backs); Alfred Shelton, Stuart Macrae, Charles F. Dobson (half-backs); William Gunn, Arthur Cursham or R.H. Venables (the name under which he often played to conceal his identity), Fred Geary, J.A. Dixon or H.B. Daft, and Harry A. Cursham (forwards)-all reading from right to left. It is

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<sup>161</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 October 1887.

<sup>162</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 92.

<sup>163</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 2 October 1889; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5 October 1889.

<sup>164</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 July 1887.

<sup>165</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 12 January 1891; Tate, 'Professionalization of Sports Journalism', p. 229.

true that Alfred Shelton would be out of place, and that Geary, who was a Nottingham Ranger and went to Everton, only occasionally played for Notts County.

Among the Foresters I recall as men who earned caps: Jack Sands and Harry J. Linacre (goal); E. Luntley, James Iremonger (backs); Frank Forman, Albert Smith (half-backs); Tom Danks, Arthur C. Goodyer, Tinsley Lindley, Sam Widdowson, and J.E. Leighton or Fred Forman. I cannot recollect any right half-back of the Foresters or "The Reds" who attained the distinction of playing for his country.<sup>166</sup>

Given such strength it was hardly surprising that Notts and Forest continued to dominate the football scene in their home county. There was also an element of ruthlessness in the way that the two major clubs maintained their superiority. In the 1860s, Notts had taken the best players from what was left of the Nottingham Law Football Club, while Forest had taken the best players from the Castle Football Club when they disbanded.<sup>167</sup> In 1887, with Notts Rangers emerging as a potential force in the county, Notts and Forest refused to play them for fear of undermining interest in their own unique inter-club rivalry, a decision that contributed to Notts Rangers running into financial difficulties at the end of the 1890-91 season and undermined any potential challenge to the *status quo*.<sup>168</sup> The East Midlands 'Old Firm', Notts and Forest, were happy to protect their mutual interests in a similar way to Rangers and Celtic, their counterparts in Glasgow, who 'whittled away at the pre-eminence of Queen's Park', collaborating in order to maximise profits.<sup>169</sup> The Notts-Forest fixture was one of the biggest money-making fixtures of their seasons – three meetings in 1887 generated total gate receipts of £560 - so they did not want the appeal of this

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<sup>166</sup> Catton J.A.H., *The Story of Association Football* (Cleethorpes: Soccer Books Ltd, 2006), p. 20; first published 1926.

<sup>167</sup> Smales K., *Forest- The First 125 Years* (Nottingham: Temple Printing, 1991), pp. 159, 167.

<sup>168</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 July 1887; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 14 January 1885; 22 August 1891.

<sup>169</sup> Murray B., *The Old Firm: Sectarianism, Sport and Society in Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1984) pp. 20-2; see also Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 170.



derby to be diluted.<sup>170</sup> Notts Rangers, who played at Meadow Lane near to where Notts County would play from 1910, could generate interest and attract a 'large attendance' against Sheffield Wednesday in 1887 or, more specifically, a 2,000 crowd against Swifts.<sup>171</sup> A fairly modest crowd as this, however, meant resources at the ground were 'taxed to their utmost'.<sup>172</sup> As seen in the previous chapter, Notts Rangers had complained that other clubs stole their players and that they 'struggled on' and so it continued that they were hindered in their growth.<sup>173</sup> Inter-club rivalry where major two clubs divided the loyalties of an urban community was also becoming part of football's culture and Nottingham provides an early example.<sup>174</sup>

The Nottingham rivalry was initially based around class. Catton became aware of this class rivalry when he arrived to work in Nottingham in late 1883:

The County were supposed to be representative of the Shire and superior persons, who assumed that they were people of importance, while the Foresters were essentially a city or town club which appealed more to the middle classes.

Catton explained how the rivalry developed whilst emphasising how football really was part of the fabric of society and how the FA Cup was key in developing enthusiasm for the sport:

There was a keen pride in the ranks of the players and their supporters. Families were even cloven in twain by the enthusiasm which was rampant, for both camps had strong teams, and were expected to win The

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<sup>170</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 31 December 1887. More specifically, a 11-12,000 crowd took £243 in 1887 whilst a 7,000 crowd took £176, *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 December 1887, 7 December 1889.

<sup>171</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 26 September 1887.

<sup>172</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 February 1889.

<sup>173</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 January 1885.

<sup>174</sup> Holt R., 'Working Class Football and the City: the Problem of Continuity', *British Journal of Sports History*, 3, 1, 1986, p. 13.

Association Cup for twenty or thirty years before they did so.<sup>175</sup>

There were some significant differences between Notts and Forest at this time and these may have fed into local perceptions of each club and what they represented. It is clear, for example, that they approached the question of professionalism rather differently. As we have seen, Notts appeared to be happy to employ the likes of Emmitt and Gunn who earned their living as professionals in another sport; they were also happy to bring players in from Scotland on occasions. Forest attempted to remain purely amateur and local, though this was changing, leading to the view being expressed at a meeting of the club in May 1889 that continuing along the same lines as in the past would be 'suicidal' and Notts, now that they were in the Football League, were under pressure to keep up with elite clubs elsewhere, especially in Lancashire.<sup>176</sup> Another reason for Forest adopting professionalism was to keep up with their rivals as it was expressed 'there was another club in the town that could buy over them'.<sup>177</sup> In November 1889, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* observed that 'followers of the game in Nottingham must not be surprised if both Notts and Forest have some fresh Scots in their ranks ere long'.<sup>178</sup> Consequently, when 'the fiercest of rivals' Forest and Notts played each other later that month, they were described as 'comparatively new organisations' and the *Nottingham Evening Post* noted that 'the introduction of the Scotch element into Nottingham football' had 'blunted' their rivalry.<sup>179</sup> Though both Notts and Forest continued to employ Scots from this point, this was done to the same extent as was seen elsewhere. Preston has highlighted the number of Scots playing for each team in the Football League's Division One in 1897,

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<sup>175</sup> Catton, *Association Football*, p. 19.

<sup>176</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 July 1886; 18 May 1889; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 14 May 1889.

<sup>177</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 13 November 1888.

<sup>178</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 November 1889.

<sup>179</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 November 1889; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 30 November 1889.

Notts having five out of eleven and Forest two. At a time when there was sixteen teams in the First Division, Notts and Forest were 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> in this respect.<sup>180</sup>

Symbolic of Nottingham's stature within the game on a county and national level in the 1880s was that it was the only English city to have two clubs seriously considered for the inaugural Football League season that began in September 1888. The Football League was established by William McGregor of Aston Villa who was frustrated at the late cancellation of fixtures and inspired by cricket's County Championship.<sup>181</sup> Crude 'league tables' had been published in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* from the mid-1880s providing some comparative assessment of performance based on the results of matches arranged between elite clubs.<sup>182</sup> A study of Notts fixtures through the mid to late 1880s suggests that an elite grouping was beginning to emerge and that Notts saw themselves as part of this with future Football League founders Blackburn Rovers, Preston North End, Bolton Wanderers, Accrington, West Bromwich Albion, Aston Villa, Stoke and Derby County all being regular opponents from 1885 onwards.<sup>183</sup> Their record was broadly comparable in this respect to that of Everton, another founder member of the Football League, in 1887-88.<sup>184</sup> Throughout the whole of 1886, Notts played future Football League sides on fifteen occasions whereas Forest, apart from their regular two derby fixtures with Notts, played only Preston North End (twice), Stoke, Accrington and Bolton Wanderers (see Table 3.1).<sup>185</sup> In the 1887-88 season, the last before the Football League was established, Forest arranged fixtures against eight future Football League sides, including Notts, whereas Notts themselves played eight. Both sides played Bolton,

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<sup>180</sup> Preston T.J., 'The Origins and Development of Association Football in the Liverpool District c.1879 until c.1915', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Central Lancashire, 2006, p. 139.

<sup>181</sup> Inglis, *League Football*, p. 6.

<sup>182</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 October 1886. Forest, Burnley and Aston Villa were the top three.

<sup>183</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, pp.70-3. Notts also played Wolverhampton Wanderers and Everton twice between 1885 and 1888. The only inaugural Football League side that they did not play in this period was Burnley.

<sup>184</sup> <http://www.evertonresults.com/188788.htm> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>185</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 4 January 1886 - 27 December 1886.

Preston, Derby, Stoke, Aston Villa and West Bromwich Albion whilst only Forest played Accrington and only Notts played Everton and Blackburn Rovers.<sup>186</sup>

That Notts were mixing a little more regularly with these clubs than Forest possibly explains why they were chosen ahead of Forest for the first Football League season. Mr Bentley, the secretary of Bolton Wanderers, argued for Notts' inclusion. It also helped that Notts' secretary, Edwin Browne, was seen as diplomatic in dealing with other clubs and that they had a representative, Atwell, at the meeting which founded the Football League alongside representatives from Aston Villa, Blackburn Rovers, Burnley, Stoke City, West Bromwich Albion and Wolverhampton Wanderers.<sup>187</sup> It may also have assisted Notts' case that their home ground was more accessible than Forest's, which was still in Lenton at this time, through the tram connection to Trent Bridge.<sup>188</sup> Above all though, Notts were professional while Forest were still amateur; an important consideration for a league which saw itself as comprising 'twelve professional teams, amalgamated with the common object of providing each other with a programme, each club to play its strongest eleven'.<sup>189</sup> This did not meet without problems, however. Notts had to play Aston Villa in the Football League on the same day as an FA Cup tie with Staveley. Interestingly, Notts prioritised the FA Cup and played Aston Villa with a second eleven. Local newspapers were inclined to greet the advent of the Football League as a low-key 'experiment' in its first season, albeit one that the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* was happy to see repeated with the same twelve teams in 1889-90.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 July 1887; Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 73.

<sup>187</sup> Gibson A. and Pickford W., *Association Football and the Men Who Made It* (London: Caxton, 1906), vol. 2, pp. 4; 106; Catton J.A.H., *The Real Football* (London: Sands and Co., 1900) p. 75; Inglis, *League Football*, p. 7.

<sup>188</sup> Inglis, *League Football*, p. 10.

<sup>189</sup> Catton, *Real Football*, p. 76.

<sup>190</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 May 1889.

**Table 3.1: Future Football League Sides that Notts and Forest Played in 1886**

Future Football League sides that Notts played in 1886 (15 occasions)	Future Football League sides that Forest played in 1886 (7 occasions)
Wolverhampton Wanderers	Notts x 2
Derby County x 3	Stoke
Blackburn Rovers	Accrington
Aston Villa x 2	Bolton Wanderers
Accrington x 3	Preston North End x 2
West Bromwich Albion	
Bolton Wanderers	
Stoke	
Preston North End x 2	

Forest, along with Halliwell and Sheffield Wednesday, were each seriously considered for the Football League but were left disappointed because the League could not find space for fixtures for these clubs.<sup>191</sup> However, there was some consolation when Forest and Halliwell were announced as inaugural members of the Midland League, which commenced in 1889, joining Long Eaton, Warwick County, Lincoln City, Grimsby Town, Staveley, Rotherham, Derby Junction, Burton Wanderers, Sheffield Town and possibly Derby County or Notts, both of whom had to apply for re-election to the Football League.<sup>192</sup> This, however, never came to fruition, so Forest eventually joined the Football Alliance along with Birmingham St. Georges, Bootle, Crewe Alexandra, Darwen, Grimsby Town, Long Eaton Rangers, Newton Heath, Sheffield Wednesday, Small Heath, Sunderland Albion, and Walsall Town Swifts.<sup>193</sup> Six of these clubs had been involved with Notts. Rangers in creating

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<sup>191</sup> Taylor M., *The Leaguers: The Making of Professional Football in England, 1900-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), p. 7.

<sup>192</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 April 1889.

<sup>193</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 May 1889; 21 September 1889.

a 'football combination' in May 1889 but that was now disbanded.<sup>194</sup> The Midland League eventually began with Notts Rangers competing with Burton Wanderers, Derby Junction, Derby Midland, Gainsborough, Leek, Lincoln City, Rotherham, Sheffield, Staveley, and Warwick County in what was effectively a third-tier competition.<sup>195</sup> The fashion for leagues in sport was very evident at this juncture with the Football League, the Football Alliance and the Midland League providing inspiration for the formation of a Notts Football League and a Notts Cricket Alliance that were also formed in 1889.<sup>196</sup> Thus the strength of Nottinghamshire football by 1889 was demonstrated by the fact that it had one side in each of the two national leagues, the Football League and Football Alliance, one in the regional Midland League and its own league of eight sides. Furthermore, when the Football League was expanded in 1892 and Forest were admitted, Nottingham became the only city to have two sides in the First Division.<sup>197</sup> First Division football would be played in Nottingham on almost every Saturday in the forthcoming season, noted the *Evening Post* and this meant that 'football supporters in this district will be catered for in a manner which no other centre can possibly hope to be'.<sup>198</sup> A few months later the same newspaper affirmed that:

In Nottingham football has certainly never before attained the popularity it possesses this year. The town, which has always been closely identified with sport, has the unique honour of possessing two League teams, the players and managers of which are upon excellent terms, so much so that they are manipulating their programmes so that each may obtain a fair share of the public support.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 May 1889.

<sup>195</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 September 1889; 30 November 1889.

<sup>196</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 21 December 1889.

<sup>197</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 14 May 1892.

<sup>198</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 30 May 1892.

<sup>199</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 10 September 1892.

It would be possible for football enthusiasts in Nottingham to follow both Notts and Forest, not least because the two clubs were cooperating with each other to ensure that attendances were maximised in this unique situation.

That Nottinghamshire – and Nottingham in particular – was so clearly in the forefront of the development of the association game meant that, when its native enthusiasts moved away, they could take the game with them and influence football elsewhere. This had been apparent as early as 1875 when former Forest player, Fitzroy Norris, by then a resident of Manchester, where rugby dominated, called for ‘the formation of an association football club for Manchester’ and ‘did not target his letter at a particular class of people’. Norris subsequently competed as an athlete for the newly formed Manchester Association Football Club who later merged with Manchester Wanderers in 1879 and became the first side from Manchester to join the Lancashire FA.<sup>200</sup> James has recently argued that Stuart G. Smith, who had gained valuable football experience whilst in Nottingham, became an influential advocate for the development of football in Manchester. Smith, after arriving in Manchester, had been prompted in 1877 ‘to write to *The Field* urging that one set of laws be produced for football which accelerated the merging of the Sheffield and FA rules’. James adds: ‘Thanks to Smith, the new merged rules limited some of the barriers preventing association football from growing in the Lancashire region and a transition in the county’s footballing activity was starting to be observed’.<sup>201</sup> A Cambridge University graduate curate named Alfred Keely, originally from Nottingham, moved to Liverpool in 1877 and formed St Mary’s FC in Bootle which included two of his brothers who were also from Nottingham. This club embraced enthusiasts from all classes which reflected probable Christian ‘evangelical intentions’ in its formation. Preston highlights too how ‘in the acutely class-divided

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<sup>200</sup> James G. and Day D., ‘The Emergence of an Association Football Culture in Manchester 1840-1884’, *Sport in History*, 34, 1, 2014, pp. 59-64.

<sup>201</sup> James G., ‘The origins debate- how soccer triumphed over other forms of team sports in Manchester’, *Soccer and Society*, published online at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14660970.2016.1276238> (January 2107).

society of Liverpool it took the actions of outsiders like Keely to overcome local prejudices'.<sup>202</sup>

London's *City Press*, some years after the event, recalled that it had been a Nottingham man, Edwin Ellis, who had helped Upton Park to two London FA Cup victories in 1882 and 1883, a fact that the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* thought worthy of note.<sup>203</sup> Indeed, the contribution made by players from Nottingham when they moved elsewhere was clearly a matter of parochial pride. Thus the *Guardian* followed the fortunes of Fred Geary, a future England international, who moved from Notts Rangers to Everton at the end of the 1888-89 season, taking great delight in claiming, 'Match after match, Geary is their brilliant star'.<sup>204</sup> Perhaps more significantly for the future of English football, the local press reported the influence which Beardsley, formerly of Forest, and Brown, formerly of Notts Rangers, had exercised when they had moved from Nottingham to London in 1884 to work at The Royal Arsenal factory at Woolwich, said to have been a rugby stronghold before they arrived. The Nottinghamshire newspapers followed this story with renewed enthusiasm when Bates, another former Forest player, joined them at Woolwich.<sup>205</sup> The legacy of this episode is that Arsenal still wear red shirts, the colour of shirts obtained by Beardsley and Bates from Forest.

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<sup>202</sup> Preston, 'The Origins and Development of Football in the Liverpool District', pp. 37-46. The brothers were Septimus, a tutor, and Edwin, a teacher.

<sup>203</sup> Cited in *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 January 1896.

<sup>204</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 May 1889; 19 October 1889.

<sup>205</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 26 October 1889; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 November 1889. Soar P. and Tyler M., *The Official Illustrated History of Arsenal* (London: Hamlyn, 2005), pp.21-22, claim the initial club that Beardsley was involved in was called Woolwich Union before Dial Square was formed in 1896, changing its name later that year to Royal Arsenal.



## Conclusion

Though football may not have become the national game by the end of the 1880s, it had ousted rugby as the most popular football code.<sup>206</sup> Norris, and especially Smith, had helped in providing an initial platform from which Manchester would eventually develop into being a footballing centre, though it continued to lag behind Nottinghamshire in this respect by the early 1890s. Norris and Smith, particularly, were like football evangelists.<sup>207</sup> Beardsley, Brown and Bates, who moved to London in the 1890s, were able to take a game that was part of their identity and make a critical intervention in its development in the South of England, where it was, of course, not unknown, but had been hitherto played largely by gentlemen amateurs like the Corinthians. The Royal Arsenal club, which they helped to establish, became the first southern club to turn professional in 1891 and the first to join the Football League in 1893, thus ensuring that it was on its way to becoming a truly national competition.<sup>208</sup>

The short period covered in this chapter was critical in determining the shape of the sporting culture that was emerging in Britain in the late nineteenth century. As we have seen the FA Challenge Cup competition continued to be the focus of much popular excitement and interest in Nottingham and elsewhere, acting as a catalyst for the emergence of professionalism. The advent of leagues, especially the Football League after 1888, ensured that this momentum continued, giving football a crucial competitive edge over rugby and ensuring that it became both more popular and, for the new football club businesses, like Notts and Forest, increasingly profitable, especially as they were at times prepared to cooperate to ensure that they

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<sup>206</sup> Collins T., *The Oval World: A Global History of Rugby* (London, Bloomsbury Sport, 2015), p. 41; Harvey, *Football: The First Hundred Years*, p. 210.

<sup>207</sup> Collins, *English Rugby Union*, pp.44-5. Collins uses the term 'evangelical visits' to help explain how Aston Villa, Sheffield Wednesday and Arsenal were behind the formation of Plymouth Argyle which was itself in a rugby stronghold.

<sup>208</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 64. Taylor, *The Leaguers*, p. 12. Royal Arsenal became Woolwich Arsenal in 1893 and, in 1914, The Arsenal.

maximised the benefits that could be derived from being the two major clubs in a city where the association game had established a clear pre-eminence.<sup>209</sup>

Nottinghamshire, in the late 1880s and early 1890s, was very much at the centre of these key developments in English football, being well represented by Notts FA officials at the Football Association and Notts and, eventually, Forest officials at the Football League. Its clubs were the source of many players who were considered good enough to earn international honours, their fame - as reflected and nurtured in the local press - confirming Nottinghamshire's view of itself as a major centre of the football code that was now sweeping the nation. By the start of the 1892-93 season, Nottinghamshire had its own league and two teams in the Midland League. Moreover, Nottingham had become the first major urban centre to supply the premier professional football league with two clubs, a significant achievement in view of Football League founder William McGregor's reluctance to move in this direction.<sup>210</sup>

Football was part of the fabric of Nottinghamshire culture. Not only did the press reflect this, it fuelled it too. Football, with cricket, dominated sports pages and seeped into other pages of the press. This not only represented what was happening but served as a constant reminder to the inhabitants of Nottinghamshire of their sporting identity. Football had, moreover, become a respected element of Nottinghamshire culture with its links with education, the church, the volunteers and fundraising for local good causes. And football, as we have seen and as was reported at the time, could 'stir the blood' here like nothing else.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 65.

<sup>210</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 15 October 1892. The two Midland League sides were Newark and Mansfield. The Notts. Football League now had 9 teams- Hucknall St. Johns, Newstead Byron, Ruddington, Radcliffe, Bulwell United, Newark Swifts, Kimberley, Stapleford and Sutton Town.

<sup>211</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 19 November 1887.

## Chapter 4

### Football, Loyalties and Identity in Nottinghamshire c. 1890-1900

Historians have recognised for some time that sport in general, and football in particular, has played an important part in the construction of local, regional and national identities. Individuals, Huggins has argued in relation to Victorian society, 'carried with them multiple layers of collective identity, loyalty, affection and rivalry' and football, with its connection to place and its capacity to stimulate emotional responses, was often important in generating meaning and shaping social consciousness.<sup>1</sup> At the simplest level, it has been argued that football helped people, men in particular, realise that they were part of a community. It gave them an interest on which they could focus communally by acquiring the habit of going to matches, reading about the teams they followed in newspapers, joining in celebrations when they won and moaning when they lost. It also arguably gave them a reason, at least once a week from September to April, to express their identity by supporting their local team against a team representing somewhere else.<sup>2</sup>

It has been the local loyalties attached to football that have been predominantly regarded as the most powerful. Holt has referred to the 'symbolic citizenship' that came with supporting a football club, while Beaven, referring to support for Coventry City before the First World War, has explored the 'peculiar fusion of citizenship and

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<sup>1</sup> Huggins M., *Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambleton, 2004), pp. 191-2.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Holt R., *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

masculine identity' which workers tended to project 'onto their team'.<sup>3</sup> Discussions of football's relationship with civic pride and identity formation have dominated the literature. Summarising the extant historiography in 2008, Taylor argued that pre-1914 football played a key role in both 'providing a sense of place and belonging in the urban environment' and in 'constructing and promoting broader town and city identities'.<sup>4</sup>

Building upon, but also looking beyond, assumptions about the centrality of civic loyalties in football, this chapter seeks to consider the multiple layers that operated in Nottinghamshire football during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Its main arguments are threefold. First, it argues, in line with Beaven, that pride in the success of Nottingham football and its clubs could be both municipally-led and citizen-led. Both variations were evident in the 1890s and at times, such as in celebrating the FA Cup wins of 1894 (Notts) and 1898 (Forest), could feed off one another, with the middle classes more prominent in the organised civic events and the game's working-class followers orchestrating more spontaneous displays of citizenship. Pride was one of a range of emotions prompted by football, such as 'feverish' excitement, disappointment and shame. Second, while Nottingham did experience the inter-city club rivalries that came with sustaining two clubs at the top levels of the professional game, especially on the occasion of local derbies, there is also considerable evidence of city-wide pride in sporting achievement. The celebrations of 1894 and 1898 were for the most part genuinely popular expressions of city pride that extended beyond the interests of one group of supporters. Furthermore, Nottingham, as a whole, gained pride too from playing a part in prestigious sporting moments. Finally, the Nottinghamshire case suggests that sports historians have too readily assumed that county loyalties had little purchase in relation to football and its predominantly working-class following. Yet not only did

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<sup>3</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 172; Beaven B., *Leisure, Citizenship and Working-Class Men in Britain, 1850-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Taylor M., *The Association Game: A History of British Football* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), p. 96.

the success of Forest and Notts limit the possibilities for identity-making in other Nottinghamshire towns but the tendency of the two main city clubs to conceive and to promote themselves as representatives of the county too, meant that city and county loyalties co-existed and coalesced in Nottinghamshire football to a far greater extent than has been recognised elsewhere.

### **City, Identity and Sport**

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, towns in the North and the Midlands of England engaged in civic rivalry. Whilst Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and Wakefield, for example, displayed civic pride through the erection of town halls between 1858 and 1880 respectively, Manchester and Liverpool achieved city status in 1853 and 1880.<sup>5</sup> The opening of Leeds Town Hall in 1858 involved a visit from Queen Victoria. Manchester and Birmingham also welcomed Queen Victoria in 1851 and 1858 respectively. Gunn has argued that these visits by the Monarch were used 'specifically for the purposes of civic display' yet rivalry was certainly prevalent too with the press in Birmingham claiming of their display that 'Manchester never turned out anything so fine'.<sup>6</sup>

Though the architect T.C. Hine had grand plans to redesign Nottingham's market place with a new town hall in 1857, the scheme was shelved. At that time, Beckett has argued that 'Nottingham had not yet developed the civic pride of its Northern industrial neighbours'.<sup>7</sup> T.C. Hine was, however, behind the renewal of the shell of the castle that had remained gutted since being set on fire during the 1831 riot over

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<sup>5</sup> Collins T., *Rugby's Great Split: Class, Culture and the Origins of Rugby League Football* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Gunn S., *The Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class: Ritual and Authority in the English Industrial City 1840-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 165-7.

<sup>7</sup> Beckett J. and Brand K., 'Municipal Reform and Parliamentary Enclosure', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006, p. 249.

the Reform Act. Between 1876 and 1878, the castle was transformed into 'the first provincial museum of fine art' and was opened on 3 July 1878 by the Prince of Wales.<sup>8</sup> Following this, a new town hall, 'the present French-Renaissance-style building', though lacking 'the grandeur and presence of Leeds, Birmingham, Manchester and other town halls of this period' was built between 1885 and 1888.<sup>9</sup> Yet, as Briggs argued in his classic *Victorian Cities* in 1963, there was a sense that such developments brought Nottingham onto a par with other modern industrial cities and some satisfaction that it could be regarded as 'the Manchester of the Midlands'.<sup>10</sup>

Nottingham's local historians, Briggs suggested, liked to point out that it had 'a venerable past' and sport had an important part in this story. As early as the 1840s, Nottingham was considered to be notable in terms of 'sporting celebrity', with a 'prominent distinction in racing, boxing... cricket and hunting'. Sporting achievement could serve to generate and focus feelings of local pride. Despite Holt's assertion that he was 'probably more famous amongst the metropolitan Fancy than the North' due to having done most of his fighting in the London area, the death of the Nottingham-based prize-fighter William 'Bendigo' Thompson in 1880 was a significant public event with 'several thousands of persons ... waiting to witness the funeral ceremony'; the crowd, moreover, was reported to have been 'composed to a great extent of the lower classes'. After the service, it was reported that the 'principal battles in which he had engaged were discussed freely', such as those against Hucknall's Ben Caunt and London's Jem Ward, as Bendigo's followers proudly celebrated a local hero who was famous throughout the land.<sup>11</sup> It will be argued here, however, that from the

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<sup>8</sup> Beckett J., 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 404.

<sup>9</sup> Beckett J. and Oldfield G. 'Greater Nottingham and the City Charter', in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006), p. 267.

<sup>10</sup> Briggs, A., *Victorian Cities* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), pp. 368-9.

<sup>11</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 September 1880; Holt R., 'Heroes of the North: sport and the shaping of regional identity' in Hill J. and Williams J. (eds), *Sport and Identity in the North of England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), p. 142.

1890s it was increasingly football on which the sporting connection with local patriotism and civic rivalry began to rest.

In sport, it has been argued, nothing reflected civic rivalry more than the quest for cup success, which resulted in 'cup fever' and huge crowds. The ultimate show of civic pride was a town's team returning home victorious with a cup. It is on such occasions, as one commentator has observed recently, 'that the team and the town will melt into one'.<sup>12</sup> In the late nineteenth century, this involved many of the town's inhabitants jubilantly welcoming the team home, followed by a more formal gathering involving club officials and dignitaries. In rugby, the Yorkshire Cup was the reason for a boom in crowds from its introduction in 1877.<sup>13</sup> For football, it was the FA Cup that was the catalyst for big crowds from its inception in 1871. Supporters longed for cup success and the sense of superiority over rivals that came with it, so when it was achieved, the crowds that assembled were remarkable and considerable excitement was generated.<sup>14</sup>

An annual feature of the Nottinghamshire press in late March or April, from Blackburn Olympic's symbolically important victory over Old Etonians in 1883, was to report the FA Cup Final and its aftermath in detail. This included relaying the joy it brought to the winners and could include a description of the return of the FA Cup winners to their home towns in the North and the Midlands and the rapturous receptions that they were given.<sup>15</sup> Wolverhampton Wanderers, for instance, were reported as 'rousing their supporters to the highest pitch of enthusiasm' when they

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<sup>12</sup> Gray, D., *Saturday, 3PM: 50 Eternal Delights of Modern Football* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 121.

<sup>13</sup> Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, p.22.

<sup>14</sup> Williams J., "'One Could Literally Have Walked on the Heads of the People Congregated There": Sport, the town and Identity' in Laybourn K. (ed.), *Social Conditions, Status and Community, 1860-c.1920* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1997), pp. 127-8.

<sup>15</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 2 April 1884; 6 April 1885; 12 April 1886; 4 April 1887; 26 March 1888; 31 March 1890; *Nottingham Evening News*, 10 April 1886; 2 April 1887; 24 March 1888; 30 March 1889; 29 March 1890.

won the FA Cup in 1893.<sup>16</sup> Hill has argued that FA Cup victors' home towns seemed to become like a Utopia as everyone came together in celebration:

Ideologically, one of the most intriguing themes in all this is that of the unified community. It is represented most clearly in the image of the crowd welcoming the local heroes on their return from London. This image, it might be suggested, sought a magical resolution of the many internal tensions and conflicts that in fact beset the communities.<sup>17</sup>

It seems likely that accounts of the celebrations occasioned by Cup Final triumphs would have heightened the stakes for Nottingham's major clubs as they tried to emulate these successes. But tension came with this quest for glory. As Collins states, in relation to football more generally, '[the] civic importance now ascribed to football, especially in connection with cup competitions, had increased the pressure on clubs to find the best players and adopt playing methods which enhanced their prospects of a successful team'.<sup>18</sup> In the 1890s civic achievement in football was not solely measured by cup success but also by league status. Local pride, Croll has argued, was abundant in 1912 as Merthyr had just been promoted to the First Division of the Southern League and so 'Inhabitants of Coventry, Stoke and Southampton would be made aware of Merthyr'.<sup>19</sup> Merthyr took pride in the fact that it was now represented amongst some of the best football sides of Wales and England's South and Midlands. As we have seen, there was much local satisfaction that Nottingham could boast two Football League clubs by 1892. For both Notts and Forest, success was now measured by what they could achieve in both the FA Cup

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<sup>16</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 September 1893.

<sup>17</sup> Hill J., 'Rite of Spring: Cup Finals in the North of England' in Hill J. and Williams J., eds., *Sport and Identity in the North of England* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), p. 106.

<sup>18</sup> Collins, *Rugby's Great Split*, p. 53.

<sup>19</sup> Croll A., *Civilizing the Urban: Popular Culture and Public Space in Merthyr c.1870-1* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), p. 171.



and the league. It was this that led both clubs to thoroughly embrace professionalism and to cast their nets wider in the search for football talent.

### **Winning the Cup**

While gaining a position in England's premier competition, the Football League, particularly its top division, was considered important by club committees, the local press and the game's followers, it was the FA Cup which provided the best opportunities to project club, and by extension town or city, onto a national stage. In the 1890s, it was the Cup rather than the Football League, which was still dominated by Northern and Midlands clubs, which could claim to be a truly national competition. The 'quest' for cup 'glory' was often the central story which shaped the narrative of each season in the local press and which could determine the self-proclaimed 'status' of places within the imagined hierarchy of English football cities. This was especially evident in Nottingham between 1891 and 1900, a decade in which one or other of the two main city clubs reached the semi-final stage on five occasions and appeared in three finals. Here, the fortunes of Notts and Forest in what was sometimes referred to as the 'English' cup became an important marker of the city's 'well-being', in football and beyond, and offered a number of occasions 'for asserting local pride on a national scale'.<sup>20</sup>

The celebrations which followed cup victories have been a particular focus of attention for historians interested in exploring the relationship between sport and identities of place. It has been argued that the spontaneous celebrations of the 1880s gradually developed into more 'ritualized', formalised and orchestrated celebrations, appropriated by local political leaders as a means to 'sustain civic authority and forge

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<sup>20</sup> Hill J., 'Anecdotal Evidence: Sport, the Newspaper Press, and History', in Phillips M.G. (ed.), *Deconstructing Sport History: A Postmodern Analysis* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006), p. 123.

local identity'.<sup>21</sup> What is more, as Hill's work has convincingly argued, the 'stories' of these events told in the local press began to assume common structural features over time. There was a consistent plotting of the whole occasion, with the team's return - whether successful or not - becoming a scene for 'massed crowds, cheering, speeches, celebration', which in turn was represented to the reader 'as a symbol of the unity of the town itself, all of its thoughts and energies focused for a short time on the heroes of the day'.<sup>22</sup> Social divisions and unrest were glossed over in such reporting to 'construct' a sense of collective civic belonging.

Williams has suggested that in most cases municipal involvement in such celebrations was not commonplace before the Edwardian period and that official receptions were relatively unusual.<sup>23</sup> This seems to have been true in Coventry, where the spontaneous celebrations that greeted the local Singer's team's victory in the Birmingham Junior Cup in 1891 took the city's urban elite by surprise. Only later, in 1905, were the connections between local patriotism and support for the city's football team formalised, when a group of councillors took over the club, now renamed Coventry City FC.<sup>24</sup> In Nottingham, however, while spontaneous demonstrations seem to have driven the earliest celebrations, official recognition of the value of its football teams to the image of the city appears to have been accepted earlier than elsewhere. Continual reference in the local press to Nottingham as an established sporting city, and increasingly a football city too, seems to have convinced members of the Nottingham elite of the value of associating with the fortunes of its local football clubs.

In many respects, the impromptu celebrations on the streets of Nottingham in 1894 and 1898 were reported in a similar fashion as in other towns and cities. In 1894 an

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<sup>21</sup> Williams, 'Sport, the Town and Identity', p. 128; Hill, 'Sport, the Newspaper Press, and History', p. 122.

<sup>22</sup> Hill, 'Sport, the Newspaper Press, and History', p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> Williams, 'Sport, the Town and Identity', pp. 131-2.

<sup>24</sup> Beaven, *Leisure*, pp. 76-7.

apparently spontaneous popular demonstration began as the train carrying the Notts team was about to arrive back in Nottingham. The *Nottingham Daily Express* described the scene in detail. It began by asking rhetorically, 'Has Nottingham ever turned out into its streets in stronger force, or been more excited, than on Saturday night, when the shabby little English Cup was brought triumphantly to the town for the first time?' It went on to explain that, 'By nine O'clock there was a very perceptible movement stationwards' and that, by half-past nine, 'thousands were congregated in front of the station'. In addition, 'Thump, thump, thump went a drum' whilst some began to hum 'See the conquering heroes come' before a 'brass band could be heard' as these *ad hoc* celebrations built up. The culmination was the arrival of the team:

Then, when feeling had reached boiling point, a shrill yell came along the station wall from the fringe of youngsters who forgot their clattering heel-taps, and, as a bass to the yell, there was the dull rumble of the incoming train. A moment's lull, during which the opening notes of "See the conquering hero," were heard, and then Station Street bellowed with all its voices, waved all its arms, and hustled all its bones in the biggest scrimmage of the season.<sup>25</sup>

Such were the crowds that it took twice as long as it should have done for the team's coach procession to make its way through the Nottingham streets to reach its destination, the Lion Hotel on Clumber Street. The processional nature of the celebrations appeared on the surface to be similar to those municipally-led events – royal coronations and visits, the opening of public buildings, the unveiling of statues and the funerals of civic worthies – discussed by Gunn. But significantly, they did not reflect the orderliness that accompanied these events nor did they reflect the 'waning of enthusiasm for civic events' that he identifies.<sup>26</sup> The welcome for the returning FA Cup winners had a new dimension as elements of a civic parade *and* a

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<sup>25</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 2 April 1894.

<sup>26</sup> Gunn, *Public Culture of the Victorian Middle Class*, pp. 163, 180.

citizen-led celebration were interwoven as the procession struggled to make its way through the exuberant crowd. The *Nottingham Daily Express* concluded though that it was ‘a splendid reception, worthy of the team that has carried Nottingham football to its culminating point’.<sup>27</sup> The result was celebrated in song in Trinity Square with one account talking of a band playing and another ‘two itinerate bards singing to guitar accompaniment’:

Great excitement there has been in good old Nottingham,  
The people cheered and seemed as if they didn't care a fig,  
Spectators they were jubilant and danced around in glee,  
When the final for the Cup, Notts. gained the victory.  
There was Toone in goal, and Harper and Hendry as backs,  
Bramley, Caulderhead and Shelton we know as halves and were cracks,  
Watson, Donnelly, Logan, Bruce and Daft, they were the boys to score,  
And they won the English Challenge Cup in 1894!<sup>28</sup>

In the days and week after the match and the triumphant return home, Nottingham's civic elite organised a number of events to mark the success. At the banquet organised by Lord Henry Bentinck, Conservative candidate for Nottingham South and of the famous racing family, the host noted that the enthusiastic welcome the team had received on their return after the match had been ‘without parallel’. Significantly, he also observed ‘that it was not a night for speechmaking’. At the ensuing banquet key figures associated with the team, and the great and good of Nottingham, were able to forge or reinforce bonds of good fellowship by toasting the first national cup success of ‘a Nottingham team’.<sup>29</sup> A week later, a smoking concert at the local Albert Hall was presided over by Councillor J. A. H. Green and attended by a number of city and county Councillors and other dignitaries, as well as members of the club and the players. With a large attendance, including a ‘gallery occupied for the most part by ladies’, and with national flags and the club's colours prominent on stage, the event was intended to celebrate and promote the achievement of the

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<sup>27</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 2 April 1894.

<sup>28</sup> *Nottingham Journal*, 14 January 1928; Illiffe R. and Baguley W., *Victorian Nottingham: A Story in Pictures (Volume 14)* (Nottingham: Nottingham Historical Film Unit Publication, 1975), p. 71.

<sup>29</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 7 April 1894; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 April 1894; 25 May 1894.

town in a national context. It was about the success of 'a Nottingham club'; not just the success of the Notts football club.<sup>30</sup>

Four years later, when Forest won, the celebrations followed a similar pattern, although the spontaneous elements had perhaps become more 'formalised', with 'official' and 'public' events more closely intertwined. By this time, Nottingham's claims to city status had been recognised and the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* seized the opportunity to adopt a non-partisan city-wide perspective, emphasising that Nottingham was now one of only three cities in the country to have two teams that had won the coveted FA Cup:

Notts. Forest had a most triumphal home coming on Monday night, and they will not soon forget the scene of enthusiasm as they drove from the station to the Maypole Hotel, McPherson in front of the coach waving the much-coveted Cup aloft. All football enthusiasts and in fact the whole of the city, rejoiced at the success which had attended the efforts of the "Reds" and Nottingham now joins Birmingham and Blackburn in having turned out two teams capable of winning the greatest honour in Association Football.<sup>31</sup>

The *County Gentleman* was certainly correct when it stated that 'Nottingham was probably the merriest town in England on Monday night, when the Notts Forest men returned from the Crystal Palace bearing with them the Challenge Cup of the Football Association'.<sup>32</sup> An estimated 120,000 people had lined the streets and it was reported that 'the reception was far and away the greatest thing of the kind ever seen in Nottingham'. Later, Forest players were present at the Grand Theatre and Theatre Royal. At the Grand it was reported that red ties and handkerchiefs had been much in evidence. At the end of the second act of *A Race for a Wife*, the trophy was displayed on stage and the 'outburst of cheering was prolonged and loud'.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 14 April 1894.

<sup>31</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 April 1898.

<sup>32</sup> *County Gentleman*, 23 April 1898.

<sup>33</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 23, 24 April 1898.

Meanwhile, a more formal civic event welcomed the players at 'Forest's Celebration Banquet'.<sup>34</sup> As with Notts' success in 1894, the upper echelons of society were more likely to indulge in an organised civic event, which reflected one aspect of civic pride, whereas the masses were more likely to enjoy more spontaneous demonstrations of citizenship. As in 1894, the FA Cup was again displayed at The Castle, thus signifying a triumph that the whole city could enjoy.<sup>35</sup>

Two terms were regularly employed in the 1890s to describe elements of a football crowd. One was 'partisan' which suggested that spectators were more interested in seeing their team or city win rather than the game itself. An example of this occurred in October 1898 when the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported, with regards a recent Notts-Forest match, that despite the fact that 'no finer contest has been produced by the meeting of the great local rivals for years', 'partisans of either team' were left disappointed by the drawn score line.<sup>36</sup> The other was 'enthusiast' which hinted that this type of follower was more interested in the game than the team. This was reflected when the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported that 'Lovers of the winter pastime' were denied a potentially exciting game between Notts and Manchester City on account of fog.<sup>37</sup> However, this did not mean that the partisan was not interested in football nor did it mean the enthusiast was not interested in wanting a team representing their local community to win. The partisan was more likely to show behaviour reflecting local patriotism - wearing colours and reacting with strong emotion to results - though this did not mean that the enthusiast was entirely immune from this behaviour as was demonstrated when all 'enthusiasts, and in fact the whole of the city, rejoiced at the success' of Forest's 1898 FA Cup triumph.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Illiffe and Baguley, *Victorian Nottingham*, p. 86.

<sup>35</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 April 1894.

<sup>36</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 15 October 1898.

<sup>37</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 25 November 1899.

<sup>38</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 April 1898.

Local press reporting suggested that the display of civic pride which greeted Forest on their return from London with the FA Cup included both the partisans and the enthusiasts. Whilst Forest enthusiasts may have indulged in displays of citizenship, the overriding picture was one of bi-partisanship. The crowds that lined the streets, were described as the 'masses' or the 'multitude', inferring that it was predominantly a working-class affair.<sup>39</sup> There is no evidence to suggest that these celebrations were organised from above; they appeared to happen spontaneously. Those who joined the *ad hoc* party – and accounts suggest that the numbers of those celebrating were far greater than those who would have watched either Notts or Forest play on a Saturday afternoon - were broadly representative of Nottingham's population or, as Victorian commentators might have said, 'the masses' rather than 'the classes'.

Forest's return with the cup appears to have been less chaotic than Notts' procession four years earlier though. Despite the high emotion and huge numbers present, there was no report of scimmages or significant delay to the proceedings as Forest were able to combine the parade of the cup *en route* to the club's headquarters and dropping in at local theatres. It is likely that the authorities were better prepared on this occasion. When the Cup was brought back to Sheffield in 1899 it was clear that they had learned from previous experience:

Excellent arrangements were made to prevent any hitch or inconvenience in the demonstration. Three years ago, things were left pretty much to chance, and the Wednesday team met with such a boisterous reception that they found it impossible to proceed through the crowded streets of the city, and many people who anxiously awaited their approach in High Street and Fargate went away disappointed. Yesterday, any such contretemps was avoided. Everything was arranged beforehand- on behalf of the club committee by Mr. Arthur Neal, and so far as the police were concerned by Inspector Bridgeman. The route to be taken through the central part of the city was decided

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<sup>39</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 September 1898; 16 September 1899.

upon, and ample contingents of police were stationed at all necessary points. With any amount of good-humoured jostling and badinage such as always characterises a crowd, there was an absence of any of the inconveniences which sometimes arise.<sup>40</sup>

It seems likely that the police knew more or less what to expect to ensure the smooth running of the 1898 celebrations in Nottingham too.

Civic dignitaries and some middle-class partisans or enthusiasts would have been more likely to have enjoyed privileged access on such occasions. Whereas in 1894 the Notts procession finished at the headquarters of the club, in 1898 Forest's destination as they made their way through streets of Nottingham was the Marypole Hotel, where more formal celebrations could take place.<sup>41</sup> That there were official receptions recognising the achievements of the Nottingham clubs at various times during the 1890s indicates that 'the strength of clubs as a source of town pride' was being acknowledged, as it had been earlier in parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire.<sup>42</sup> In 1891, Notts were rewarded for their efforts in reaching the FA Cup final with a banquet at a restaurant in Holborn, London. It was organised by Henry Smith Wright, Conservative MP for the Nottingham South constituency, who remarked that 'London was his home, though Nottingham was his county'. The municipal flavour of the event was reinforced by the presence of Town councillors Elborne and Brittle.<sup>43</sup> Later that year, Forest celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with an extravagant bazaar at the Mechanics' Hall with a theme of an Alpine village that was designed by the scenic artist to the Prince of Wales. Opened by local dignitaries, Lord and Lady Belper, its 'patrons included the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle, the Duke and Duchess of Rutland, Earl and Lady Manvers, Viscount and Lady Newark and Viscount Galway'.<sup>44</sup> The following season, Forest were rewarded for their success in the Alliance League

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<sup>40</sup> *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 19 April 1899.

<sup>41</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 April 1898; Illiffe and Baguley, *Victorian Nottingham*, p. 86.

<sup>42</sup> Williams, 'Sport, the Town and Identity', p.132.

<sup>43</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 March 1891; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 5 January 1891.

<sup>44</sup> Wright D., *Forever Forest: The Official 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Original Reds* (Stroud: Amberley, 2015), p. 47.



and their run to the FA Cup semi-finals with another celebration dinner in London. The Sheriff of Nottingham, Mr J. A. H. Green, presided over the proceedings and, after the 'usual loyal toasts', Forest player Tinsley Lindley toasted 'The Mayor, Magistrates and Corporation'. The Holborn restaurant was decorated for the evening with various shades of the Forest colour - red. Scarlet predominated but also to be seen were red flowers, crimson drapery and Chinese lanterns as 'the striking colours of the popular team were prominently displayed on every hand'. Lindley reminded everyone how 'Nottingham was rightly considered to be a sporting town' at this event which demonstrated how sporting and municipal civic pride could intertwine.<sup>45</sup>

Events of this type can provide interesting insights into the relationships within the Nottingham football community. As well as representing club successes as town or city achievements, they revealed the close alliances between institutions that regarded themselves, significantly, as both friends and rivals. Special guests at Notts' headquarters during the 1894 celebrations were the Forest committee. One of its representatives, George Seldon, noted the 'great honour to this town that a Nottingham club should have won the Cup' and was willing to accept 'playing second fiddle to a team that was better than their own'.<sup>46</sup> The Notts-Forest rivalry was certainly now becoming friendlier in nature as was seen in the previous chapter when Notts and Forest made sure each other's fixtures did not clash in order to maximise crowds. This attitude was further aided by Alderman H. Heath, who became Notts chairman in 1894, the year of Notts' FA Cup success. Reflecting in 1928 on when the competitive rivalry started, with the FA Cup match of 1878, Ald. Heath was able to state how relations between the two clubs had improved considerably. This was initially instigated through an approach he made to Hancock, member of the Forest committee. The following was reported in the *Nottingham Evening Post*:

"In the old days," added Ald. Heath, "the rivalry between the two clubs was carried to absurd limits. The

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<sup>45</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 April 1892.

<sup>46</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 2 April 1894.

directors of the respective clubs would not speak to each other in the street and the players were almost at loggerheads, but happily that is all now past. When I became chairman of the County club 34 years ago I announced my intention to Mr. Tom Hancock to put an end to such silly rivalry.”<sup>47</sup>

There is some evidence too that wider county and regional identities were at play during key cup matches. In 1894, the Nottingham press reported cheering at the Sheffield United-Forest game at Bramall Lane in Sheffield when news filtered through of Notts’ final victory over Bolton Wanderers.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, a number of newspapers alluded to larger regional identities when reporting on Forest’s 1898 ‘all Midlands’ Cup final clash with opponents Derby County. The suggestion that consolation for Derby followers might come from ‘knowing that the Cup is resting among neighbours’ probably reflected the ‘mental maps’ of sports reporters generally rather than those of partisan fans.<sup>49</sup> However, the effect of the persistent layering of regional or county identity on top of that of town and club should not be entirely dismissed, a point which will be developed later.

### **Town, City and County**

In February 1894, Notts and Forest were drawn against one another in the quarter-final of the FA Cup. ‘Never in the annals of Forest and Notts.’, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported, ‘have the clubs met under more exciting conditions’.<sup>50</sup> Next to a long report on the match, which ended in a 1-1 draw, the *Nottingham Evening Post*

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<sup>47</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 19 October 1928; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 June 1894.

<sup>48</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 7 April 1894.

<sup>49</sup> *Dover Express*, 22 April 1898; Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 203.

<sup>50</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 March 1894.

printed a lengthy 'Description of the Scene' before, during and after the game at Forest's Town Ground. 'Most cup ties', it noted:

give rise to a certain amount of enthusiasm, but when it happens that the contesting teams bear to one another the relation that Forest and Notts. bear it is difficult to find in the standard dictionaries a word to describe adequately the state of feeling which most people feel about the matter.

The level of excitement was not explained purely, it was argued, by the fact that the clubs were 'rival teams in one town' but also because they stood 'in public opinion on such even planes of excellence', making the result of their encounters impossible to predict. Around 20,000 fans, a ground record at the time, attended the game, with hundreds allegedly locked out. The report dwelt on the visual impact of a packed ground but also emphasised the friendly rivalry of spectators:

Not only were the usual stands packed, but the extra banks, capable of holding 4,000 people, were also filled. The tedium of waiting was accompanied by a band discoursing much popular music in the centre of the field. Quite a gala spirit prevailed... Everyone puts on his best humour as his best clothes. Consequently the massed crowds were exemplary in patience and good humour. They jostled one another in the highest of spirits, and they cracked jokes as though they felt no anxiety as to the result of the match. Party favours were as common as the proverbial blackberry. The enthusiasm even ran to huge flags, which were borne aloft round the interstices between the banks and the stands, to the delight and derision of the individual occupants. The trees, one would suppose, from their dusky colour, gave an unfair advantage to Notts., who would be able to claim the athletic individuals who, Zacchaeus like, had climbed into their boughs to get a better view of the game. The windows of the adjacent houses were all thronged with spectators, and in one very noticeable instance a skylight in a somewhat more

remote terrace betrayed its owner's predilections by flaunting a flaring strip of red material.

During the game, the report noted partisan cries of 'Go it Notts' and 'Go it Forest' but maintained that 'the "gate" was merry, seizing eagerly upon any pretext for indulging in a hearty laugh'.<sup>51</sup>

It helped that by this time football was firmly established as part of the routine of seasonal entertainment. One sporting newspaper observed in 1891 that 'Football is as much a concomitant of New Year's Festivities in Scotland as the national beverage is'.<sup>52</sup> Much the same could be said about seasonal fixtures up and down the country more generally. Johnes has demonstrated that this applied especially to Christmas fixtures which quickly established themselves as 'traditional'.<sup>53</sup> This was certainly evident in Nottingham by the mid-1890s by which time the local derby was very much part of the cultural calendar. 'Boxing Day in Nottingham', the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* observed in 1894, 'would be no Boxing Day without a football match between the rival teams - Forest and Notts. - so thickly interwoven has the contest become with the ordinary entertainments of the Christmas festival'.<sup>54</sup> The *Nottingham Evening News* highlighted the size of the crowd that such a match would attract and described the packed scene of 'enthusiasts', stating how hard it was to gauge which team had the dominant support.<sup>55</sup>

It is difficult to know whether such emphasis on the friendly rivalry and communal nature of crowds reflected a culture specific to the Nottingham clubs or one common in many pre-1914 English football crowds, especially at Cup ties. Certainly, the picture painted of Nottingham 'derby' crowds hardly fits the 'aggression, anger and prejudice' that Huggins has suggested was characteristic of football matches where

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<sup>51</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 24 February 1894.

<sup>52</sup> *The Sportsman* (London), 1 January 1891.

<sup>53</sup> Johnes M., *Christmas and the British: A Modern History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp. 172, 200.

<sup>54</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 December 1894.

<sup>55</sup> *Nottingham Evening News*, 29 December 1894.

rivalries and local allegiances determined the emotional responses of fans.<sup>56</sup> Notts supporters had, after all, previously joined Forest supporters at Forest's FA Cup semi-final match in Derby with Queen's Park in 1885.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, there is evidence to indicate Nottingham football spectators watched Notts and Forest on alternate weeks in a similar way to the examples shown by Mellor and Russell. The level of bipartisan support was demonstrated when both Nottingham sides were in the First Division and the *Evening Post* had claimed that football supporters would, as a result, be catered for like no other area.<sup>58</sup>

The composition of the teams themselves was also a topic around which debates over identities of place developed. As we have noted, Nottingham clubs followed their Lancashire and Sheffield rivals in importing players from Scotland and elsewhere. Success was the most important criteria for constructing a team but there is no question that local 'lads' were preferred, and that they were often the particular favourites of the crowd. In celebrating Notts' 1894 FA Cup win, Councillor Green focused particularly on the role of fellow 'townsmen' in the team, such as Toone, Daft and Bramley, and particularly Alfred Shelton, who 'had been playing in the ranks of the Notts Club for many years, through good fortune and ill'. Players from outside the area were also applauded but significantly as 'loyal allies' and 'friends' rather than as 'one of us'. In certain cases, however, the suggestion was that 'Nottingham men' could also be made. David Calderhead, the captain of the 1894 side, a Scotsman who had moved to Notts from Queen of the South Wanderers in 1889, was described as 'a stranger in Nottingham once, but he was a Nottingham "lamb" now, and he ... always would be'.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 200.

<sup>57</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 20 March 1885.

<sup>58</sup> Russell D., *Looking North*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p. 45; Mellor G., 'The Social and Geographical Make-Up of Football Crowds in the North-West of England, 1946-1962', *The Sports Historian*, 19, 2, November 1999, pp. 34-39; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 30 May 1892.

<sup>59</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 14 April 1894.

Hosting major events also helped Nottingham to identify itself as a football town. In 1893 Nottingham hosted another FA Cup semi-final between Wolverhampton Wanderers and Blackburn Rovers at Trent Bridge. The attendance was 20,000 and the receipts of over £750 were a 'record for Nottingham'.<sup>60</sup> Nottingham was also 'honoured' to be chosen as a venue for the semi-final of the Amateur Cup between Old Carthusians and Bishop Auckland which was played at the Town Ground in 1894.<sup>61</sup> In 1896, Bolton and Sheffield Wednesday's FA Cup semi-final was hosted at Forest's Town Ground. It was claimed in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* that the Nottingham public would support 'The Blades', a nickname that Wednesday shared with Sheffield United at this time. The paper remembered how the people of Yorkshire had supported Notts in their 1894 semi-final in Sheffield and claimed that Nottingham and Sheffield had a 'friendly rivalry', the inference being that it would only be natural in the circumstances to lend support to Wednesday. This was the fifth semi-final to be staged in Nottingham and the third ground used in Nottingham for a semi-final. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* proudly claimed this as 'a record held by no other football centre'.<sup>62</sup> The crowd for this semi-final, however, was less than had been anticipated and the gate of around 12,000 took between £350 and £360.<sup>63</sup>

A year later Nottingham's reputation as a football city was reinforced when it hosted its first England international match at Trent Bridge.<sup>64</sup> Five years earlier, in 1891, Tinsley Lindley had been appointed captain for England against Ireland in a team that also featured Harry Daft of Notts, whilst Charlie Shelton of Notts and Albert Smith of Forest had been chosen to play against Wales.<sup>65</sup> This gave the *Nottingham Daily Express* an opportunity to reflect and reinforce notions of local pride by suggesting

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<sup>60</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 March 1893.

<sup>61</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 March 1894.

<sup>62</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 March 1896.

<sup>63</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 April 1896.

<sup>64</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 19 December 1896.

<sup>65</sup> *The Times*, 27 February 1891; *Nottingham Daily Express*, 27 February 1891; *Nottingham Evening News*, 9 March 1891. <http://www.EnglandFootballOnline.com/TeamCapt/CaptBio/CaptLindleyT.html>, (accessed 3 April 2017). Lindley also captained England three times in 1888.

that: 'All supporters in Nottingham and the district will be heartily pleased'.<sup>66</sup> Smith and Shelton also played in the prestigious England-Scotland game at Blackburn a few weeks later.<sup>67</sup> On the occasion of the international match at Nottingham in 1896 the *Nottingham Daily Express* noted the annoyance locally at the absence of Notts or Forest players in the England line-up and claimed too that the crowd would have been higher had it featured a Nottingham player:

One of the few faults to be found with it was that it contained no Nottingham player and this was the cause of great dissatisfaction amongst the football community of the town. How Langham, Frank Formann, and Prescott all came to have had their claims parried over by the selection committee is a mystery.<sup>68</sup>

Though no Nottingham players featured in the England team, 13,490, the third highest crowd of the Home Internationals that year, witnessed a 6-0 win for England against Ireland.<sup>69</sup> To put this in perspective though, a world record attendance figure of 60,000, which took a gate of £3,640, had watched the more prestigious Scotland-England international in Glasgow a year earlier.<sup>70</sup>

The Nottingham clubs, despite the intermittent FA Cup successes that they enjoyed in the 1890s, were not able to command comparable levels of support for routine Football league fixtures as found certainly at Everton and Aston Villa now. Everton and Aston Villa averaged 16,000 and 11,875 respectively for the 1895-96 season and 15,525 and 12,925 respectively for the 1896-97 season.<sup>71</sup> *The Sportsman*, in 1892, had described the attendance of 5,481 for Forest's match against Preston North End as 'phenomenal' with receipts surpassing '[the] largest amount previously taken at

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<sup>66</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 7 March 1891.

<sup>67</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 6 April 1891.

<sup>68</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 20 February 1897; 22 February 1897.

<sup>69</sup> *The Times*, 22 February 1897. 15,000 saw Scotland-Ireland at Ibrox whilst 33,715 saw England-Scotland at Crystal Palace. Games featuring Wales tended to draw the smallest crowds. <http://www.EnglandFootballOnline.com/CmpBC/CmpBC1896-97.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>70</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1896.

<sup>71</sup> Tabner, B., *Football through the Turnstiles ... Again* (Harefield: Yore Publications, 2002), pp. 95-6.

any football match in the lace town'.<sup>72</sup> Yet the Nottingham clubs did not keep pace with rises in crowds that were starting to be seen elsewhere. In the 1892-93 season, Forest were the fifth best supported club in the country averaging crowds of 7,200 whilst Notts were the eighth best supported club with an average of 6,925. Tabner's estimates for season 1896-97 suggest, however, that Forest, then in the First Division, averaged 5,125 for their home matches and Notts, then in the Second Division, 4,850 leaving them as the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> best supported clubs.<sup>73</sup> Ominously, relatively modest levels of support meant that Forest and Notts could not compete with the £4,257 that Everton were spending by then on wages.<sup>74</sup> There were occasions, however, when attendances at matches were considerably boosted by visitors who had come to town for the annual Goose Fair.<sup>75</sup> When Notts hosted Grimsby and Forest played Derby in October 1895, the terraces of both grounds were 'swelled' by visiting fans.<sup>76</sup> The following October, when Forest played Derby, again during Goose Fair weekend, the crowd was given as 17,000 with takings of £357 13s. 9d, and hundreds more were either locked out or broke into the ground. The resulting crush caused some of the spectators in the ground to encroach on to the pitch and the match, as described in the previous chapter, had to be abandoned with fifteen minutes left.<sup>77</sup> Forest did, however, have the stature to attract 'a monster attendance' for their friendly in London against Dundee in April 1896, reflecting a significant interest in the club beyond both locality and region.<sup>78</sup> After all, the *Sunday Times* had, in 1895, referred to Forest as being 'the famous "Midland Reds"' when playing another prestigious friendly against the famous amateur club, Corinthians, at the Queen's Club in London.<sup>79</sup> This suggests that Nottingham's wider reputation as a football town was secure and this continued to be reflected in the active roles played

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<sup>72</sup> *The Sportsman* (London), 15 February 1892.

<sup>73</sup> Tabner, *Football through the Turnstiles*, p. 95.

<sup>74</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 30 May 1896.

<sup>75</sup> Beckett, 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', pp. 396-9.

<sup>76</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 5, 12 October 1895.

<sup>77</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 October 1896.

<sup>78</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1896.

<sup>79</sup> *Sunday Times*, 3 March 1895.



by its officials, notably E. Browne of Notts at the Football League and A.G. Hines of the Nottinghamshire FA at the Football Association.<sup>80</sup>

Most writing on the relationship between football and the sense of identity experienced by supporters in the late-nineteenth century has focused on towns and cities. Yet it is evident that identification could be multi-layered, with followers supporting, for instance, a town's football side, a county's cricket side and a nation's football and cricket team simultaneously.<sup>81</sup> Russell has demonstrated how a specific sense of 'county loyalty' developed around Yorkshire County Cricket and co-existed with local rivalries in the area.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, he has found examples in football of supporters of Lancashire clubs supporting fellow Lancashire sides, and of Middlesbrough FC coming to be seen as representative of Teesside. Metcalfe has also identified how Newcastle United attracted substantial support beyond Newcastle with people from Northumberland and the North-East feeling affinity with the club.<sup>83</sup> Yet for all this, there has been very little exploration of the specific dynamics of city and county loyalties in football. Most scholars have tended to assume that county identities were stronger among the middle and upper classes and had limited resonance among football's predominantly working-class popular following.<sup>84</sup>

Civic and county pride could be interlinked. There is considerable evidence that people in Nottingham and the county were proud of the successes of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club and its leading players such as 'Our General', William Clarke, 'The Lion of the North', George Parr, 'local hero', Alfred Shaw, and W.G. Grace's favourite opening partner, Arthur Shrewsbury. In recognition of Arthur Shrewsbury's outstanding cricketing skills, the Mayor of Nottingham 'presented him

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<sup>80</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 28 April 1894; 26 May 1894.

<sup>81</sup> Russell, *Looking North*, p. 245.

<sup>82</sup> Russell D., 'Sport and Identity: The Case of Yorkshire County Cricket Club, 1890-1939', *Twentieth Century British History*, 7, 2, 1996, p. 216.

<sup>83</sup> Russell, *Looking North*, pp. 245-6, 255; Metcalfe A., 'Leisure and Recreation in a Victorian Mining Community: The Social Economy of Leisure in North-East England, 1820-1914', in Hill and Williams (eds), *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, p. 30.

<sup>84</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, pp. 205-6.

in 1887 with an illuminated address together with a purse containing 72 sovereigns subscribed by the “noblemen and gentlemen residents of the town” whose names were appended’. Shrewsbury headed the national batting averages five times between 1885 and 1892 and was described by the Mayor of Nottingham as having won ‘universal respect both in his native country and throughout the cricketing world’.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, there is some evidence to suggest that, as far as the county was concerned, it was as natural to identify with Notts and Forest as with the county cricket club and other activities and institutions in which justifiable pride could be taken. At a dinner for the the South Notts Hussars (B squadron) in Redhill, just north of Nottingham, in 1885, Captain Murray Smith declared that ‘[the] county of Nottingham was proud of its various accomplishments, it was proud of its cricket, its football and its industries’.<sup>86</sup>

The intertwining of city *and* county loyalties manifested itself in a number of ways in relation to Nottingham’s main football clubs. First of all, it is significant that both clubs, for a period, were commonly referred to as ‘Notts’ rather than ‘Nottingham’, indicating a connection to the popular name of the county as opposed to the city. For Notts, the county connection was stronger and more explicit. While Forest played at the Town Ground, later the City Ground, and were initially known popularly as Nottingham Forest until April 1887 and from September 1901, Notts played at the county cricket ground, Trent Bridge, and kept the ‘Notts’ title. A letter in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in 1876 had significantly expressed how Notts (and Castle) were not ‘purely town clubs’.<sup>87</sup> Forest, meanwhile, were more commonly represented as Notts Forest between July 1887 and May 1901 and this was made especially evident by the ‘Notts Forest’ title being connected with annual meetings or events.<sup>88</sup> Forest, however, were never referred to as just ‘Notts’. The most

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<sup>85</sup> Holt, ‘Heroes of the North’, from Hill and Williams (eds), *Sport and Identity in the North of England*, pp. 144-6.

<sup>86</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 June 1895.

<sup>87</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 December 1876.

<sup>88</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 May 1885; 28 August 1885; 4 February; 30 April 1887 (last significant mention of ‘Nottingham Forest’); 30 July 1887 (first significant mention of ‘Notts. Forest’); 10

common shorthand was 'Forest' or 'Foresters' and when the two teams played, the match was invariably billed as 'Notts v. Notts. Forest' or 'Notts. v Forest'.<sup>89</sup> As we have seen, James Catton had observed in 1883 that that this distinction reflected the popular support attached to the clubs at that time, noting that Notts were more 'representative of the Shire' and Forest 'essentially a town club'.<sup>90</sup>

But it seems that Notts *and* Forest both represented something more than just the city after this. The main football clubs in Derby, Newport and Stockport were also named 'County' which reflected, like Nottingham, that their towns had acquired county borough status after the 1888 Local Government Act. Carlisle United would, after their formation in 1904, be nicknamed 'The Cumbrians'. But these clubs were not regularly referred to by the name of their county, suggesting that the bonds between club and county were more prominent in Nottingham than elsewhere. Town/ city and county/ county borough could be celebrated together as layered identities. When Notts reached the final of the FA Cup in 1891, the South-East Nottingham MP, Smith-Wright, observed that Nottingham was his *county*.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, when Notts became a limited company in 1890, their memorandum stated that the club was to 'promote the game of football in the Town of Nottingham and the County of Nottingham'.<sup>92</sup> Also, when Forest won the FA Cup in 1898, they were known as Notts Forest to the whole country.<sup>93</sup>

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September; 3 December 1887; 18 May 1889; 30 April; 2 July 1892; 30 June 1894; 29 June 1895; 22 October 1898; 6 May 1899; 27 January; 19 May; 29 December 1900; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 August 1886; 21 May 1901 (last significant mention of 'Notts. Forest'); 2 September 1901 (first significant mention of 'Nottingham Forest' again); 30 June 1904 are significant references to 'Notts. Forest' (or 'Nottingham Forest' before July 1887 and after May 1901).

<sup>89</sup> See *Nottingham Evening Post*, 24 February; 3 March 1894.

<sup>90</sup> Catton J.A.H., *The Story of Association Football* (Cleethorpes: Soccer Books Ltd, 2006; first published 1926), p. 19.

<sup>91</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 23 March 1891.

<sup>92</sup> *Memorandum of Association of the Notts. Incorporated Football Club*, Nottinghamshire Archives DD1632/6.

<sup>93</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16, 23 April 1898; *London Evening Standard*, 16 April 1898, *Glasgow Herald*, 18 April 1898, *The Times*, 18 April 1898 are a few examples. I can find no evidence of the team being referred to as 'Nottingham Forest' on the day.

For local dignitaries and political figures, association with a local football team could connect with a number of overlapping functions. Mason has highlighted the status those in the boardroom enjoyed, citing the president of the Football League, J.J. Bentley, who claimed in 1905 that ‘in most towns it is considered a distinct privilege to be on the board of the local club directorate and the position is as eagerly sought after as a seat in the council chamber’.<sup>94</sup> Taylor has similarly argued that people such as Harry Mears at Chelsea, J.H. Davies at Manchester United, Samuel Hill-Wood at Glossop, Sir Henry Norris at Arsenal and the Crowther family at Huddersfield gained huge ‘community prestige’ from their association with the local club where community could mean area, town or region.<sup>95</sup> Chelsea FC, for instance, can be seen to have represented the area of Chelsea, their London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, West London, and further out into Middlesex and Surrey too, where much of their support has come from. Moreover, Taylor has highlighted how many Football League committee men combined their interest in a football club with other forms of local public service. Many club directors were also local councillors, magistrates and school governors, accumulating social capital from these overlapping roles.<sup>96</sup> When Notts mourned the passing of their first chairman, Arthur Williams, as if to highlight how football and official community roles were interlinked, the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported how he had also been Under-Sherriff of Nottinghamshire and clerk to the magistrates of Bingham Petty Sessional Division, and that he had also served on the Bingham Board of Guardians, the Rural Sanitary Authority and the Highway Board.<sup>97</sup> By 1895, the presidents and vice-presidents of Forest included the Mayor, three MPs, three justices of the peace, numerous Councillors, Lord Henry Bentinck and the Earl of Burford.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Bentley J.J., *C.B. Fry's Magazine*, vol. IV, October 1905-March 1906, p. 146.

<sup>95</sup> Taylor M., *Proud Preston: A History of the Football League*, PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 1997, p. 41.

<sup>96</sup> Taylor, *Proud Preston: A History of the Football League*, pp. 48-9.

<sup>97</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 December 1893.

<sup>98</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 June 1895.

Though it was possible, as a shareholder, to make money out of a football club annual dividend payments were limited to five per cent under FA regulations in force at this time. Sir Frederick Wall, who served as the Association's secretary from 1895, was to claim in his memoirs that there were 'too many limitations in football for the ordinary investor, and no sane person would ever dream of hoping to make a fortune out of football'. The inference here is that non-financial motives were likely to be more important when it came to joining the board of a local club. Wall went on to suggest that the principal objects of club directors were 'to maintain the game as a sport, as a healthy recreation for all those who take part in it, and to provide an out-of-doors entertainment'.<sup>99</sup> This attitude no doubt facilitated the links between football and municipal philanthropy; the game was identified as a force for good by Nottingham's civic leaders. 'Nobody', the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* commented in December 1893, 'was doing more at that moment [than the Mayor of Nottingham, who was Ald. Pullman], to promote sport in the best sense of the word, such as cricket and football'.<sup>100</sup> The comment referred to a trip that he had helped to organise for boys from the Nottingham Gordon Memorial Orphanage to watch Forest against Stoke. The day also involved tea, being put through drill and being entertained by a band at the Exchange.<sup>101</sup>

There was clearly no perceived conflict between football and a progressive municipal outlook. Indeed, the corporation encouraged local football by acquiring and maintaining as much open ground as possible for sport. The Public Parks and Burial Grounds committee continued, as they had done from 1877 - before 1879 it had been called the Public Walks and Recreation Grounds committee - to take responsibility for the 'care and management of the Estates vested in this Corporation for purposes of recreation' that included mostly football and cricket, some hockey

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<sup>99</sup> Wall, F., *50 Years of Football 1884-1934* (Cleethorpes: Soccer Books Ltd, 2006), p. 107; first published in 1935.

<sup>100</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 December 1893; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 21 April 1894.

<sup>101</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 19 September 1896.

yet no rugby (see Table 1.3 in Chapter One).<sup>102</sup> This was further exemplified by Nottingham's Mayor at a Notts County Cricket Club meeting in April 1896, when he stated that the policy of providing facilities for exercise 'was not a new one, but one which, by tradition, had been handed down to them, and that was to preserve as much as possible the open grounds in the town in order that cricket might be practiced, in order that football be played, and in order that the new game, golf, might be indulged'.<sup>103</sup> Some Members of Parliament were happy to echo these views. When Mr Johnson-Ferguson M.P. opened the Kegworth Social Guild in 1898, he expressed the hope that it would encourage both cricket and football.<sup>104</sup>

In June 1897, Nottingham gained city status, alongside Bradford and Hull, as part of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.<sup>105</sup> An immediate consequence of this was that Forest's Town Ground at Arkwright Street became known as the City Ground. But perhaps more significant was that Forest were involved in the wider Diamond Jubilee celebrations and that Notts could have been had they been so inclined. Williams has shown that in the Lancashire mill towns of Blackburn, Burnley and Darwen, where football 'had probably brought more national fame than any other activity', the local clubs were conspicuously absent from the 1897 festivities, suggesting, perhaps, that local civic leaders did not consider sport generally, or football more specifically, 'a very important source of civic honour'.<sup>106</sup> In Nottingham, by contrast, Forest and Notts were both invited to take part in the Jubilee procession in the city. Forest accepted the invitation but Notts declined.<sup>107</sup> Significantly, after the procession, it was reported that the 'appearance of Forest in the familiar red

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<sup>102</sup> *Nottingham Council Minutes, 1877-1915*, Nottinghamshire Archives, GB015, CA/TC/1/2 quoting here *Nottingham Council Minutes, 1877-8*, 9 November 1877, p. 24.

<sup>103</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1896.

<sup>104</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 January 1898.

<sup>105</sup> *The Times*, 22 June 1897.

<sup>106</sup> Williams, 'Sport, the town and identity', p. 131.

<sup>107</sup> *Newspaper cuttings volume; Programme of arrangements for Nottingham celebration of Queen's Diamond Jubilee; Arrangements for Procession on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June*; Nottinghamshire Archives, DD 594/9.

shirts was the signal for continued outbursts of enthusiasm'.<sup>108</sup> How far we can take this as evidence of an official recognition of football's importance in the life of the newly-recognised city is problematic but it does suggest a closer relationship between football and the civic sphere than existed in some other parts of the country, not least because civic leaders and officials seem to have been conscious that Nottingham's football clubs supplied an effective way of promoting the city.

### **Nottingham as a Regional Football Capital**

Day and James have suggested that Manchester City's FA Cup victory in 1904 transformed the status of association football in the city, generating a significant increase in interest in the game. They note, for example, that the number of local leagues more than doubled from eight to eighteen within four years of the FA Cup success.<sup>109</sup> The FA Cup wins by Nottingham clubs in the 1890s appear to have had similar consequences, adding to the prestige of the city, and county, as an important centre of the association game and reinforcing football's place in local popular culture as the main winter pastime, especially for young men. After examining the increase in numbers of local teams and leagues during the 1890s, this section suggests that similar patterns existed in Nottinghamshire as those identified by Day and James for Manchester almost a decade later. Yet the picture is a little complicated. There is evidence to suggest that the overwhelming pre-eminence of Notts and Forest, now underpinned by their FA Cup successes and membership of the Football League, may have had a detrimental effect on some other clubs in the city and county. Moreover, it is possible to argue that Nottingham's position as both

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<sup>108</sup> *Newspaper cuttings volume; Programme of arrangements for Nottingham celebration of Queen's Diamond Jubilee; Arrangements for Procession on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June*; Nottinghamshire Archives, DD 594/9. The quotation is taken from the *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 24 June 1897.

<sup>109</sup> James G. and Day D., 'FA Cup success, football infrastructure and the establishment of Manchester's footballing identity', *Soccer & Society*, 16, 2-3, 2015, pp. 200-16.

a regional and a sporting capital may have inhibited the development of football elsewhere in the county, especially in smaller towns such as Mansfield and Newark.

Underpinning and reflecting the growth of football in Nottinghamshire, and its place in working-class culture, was the development of a particularly dynamic local sporting press. 'Looking back', as Tony Mason has observed, 'we can see that the 1890s was the decade when the coverage of sport in newspapers really took on its modern size and shape'.<sup>110</sup> Arguably, Nottinghamshire's newspapers were in the forefront of this development, especially as the *Nottingham Evening News* began a dedicated Saturday night football results paper - as seen in the previous chapter - for the 1891-92 season, the *Football News*, which also covered national and local football in depth. Between 1894 and 1896, the *Football News* made the claim that it had the 'Guaranteed largest circulation of any Athletic paper out of London or Manchester'.<sup>111</sup> The strength of football locally was made evident with regular sections with reports on matches played right across the county – from Arnold and Red Hill, Sutton, Bulwell, Mansfield, Hucknall, Newark, Kirkby, Kimberley, Bingham, Stapleford, Carrington, Radcliffe, Heanor, Basford and Bestwood.<sup>112</sup> In addition to this specialist coverage, other local newspapers seem to have responded to the stimulus of Notts' FA Cup victory in 1894 by allocating more space to football, especially local football. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* in season 1893-94 could be relied upon to feature the league tables of the Football League Divisions 1 and 2, Midland League and Notts Football League. In the following season the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* also published tables for the Notts Amateur League, the Hucknall and District League, the North Notts League, the Notts Junior League, the Notts Leen Valley League and the United Counties League.<sup>113</sup> In part the sports pages were simply reflecting the growing enthusiasm for leagues, very much a

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<sup>110</sup> Mason, T., 'Sporting News, 1860-1914', in Harris M. and Lee A. (eds), *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* (London: Associated University Presses, 1986), p. 185.

<sup>111</sup> *Football News*, 13 January 1894.

<sup>112</sup> *Football News*, September 1891 to December 1899 editions examined.

<sup>113</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 27 April 1895 demonstrates almost complete tables for the season.



phenomenon of the 1890s, but news published elsewhere in newspapers occasionally drew attention to clubs operating outside this convenient framework. When, tragically, deaths of players were recorded in a Heanor Church Institute-Belvoir Rangers game, played in Nottingham, and a Sneinton Villa-All Saints game, it drew attention to clubs not otherwise mentioned in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian's* football coverage.<sup>114</sup>

In the short term at least, the success of top professional clubs seems to have stimulated the growth of recreational football. By the end of the 1894-95 season, the Notts FA had 160 clubs affiliated to it, of which 80 had joined in the previous fourteen months after the first side from Nottinghamshire had won the FA Cup.<sup>115</sup> This reflected a doubling in numbers, very similar to what happened later in Manchester after City's FA Cup victory in 1904. Further increases to a total of 204 member clubs in 1895-96 and then 219 in 1896-97 represented a rise of 158 per cent over three seasons. Local competitions also began to attract significant numbers of spectators, especially when the stakes were high and the knock-out cup format remained popular. The Notts FA Cup semi-finals held in Bulwell and Sutton-in-Ashfield in 1896 saw the largest gates 'for some years'.<sup>116</sup> By this point the Notts FA had eight local organisations affiliated to it - the Notts Football League, the Notts Amateur League, the Notts Junior League, the Bulwell and District League, the Notts Thursday League, the Radford and District League, the North Notts League and the Notts Church FA. In the summer of 1896, discussions were in place over a new Stapleford and District League and an Eastwood and District League.<sup>117</sup> The Nottingham Elementary Schools FA, as mentioned in the previous chapter, was also in existence by this time.<sup>118</sup> These new clubs and new competitions all required match officials which the Notts Football

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<sup>114</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 13 October 1894; 27 October 1894.

<sup>115</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 June 1895.

<sup>116</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 February 1896.

<sup>117</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 May 1896.

<sup>118</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 16 May 1896.

Referees Association - with 154 members in 1896, up by 41 on the previous year - did its best to supply.<sup>119</sup>

A glance at the press coverage of local football in season 1894-95 gives an indication of the strength of the game below the elevated level of the Football League and highlights a number of Nottinghamshire clubs capable of making an impact in regional and national cup competitions. Hucknall St Johns demonstrated 'proof of the excellence of the Notts League competition' when they performed well at Midland League side Loughborough in the FA Cup.<sup>120</sup> However, the shock result at the semi-final stage of the qualifying competition was when another Nottinghamshire club, Worksop, beat Grimsby Town, the third-placed team in the Second Division of Football League.<sup>121</sup> Newark competed in the Midland League and, although they struggled, finishing eleventh out of fourteen before successfully applying for re-election, they played well in the FA Cup, beating fellow Midland Leaguers Mansfield, who claimed to have 'the best team they had ever possessed' - before losing to Loughborough by one goal.<sup>122</sup> Beeston, meanwhile, represented Nottinghamshire in the FA Amateur Cup, a new national competition that had been started in 1892-93 season, and beat Leicester YMCA 8-1, briefly raising hopes they could win it, before losing to ambitious Tottenham Hotspur in the second round proper.<sup>123</sup> There was no shortage of football drama at this level to keep sports editors and newspaper readers interested. 'Sports news sold newspapers, or was thought by their owners to do so', as Mason has observed, 'and they were prepared to see that it had all the space it needed, much to the chagrin of some leader writers'.<sup>124</sup>

Nottinghamshire maintained its new-found status as a footballing centre throughout the 1895-96 season. Thirteen Nottinghamshire clubs entered the FA Cup

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<sup>119</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 July 1896.

<sup>120</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 10 November 1894.

<sup>121</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1, 15 December 1894.

<sup>122</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 December 1894.

<sup>123</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 December 1894; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7, 23 February 1895.

<sup>124</sup> Mason, 'Sporting News', pp. 184-5.

in the first qualifying round with twelve competing in a Nottinghamshire/Leicestershire Division and Worksop competing in a Yorkshire/Lincolnshire Division.<sup>125</sup> Notts and Forest would join in the first round proper in January. Only Derbyshire, Lancashire and Northumberland could show a comparable number of entrants. In the Notts Junior Cup, there were so many entrants that the early rounds, like the FA Cup, they were grouped into three regional divisions which covered the areas around Nottingham, Mansfield and Southwell.<sup>126</sup> A fourth section was added in 1896-97 which centred on Kimberley.<sup>127</sup>

However, local sides continued to struggle to make the step up to the next level. In some cases, gate receipts were insufficient to ensure that ambitious senior clubs could make the progress that they desired. Mansfield and Newark, both in the Midland League in 1895-96, struggled to secure high enough gates to cover costs. By January, Mansfield were involved in a financial crisis. If things were to continue as they were, it was estimated they would be £300 in debt by the end of the season. Players would have to accept a cut in wages or be transferred.<sup>128</sup> The following week, the club announced its intention to leave the Midland League and step down a tier to the Notts Football League.<sup>129</sup> An article in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* not only attacked the fickleness of football supporters but also claimed that 'no branch of business, for the running of football clubs is a business, is more mismanaged than that of football'.<sup>130</sup> Some football clubs took huge risks in bringing prestige to a town and consequences were harsh when this failed. Newark, like Mansfield, struggled to cope with the expense of playing at Midland League level. In February 1896, they announced their intention to withdraw from the Midland League as they had already made a loss of £90 for that season.<sup>131</sup> In 1896-97, Worksop became the third

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<sup>125</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 14 September 1895.

<sup>126</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 26 October 1895.

<sup>127</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 12 September 1896.

<sup>128</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 January 1896.

<sup>129</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 January 1896.

<sup>130</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 January 1896.

<sup>131</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 February 1896.

Nottinghamshire club in two seasons to fail to establish themselves in the Midland League after finishing fourteenth out of fifteen and deciding to drop out of that league.<sup>132</sup> As the achievements of Notts and Forest on the national stage supplied a focus for local patriotism and were clearly institutions of which city and country could at times feel proud - whilst offering inspiration to recreational footballers and helping maintain football as the main winter pastime - they also stifled much local opposition.

By the end of the decade, Worksop, Mansfield, Newark and nearby Long Eaton, just across the county boundary in Derbyshire, had all failed to maintain their status in the Midland League.<sup>133</sup> As Martin Johnes has argued in relation to South Wales, it was quite possible for those who followed the game to identify simultaneously with a club representing their immediate local community and a nearby Football League club.<sup>134</sup> However, especially where there was a well-developed local transport network which enabled supporters from outside Nottingham to attend matches, it is likely that the impact on gates and revenue – especially when Notts and Forest were enjoying good seasons or had particularly attractive fixtures – would prove problematic for the less illustrious senior clubs. At a Lincoln City Football Club meeting in the summer of 1898, it was stated that people were going to Nottingham (32 miles away) in order to see ‘good football’.<sup>135</sup> There were also repercussions further down what was, in effect, a regional football pyramid, notably in the Notts Football League. Hucknall St. Johns, who had enjoyed some success, withdrew from the league during the 1898-99 season and Kimberley also failed to maintain a side at that level. Well-established amateur clubs, Notts Rangers and Notts Jardines, struggled to maintain sides in the Notts Amateur Football League and withdrew in 1898.<sup>136</sup> The quest for playing success meant that some clubs took huge financial risks with disastrous consequences. Tellingly, at a Notts Football League meeting, a

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<sup>132</sup> <http://www.rsssf.com/tablese/engmidlandhist.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>133</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 3 June 1899.

<sup>134</sup> See Johnes, M., *Soccer and Society: South Wales, 1900-1939* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002), p. 210.

<sup>135</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 2 July 1898.

<sup>136</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 April; 18 June 1899.

Mr Johnson of Bulwell bemoaned the fact that wages were not being met by gates because of the First Division matches in Nottingham and complained that the 'success of the two leading clubs, and Notts. in particular, had drawn people away from Notts. League matches and to Nottingham'.<sup>137</sup> That the Forest reserve team comfortably won the Notts Football League and that Notts reserves came third, (with Mansfield second) in the 1898-99 season further reflected the dominance of the two leading clubs.<sup>138</sup> At the end of that season, in response to these growing difficulties, the Notts Football League was folded and was replaced by a new Notts and District League which included leading senior clubs from the neighbouring counties of Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.<sup>139</sup> Thus, while there is clear evidence of football's growing popularity in Nottinghamshire during the 1890s, both as a spectator sport and as a recreational activity, there were some problems which were hard to resolve satisfactorily.

## Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the two main Nottinghamshire clubs acted as focal points for a range of identities in the 1890s. Successful football teams stimulated interest at a number of levels: crowds that wanted to witness a winning side or an exciting match; newspapers that hoped to generate further interest and increase sales in the process; and members of the local elite who hoped that associating with a winning team would reflect kindly on them and help to stimulate a sense of belonging to the town or city. In Nottingham, FA Cup successes, in particular, prompted celebrations, some popular and apparently spontaneous, some more organised, official and civic in character. In these conditions, where the achievement of success on the field prompted heightened emotions off it, individual club loyalties

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<sup>137</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 March 1899.

<sup>138</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 29 April 1899.

<sup>139</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 June 1899.

to either Notts or Forest seem to have been subsumed into city-wide celebrations, reinforcing Nottingham's self-image as an important centre of English football and reassuring its citizens that they could match other towns and cities in football as in other things. But as their names suggested, both Notts and, when used, Notts Forest were county as well as city institutions, emblems of the shire as much as of the urban and administrative centre. This both encouraged a multiplicity of town/city and county/county borough identities to build around the clubs and held back the progress of senior football in Nottinghamshire's secondary towns, which were unable to compete with the success of two long-established professional clubs playing regularly at the highest level of the English game, thus offering in effect a superior brand of commercial sporting entertainment.

Nottingham took great pride in the league status of its two leading clubs. For the 1898-99 season, both sides were in the First Division. Of England's other large cities, this was only matched by Sheffield and Liverpool. Notts finished fifth that season whilst Forest finished eleventh out of eighteen. By finishing fifth, Notts were especially proud of their team and their 'supporters during the season of 1898-99 found constant cause for congratulation in the successful efforts of their chosen elevens'.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, Notts and Forest were able to provide the representative North of England side and national teams with players. When Forest's Formann brothers were picked for England - even though it had happened earlier when the Cursham brothers of Notts had been selected to play against Wales and Scotland in 1883 - the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported that 'never was an honour more appreciated'.<sup>141</sup> The Formann brothers played against Ireland, Wales and in the prestigious Scotland match.<sup>142</sup> Morris of Forest was chosen to play for Wales too against England, Scotland and Ireland and at Forest's annual meeting, it was made clear that the club was 'honoured' to have three internationals.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, both

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<sup>140</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 9 September 1899.

<sup>141</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 February 1899; *Nottingham Daily Express*, 18 February 1899.

<sup>142</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 15 April 1899; *Nottingham Daily Express*, 10 April, 1899.

<sup>143</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 June 1899.

Nottingham and Forest gained financially and in standing when the new City Ground was chosen to host the FA Cup Semi-Final in 1899. This was the fourth ground to be used in Nottingham to host such a game, something no other city could match. At Forest's annual meeting it was proclaimed that this was 'beneficial to the club and the city'.<sup>144</sup> It was the kind of external recognition that was especially welcome in a community that had only just achieved city status.

By the end of the 1890s football was clearly integrated into local popular culture in both city and county alongside other forms of commercial entertainment. The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* reported in 1899 that the Easter Bank Holiday celebrations in Nottingham included attractions at the Arboretum, the Forest, the Castle Museum, the Theatre Royal, the Grand Theatre and the Empire, fairs at the Market Place and at Sneinton, a point-to-point race meeting, as well as a Notts home game, a Forest Reserves match and the Notts Junior Cup Final between Boots Athletic and West Bridgford.<sup>145</sup> Undoubtedly, football was emerging as a significant part of the identity of a Nottingham citizen. Pride in coming from Nottingham and its county was often interwoven with an enthusiasm for football or partisanship for a club, a point hinted at by Holt's suggestion of the 'symbolic citizenship' engendered through the game.<sup>146</sup> Football pervaded the wider sporting culture of the city. For instance, a cycling parade in Nottingham in aid of charities in 1898 featured a 'Peregrine' who 'mostly sported the colours of the Notts. F.C.'.<sup>147</sup>

It was the FA Cup that was still the prize most sought after and which triggered heightened emotions. When Notts' and Forest's FA Cup campaigns got under way in 1899, it was reported that 'football enthusiasm which has been merely shimmering for five months, began to reach boiling point on Saturday'. For the First Round of the 1898-99 FA Cup competition, Forest were drawn at home to Wolves whilst Notts

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<sup>144</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 June 1899.

<sup>145</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 8 April 1899.

<sup>146</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, p. 172.

<sup>147</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 24 September 1898.

were drawn at home to Kettering. Both games were played simultaneously and in very close proximity to each other with the City Ground and Trent Bridge being located very close to each other and only a short walk from the from the city centre. The City Ground was proclaimed as 'one of the best in the country' now and was 'thoroughly tested' with the 32,070 crowd that paid over £1,000 at the gate for the first time in Nottingham. Meanwhile, Notts attracted a healthy 8,000 crowd. After the game, there were 'crushes' and gridlock with 'such a block in traffic' over the Trent Bridge. It was 'miraculous no serious results followed'.<sup>148</sup>

Whilst Notts lost to Southampton in the second round to the 'disgust' of their followers, Forest won at Everton where it was stated of their performance 'the display of the winners, it is impossible to speak in too glowing terms'.<sup>149</sup> In the quarter-finals Forest were drawn at home to Sheffield United. The huge attendance estimated at 33,500 generated a £1,400 gate and witnessed a Sheffield United victory, leaving the visiting fans 'beside themselves with glee'.<sup>150</sup> On this occasion it was United's followers whose sense of local identity had received positive affirmation and 'for hours after the game Nottingham rang with the jubilation of visiting supporters'.<sup>151</sup> If it was any consolation, the inhabitants of Nottingham, where football was by now firmly integrated into the new city's popular culture, would have understood exactly why their visitors were behaving in this way.

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<sup>148</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 4 February 1899.

<sup>149</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 18 February 1899.

<sup>150</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 27 February 1899.

<sup>151</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 March 1899.



## Chapter 5

### **Narrowing ambitions, widening horizons: Nottinghamshire football, 1900-1915**

This chapter argues that association football remained embedded in the popular culture of Nottinghamshire between 1900 and 1915 and that this was evident in the following ways: firstly, interest in and support for the major professional clubs remained steady despite a surge of enthusiasm for the game elsewhere which led to Forest and Notts becoming relatively less successful than they had been in the 1880s and 1890s; secondly, the thriving amateur football scene in the county, unusually beyond the South, catered for both the elite and the park footballer; finally, football was sufficiently well-established in the county for Nottinghamshire to have a role in the process by which the association game spread abroad to Europe and South America.

The period between 1900 and 1915 was crucial in terms of the game's development with professional football expanding beyond its initial heartlands of the Midlands and the North. Football's popularity as commercial entertainment was evident in the success of the Football League, which had expanded from its original membership of 12 in 1888-89 to embrace two divisions each of twenty clubs by 1905-06. As Taylor has observed, '[the] piecemeal absorption of clubs from outside the League's original geographical base' had been a feature of its evolution from the 1890s onwards.<sup>1</sup> Bristol City, Chelsea, Clapton Orient, Fulham and Tottenham Hotspur from the south of England had joined Woolwich Arsenal and clubs from the Midlands, including Notts and Forest, and the North, so that it had the appearance of a genuinely national

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, M., *The Leaguers: the Making of Professional Football in England, 1900-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), p.11.

competition. The Southern league, started in 1894, supplied a framework within which professional football could establish itself in the South. Tottenham Hotspur, then one of its member clubs, became the first southern professional club to win the FA Cup in 1901. Professional soccer expanded successfully into rugby-dominated areas such as West Yorkshire and South-East Lancashire as professional clubs from Leeds, Bradford and Manchester came to prominence.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter examines how Notts and Forest slipped from being amongst the elite teams in the country between 1900 and 1915 as there was a new wave of interest in football elsewhere. Factors behind this decline are addressed and the most powerful clubs in the country by 1915 are identified. The first major issue that is scrutinized in depth here is the how attendances at matches at Forest and Notts fell behind in comparison with sides who were experiencing the novelty of Football League success, FA Cup runs or local derbies. That attendances in Nottingham suffered relative decline when compared to rival Football League clubs impacted on the way in which Notts and Forest operated by limiting the extent to which they could be proactive in attracting the best players from elsewhere, a factor which probably contributed to their lack of playing success, and further reduced their ability to attract large crowds. Forest and Notts were conservatively run as businesses during this period as well, also impacting on crowds and limiting their capacity for achieving the successes in cup and league competitions which would have generated greater local excitement and interest. Football, however, *did* remain a crucial element of Nottinghamshire life. This was reflected in the continuing popularity of the game at all levels in the county which was by now the home of a thriving football culture. The local press continued to reflect and promote the game, the local schools' FA was long established, local football continued to grow, and attendances for Notts and Forest

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<sup>2</sup> Russell D., *Football and the English: A Social History of Football in England, 1863-1995* (Preston: Carnegie, 1997), pp. 35–8; Taylor M., *The Association Game: A History of British Football* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), pp. 63-70.

– though somewhat disappointing when compared to some other big city clubs - actually remained fairly steady.

The furthering of the rise of professionalism in the game caused friction in the South and led to a schism in the game.<sup>3</sup> Morris has written a detailed analysis on this subject and notes that a Nottinghamshire Amateur Football Association was created.<sup>4</sup> This chapter builds on this by providing a more detailed account of the split in Nottinghamshire which was atypical for a county beyond the South. Notts Magdala and its allies in the Nottinghamshire Amateur Football Association sought sanctuary with the AFA whilst other amateurs remained loyal to the Notts FA. Despite the division amongst amateur footballers in the county, the popularity of the association game continued to grow, as evidenced by the expanding number of local leagues and teams competing within them. FA-regulated amateur football in Nottinghamshire in the era of English soccer's 'great split' (1907-14) was sufficiently strong to produce players considered worth of selection at international level, for example, for the team that represented Great Britain at the 1908 Olympic Games. In the end, the effect of socially-elite amateurism dwindled in Nottinghamshire but some middle-class football enthusiasts would have been consoled by the emergence of rugby union as an alternative.

It was in the early years of the century, too, that the international diffusion of the game accelerated. Though historians are now realising that this process was rather more complicated than they once believed it is clear that Britain, through its extensive trade connections and the extensive cultural influence that it was able to extend via education, for example, played a crucial role. Overseas tours undertaken by British teams were also an important factor.<sup>5</sup> The strength of the game in Nottinghamshire - with Forest and Notts competing in the Football League and local

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<sup>3</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> Morris T., *In a Class of Their Own: A History of Amateur Football* (Sheffield: Chequered Flag, 2015), pp. 173-188.

<sup>5</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, pp. 160-4.

leagues and schools football flourishing - shaped the county's sporting identity. Consequently, when those from Nottinghamshire travelled through links in business or for leisure, the game travelled with them. The roles that Forest, Notts, Notts Magdala and Magdala Amateurs played in helping to establish football in Europe and South America through trading networks and overseas tours will be given attention here. Murray has written extensively on how football became a global game through trade connections and tours.<sup>6</sup> What has hardly been studied before, however, is that tours undertaken by clubs varied in their purposes. This chapter argues that, whilst Notts Magdala and Magdala Amateurs were forging links with like-minded amateurs, Forest and Notts were, as professionals, acting more as promoters of the game.

### **Nottinghamshire and English Football's New Wave**

This section analyses how Notts and Forest became less powerful in relation to other professional clubs that were emerging in this period, such as Manchester City, Manchester United, Liverpool, Tottenham Hotspur, Newcastle United and Sheffield United, who were fresh to the excitement of FA Cup or Football League success or older clubs, such as Aston Villa, Everton, Sunderland and Sheffield Wednesday, who seemed stimulated by new rivalries. Though the novelty of football as a form of commercial entertainment may have worn off to some extent, the press helped to ensure that the game remained broadly popular in the Nottinghamshire. It is important to note that attendances at Forest and Notts matches remained fairly steady - any decline was relative rather than absolute - while football continued to flourish at schools and local league level.

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<sup>6</sup> See Murray B., *Football: A History of the World Game* (Aldershot, Scolar Press, 1994).pp. 113-47.

The local press continued to reflect the mood of the public whilst shaping opinion too.<sup>7</sup> We can infer from the coverage that readers continued to be primarily interested in the progress of Notts and Forest, though reports of matches played by clubs at a lower level also featured regularly. The FA Cup continued to capture the imagination of the football public. On the occasion of Forest reaching the FA Cup semi-final in 1900, the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* reported that ‘in the eyes of the football world generally the league matches played [on the same day] had but a minor place’. Forest’s match against Bury, played at Stoke, finished in a draw but the gate of 18,000 which generated receipts of £768 was regarded as disappointing, an understandable reaction in view of the 40,000 who watched the other semi-final between two Southern League teams, Millwall and Southampton.<sup>8</sup> At the replay, staged on the following Thursday in Sheffield, a crowd of 12,000 witnessed Forest - who had been in special training at Matlock - go 2-0 up by half-time. Bury, however, fought back though and equalised late on to make the ‘delight of the Bury contingent unbounded’. ‘Disaster appeared to be impending’, according to the *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, and it was not long in arriving with Bury scoring the winning goal in the second-half of extra-time.<sup>9</sup>

The status of the FA Cup competition was re-affirmed two years later. When Forest again reached the semi-final, the *Nottingham Daily Guardian* argued that the ‘fight for the Association Cup was the event of paramount importance’. Forest played Southampton who were keen to avenge their defeat by Forest at the same stage of the FA Cup in 1898. According to the *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, it was ‘doubtful whether an encounter short of the actual final tie ever gave rise to more intense excitement’. After Southampton had defeated Forest 3-1 ‘the West End of London

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<sup>7</sup> Hill J., ‘What the Papers Say: Sports History, the Newspaper Press and Narrative Theory’, paper given at the British Society of Sports History Conference, Lancaster, 2001; Johnes M., *Soccer and Society: South Wales 1900-1939* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002), p. 10.

<sup>8</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 26 March 1900.

<sup>9</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 30 March 1900.

rang with the discordant war cry of the victorious Southampton hordes'.<sup>10</sup> These cries, it seems, would have gone largely unchallenged as Forest failed on this occasion to attract much in the way of travelling support with '[less] than 170 persons patronising the five special trains' that were arranged to carry supporters from Nottingham to London.<sup>11</sup> This was Forest's seventh FA Cup semi-final, their first being in 1879, whilst this was Southampton's third appearance at this stage of the competition since 1898. Perhaps the novelty of reaching a semi-final had worn off for Forest to some extent. Certainly, the relatively disappointing level of support for Forest on the day was an indication that enthusiasm for football in Nottingham could no longer be taken for granted and could be outmatched by a new centre of professional football like Southampton. If the Nottingham press reflected the mood of the local football public correctly, it was predominantly one of disappointment and frustration at this time. In October 1903 a regular feature in the *Football Post* waxed lyrical in bemoaning Forest's fall from grace and the team's manifest deficiencies with a parody based on W.S. Gilbert's well-known *Bab Ballads*.

#### The Wab Ballads

#### Wanted

#### (An Advertisement)

Wanted, by Forest, at once: first of all,  
 A sound line of halves- like the halves we recall,  
 Wanted, some man of superlative rank;  
 Wanted, a Foreman, in fact (to be 'frank'),<sup>12</sup>  
 Also, required a vanguard who can  
 Not be dependent (sic) on just an odd man:  
 Wanted, a right flank both 'heady' and deft-  
 Wanted, a right wing as good as the left:  
 Also required less play of the kind  
 Which leaves us a goal- by our giving- behind!  
 Wanted, more wins to chalk up on our card-  
 For terms and requirements - write Marypole-yard.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 17 March 1902.

<sup>11</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 17 March 1902.

<sup>12</sup> Refers to Frank Foreman who had been dropped.

<sup>13</sup> *Football Post*, 10 October 1903; 'Marypole-yard' was Forest's headquarters.

Sports coverage in Nottinghamshire newspapers ensured that readers were well aware of the development of the game elsewhere. In 1902, for example, mention was made of a crowd of 30,000 at Manchester City.<sup>14</sup> The rise of professional football in London was of particular interest. When Tottenham Hotspur won the FA Cup in 1901, the *Nottingham Daily Guardian's* comment used the occasion to remind readers of the tensions arising from the southern amateurs' jaundiced view of professional football in the North and Midlands: 'Now London has regained the blue riband of football, by the aid of imported players, we shall probably hear less of the spoilt child of amateurism'.<sup>15</sup> This reflected and reinforced local feeling on the South's previous attitudes to professionalism while, at the same time, highlighting the emergence of a new centre of footballing power. In these circumstances, the visit of Spurs to Trent Bridge in 1907 for a third round FA Cup-tie was of particular interest. The appeal of the FA Cup together with the visit of a new rising power in football ensured that Notts attracted 28,000, their highest-ever crowd at Trent Bridge, with hundreds locked out. The press reported that the whole affair was 'simply splendid' before adding that 'there was not the least suspicion of disorder' and that 'all were satisfied, except the Tottenham excursionists' as Notts won 4-0.<sup>16</sup>

There were occasions when the league performances of the local teams provided cause for pride, though these occurred less frequently as the period 1900-15 progressed. When Notts finished third and Forest fourth in the First Division of the Football League in the 1900-01 season, the *Daily Guardian* reported that 'Nottingham people have every reason to be very well pleased with the creditable part which the two local clubs have played in the competition'.<sup>17</sup> There was, however, considerable disappointment at how the season had ended. Notts went into their final home game with a chance of winning the title. After the match the local press reflected that 'Notts have never in their whole League history had a better chance of championship

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<sup>14</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 31 March 1902.

<sup>15</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 29 April 1901.

<sup>16</sup> Wain P., *Notts County: A Pictorial History* (Harefield: Yore Publications, 2004), p.22.

<sup>17</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 29 April 1901.

honours than was theirs on Saturday morning'. After being beaten 4-2 by Stoke there was, not surprisingly 'bitter disappointment'; a season of 'unceasing energy' had ended in a 'wasted opportunity'.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, only 6,000 had attended this important match which had been played, like Notts' previous home fixture, at Forest's City ground because Trent Bridge was unavailable due to cricket. If Tabner's estimate of home attendances is correct, this was significantly less than the average for the season of 9,450.<sup>19</sup> Even more surprising, perhaps, was the 'baffling' 1,500 crowd that witnessed the final home game at Trent Bridge that season against Preston North End on 27 March.<sup>20</sup> That it was played on a Wednesday afternoon would account partly for the small crowd, though other games on the same day at Bury, Newcastle and Aston Villa drew crowds of 5,000, 5,000 and 16,000 respectively. It probably did not help that Notts' hopes of winning the Championship had diminished a few days earlier: the *Nottingham Daily Express* observed that the game was 'ordinary' for Notts, as opposed to it being vital for Preston North End who were in a relegation fight.<sup>21</sup> Even so, with Notts third in the Football League, this was still a remarkably low attendance.

For their home games played at Trent Bridge, Notts' average for this season was 9,679. Though this was similar to the average for the previous three seasons in the First Division, it is striking that a well-established club in a football city that came so close to winning the championship could not attract more supporters. By now, Aston Villa, Everton, Newcastle United and Manchester City were all attracting seasonal averages of between 17,500 and 20,000.<sup>22</sup> Notts' final away game had been at Liverpool in front of a crowd of 20,000, a further indication of the higher levels of

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<sup>18</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 15 April 1901.

<sup>19</sup> Inglis S., *The Football Grounds of Great Britain* (London, Willow Books, 1987), p. 145; Tabner, B., *Football through the Turnstiles .... Again* (Harefield: Yore Publications, 2002), p. 97.

<sup>20</sup> Inglis, *Football Grounds of Great Britain*, p.145; *Bolton Evening News*, 27 March 1901.

<sup>21</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 28 March 1901.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.victorianfootball.co.uk/victorian-football-attendance-evolution/> (accessed 3 April 2017).



support which some rival clubs, especially those in big cities, could attract.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, crowds like this enabled Liverpool to pay players £7 a week, which with bonuses could reach £10 a week.<sup>24</sup> Attendances at Forest, who had enjoyed a less successful season than Notts, told the same story. When they played their final home game of the 1900-01 season against Aston Villa, they had already disappointed their followers by failing to capitalise on a strong position and allowing their prospects to fade. Forest beat Villa 3-1, prompting the observation that 'not for many a week has the City Ground resounded with such hearty cheering'.<sup>25</sup> For the 1901-02 season, though Forest finished a creditable fifth in Division One, one of their attendances was the equal lowest for the First Division that season.<sup>26</sup> 'Barely' 2,000 witnessed the home game against Newcastle United on 19 March, 1902.<sup>27</sup> Reflecting waning enthusiasm for football, cricket was now prioritised ahead of football - as before the mid-1880s - as soon as its season started.<sup>28</sup>

A similar pattern emerges in relation to crowds attending local derbies. In this period, the attraction of the Nottingham derby between Notts and Forest appeared to be undiminished. For the 1900-01 and 1901-02 seasons, the games played at Trent Bridge attracted crowds of 20,000 (the biggest home attendance of that season) and 12,000. The two derbies at the City Ground attracted 15,000 and 20,000 crowds.<sup>29</sup> Though similar to previous Football League Nottingham derby attendances, these were now being dwarfed by crowds for comparable matches elsewhere. Liverpool, despite the 1901 census recording a smaller population (147,405) than Nottingham (239,743), witnessed a 50,000 crowd drawn to Goodison Park for Everton versus

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<sup>23</sup> Warsop K. and Brown T., *The Definitive Notts County* (Beeston: Tony Brown, 2007), p.86.

<sup>24</sup> Taylor, *The Leaguers*, p.102.

<sup>25</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 22 April 1901.

<sup>26</sup> Laschke I., *Rothmans Book of Football League Records 1888-89 to 1978-79* (London & Sydney: Macdonald and Jane's, 1980).

<sup>27</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 29 March 1902.

<sup>28</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 15, 22, 29 April 1901.

<sup>29</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, pp. 78-87.

Liverpool on 22 September, 1900.<sup>30</sup> Another 50,000 crowd was seen at the Birmingham derby between Aston Villa and Small Heath on Boxing Day, 1901.<sup>31</sup> Such figures were an indication of a growing gap between the Nottinghamshire clubs and some of their Football League rivals in other big cities and marked the onset of a period of relative decline as Forest and Notts began to slide away from the place they had once held at the commanding heights of English professional football.

The fundamental factors of attendance levels and Football League or FA Cup honours were naturally interconnected. In 1888, Notts had been chosen as one of an elite group of twelve to be founder members of the Football League. In 1892, Forest had been chosen to join Notts in the Football League's elite group which now numbered sixteen. By 1914 however, neither club could be seen as amongst the country's elite. Symbolic of this was firstly Notts' and Forest's League and FA Cup performances. After the 1901-02 season, the highest that either side finished was ninth, with Forest achieving that position in 1903-04 and 1907-08 and Notts in 1909-10. In 1904-05, Notts finished at the foot of the First Division with Forest only two places above them, avoiding relegation only because a decision was made to expand the top division to twenty clubs. At the end of the following season Forest finished nineteenth and were relegated to the Second Division. Though promoted at the end of 1906-07, thereby regaining their place in English football's top tier, Forest were nearly relegated again in 1908-09. They escaped relegation by beating Leicester Fosse 12-0 in the penultimate game of the season and Middlesbrough 4-1 on the final day. An enquiry revealed that Leicester's players were suffering from severe hangovers following two days of celebration relating to a wedding. 'Tityrus' at the *Athletic News* was scathing about the irresponsible conduct of the Leicester players and voiced his discontent of the outcome stating:

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<sup>30</sup> The population figures in this table are taken from the 1901 census records using records from the University of Portsmouth at <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>31</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 27 December 1901.

The Commission had no power to deal with a body of players who had held revels and kicked up high jinks. Their junketings appear to have been a prolonged orgie unfitting men for proper discharge of their duties. This matter should not be allowed to pass over, because every League match concerns 18 other clubs besides the 2 teams.<sup>32</sup>

This incredible ending to a season, however, merely postponed the event for a season as Forest finished bottom of Division One in 1910-11 and were relegated. Notts finished nineteenth in Division One in 1912-13 so joined Forest in Division Two for the 1913-14 season. Forest actually finished last in the Football League in 1913-14 and had to apply for re-election. The *Football Post* reflected on a disastrous season and could only hope that Forest's reputation would see them avoid being thrown out of the league:

What a tale of defeat and disaster. What a story of misfortune and ill-luck. Let us hope that old associations, and the part which the Reds have played in the development of the game, will count for something when election day comes around.<sup>33</sup>

Notts quickly recovered and won the Second Division in 1914 finishing the 1914-15 First Division season in sixteenth place, thus avoiding relegation, whilst Forest rose two places off the foot of the Second Division. Success in the FA Cup proved equally elusive. Between seasons 1902-03 and 1914-15 neither of Nottingham's major clubs progressed beyond the quarter-finals, Notts reaching the last eight in 1903 and 1907 and Forest in 1909.<sup>34</sup>

Lack of success on the field helped to ensure that Forest and Notts failed to benefit fully from the trend towards higher Football League attendances. When both Notts and Forest were in the First Division of the Football League for the 1892-93 season -

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<sup>32</sup> Tabner, *Football through the Turnstiles*, p. 43; *Athletic News*, 26 April 1909; 10 May 1909; *Nottingham Evening Post* 26 April 1909.

<sup>33</sup> *Football Post*, 25 April 1914.

<sup>34</sup> Rollin J., *Rothmans Book of Football Records* (London: Headline Book Publishing, 1998), pp.28-35.

with Nottingham being the first city to achieve this - Forest were the fifth best-supported club in the Football League with an average attendance of 7,200 whilst Notts were the eighth with an average of 6,925.<sup>35</sup> In 1900-01, whilst finishing third and fourth in the Football League, Notts averaged 9,450 whilst Forest averaged 9,350 and were the eleventh and twelfth best-supported sides. By 1914 however, whilst their average gates were 11,800 and 8,050 respectively, higher than in the mid-1890s, they were now 26<sup>th</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> in the Football League's attendance table and both were in the Second Division, even though the First Division had by now expanded to twenty clubs. Thus, while the crowds attracted by Notts and Forest, despite a lack of success on the field of play, remained reasonably steady from 1900 to 1914, as Appendix 5 and Appendix 6 demonstrate, they were not increasing to the same extent as crowds were in other parts of the country. Moreover, when Forest followed their re-election with another poor season the average attendance at home matches of 6,075 in 1914-15 was their worst since 1896-97.<sup>36</sup>

Harding analysed the performance levels attained by the major English professional clubs in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth and their performances can be related to Tabner's records on attendances. He has argued that Everton, Aston Villa, Sunderland and Newcastle United emerged as 'super clubs' in the 1890s. Their successes were mirrored by drawing the largest crowds with Everton and Aston Villa being the best supported. In the 1900s, he argues, Sheffield Wednesday, Liverpool, Manchester United and Manchester City joined this elite group, now constituting a 'Super Eight'. Harding points out that 'between them these eight teams won all the League titles up to the war' whilst they 'also took fifty per cent of Cup wins', adding that 'between the years 1904 and 1914 there was not a Cup Final that did not feature either one or two of the "Super Eight"'. Moreover, these eight clubs featured consistently in the top twenty Football League clubs between 1899-1900 and 1914-15 in respect of average attendances, with only

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<sup>35</sup> Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, p. 93.

<sup>36</sup> Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, pp. 96-104.

Sheffield Wednesday bucking the trend as the twenty-first best-supported club in 1909-10 and 1910-11. Harding is incorrect on Football League titles as Blackburn Rovers won the First Division in 1912 and 1914. They also featured consistently in the top twenty best supported clubs for this period as did Sheffield United who won the FA Cup three times between 1899 and 1915. Chelsea, meanwhile, were formed in 1905 and were already a First Division side in 1907 whilst the 1901 FA Cup winners, Tottenham Hotspur, reached the First Division in 1909. Significantly, these two London clubs were between 1908 and 1914 always amongst the top four best-supported clubs in the country with Chelsea being notably well supported in the 1913-14 season when their average home attendance was an estimated 37,900, exceeding by around 5,000 the record achieved by Newcastle United in 1906-07. In 1915, Chelsea went on to reach the FA Cup Final, the finest achievement in their short history. It could be argued, therefore, that by 1915 a 'top twelve' had emerged who were winning First Division titles or reaching FA Cup finals whilst also consistently attracting the best crowds. This group comprised Harding's 'Super Eight' of Liverpool, Everton, Sheffield Wednesday, Sunderland, Newcastle United, Manchester City, Manchester United and Aston Villa together with – I would argue - Blackburn Rovers, Sheffield United, Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur.<sup>37</sup> Notts and Forest certainly could no longer claim to be amongst England's most powerful clubs.

There was clearly a link between playing success and growing attendances. Normally success led to larger crowds but occasionally a large supporter base as at Chelsea - which was effectively a new Football League franchise in central London - appeared to be the catalyst for playing success. Novelty may also have been a factor

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<sup>37</sup> Harding J., *For the Good of the Game: Official History of the Professional Footballers Association* (London: Robson Books Ltd, 1998), p.34. Though Harding's 'Super Eight' is a good indicator of the most successful clubs, it takes insufficient account of Blackburn Rovers winning Football League Championship in 1912 and 1914. Moreover it is worth noting that the 1912 FA Cup Final was contested by Barnsley and West Bromwich Albion, neither of which were included in Harding's 'Super Eight'; Russell, *Football and the English*, p. 53; Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, pp. 96-104; see also Porter D., 'Coming on with Leaps and Bounds in the Metropolis: London Football in the Era of the 1908 Olympics', *The London Journal*, 34, 2, July 2009, p. 117, with regards the strength of support for Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur.

in attracting the large numbers that could generate the higher revenues that generally underpinned improved league and cup performances. Though Forest and Notts had both won the FA Cup in the 1890s and had both finished in the top four of the First Division as recently as 1901, these successes were not followed up and failed to lead to any significant long-term increase in attendances. The novelty of FA Cup runs and Football League membership appeared to have worn off in Nottingham by 1900. Rising attendances elsewhere reflected success and instigated further success. Significantly, of the sixteen First Division sides in 1892-93 - which were also the sixteen best-supported clubs in England at that time - only Everton, Sunderland, Sheffield Wednesday, Aston Villa, Newton Heath (renamed Manchester United in 1902) and Blackburn Rovers merited a place among the elite twelve that had emerged by 1914-15. It was important that Everton, Sunderland, Sheffield Wednesday, Aston Villa and Newton Heath had new rivalries with Liverpool, Newcastle United, Sheffield United, Small Heath (renamed as Birmingham in 1905), and Manchester City to help them sustain interest and create impetus. Blackburn Rovers, meanwhile, engaged in big signings such as Simpson and Shea to create momentum.<sup>38</sup> This left ten of the sixteen top clubs from 1892-93 in a relatively weaker position twenty years later. The two Nottingham clubs thus found themselves in a similar position to no longer quite so proud Preston North End, Bolton Wanderers, Burnley, Derby, Stoke, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton and Accrington.

So, from being one of the strongest footballing centres in the country, Nottinghamshire was now struggling to compete with longer standing rivals such as Sheffield Wednesday, Everton, Blackburn Rovers, Aston Villa and Sunderland as well as with the newer professional clubs that had emerged such as Liverpool, Manchester City, Newcastle United, Sheffield United, Chelsea, Tottenham Hotspur and the revitalised Manchester United. Successes achieved in this period by outliers

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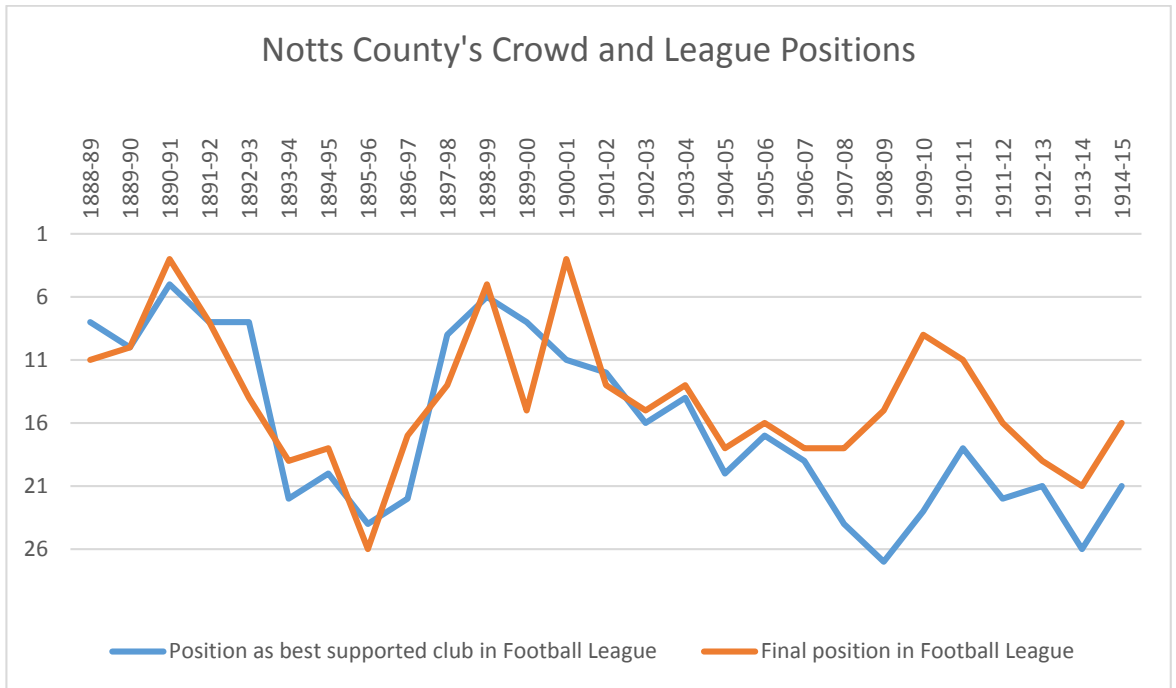
<sup>38</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 January 1913.

like Bristol City (Division One runners-up in 1907 and FA Cup finalists in 1909) and Bradford City (FA Cup winners and fifth in Division One in 1911) simply underlined the point that the Nottingham clubs were now amongst the Football League's 'also-rans'. After Forest's FA Cup win in 1898, success eluded both them and their Nottingham neighbours right through to 1914-15, the last season before the break caused by the First World War. During this period Everton, Liverpool (twice), Manchester United (twice), Blackburn Rovers (twice), Aston Villa (three times), Sheffield Wednesday (twice), Sunderland (twice) and Newcastle United (three times) claimed First Division titles. Meanwhile Sheffield United (three times), Bury (twice), Tottenham Hotspur, Manchester City, Aston Villa (twice), Everton, Manchester United, Sheffield Wednesday, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Newcastle United, Bradford City, Barnsley and Burnley all claimed FA Cup honours. Tellingly, all of these clubs - except Bury, Barnsley and Wolverhampton Wanderers - attracted consistently higher average attendances in this period than both Forest and Notts.<sup>39</sup> The nature of these developments in English professional football and how they impacted in absolute and relative terms on Nottingham's two major clubs is clear from Figures 5.1 and 5.2.

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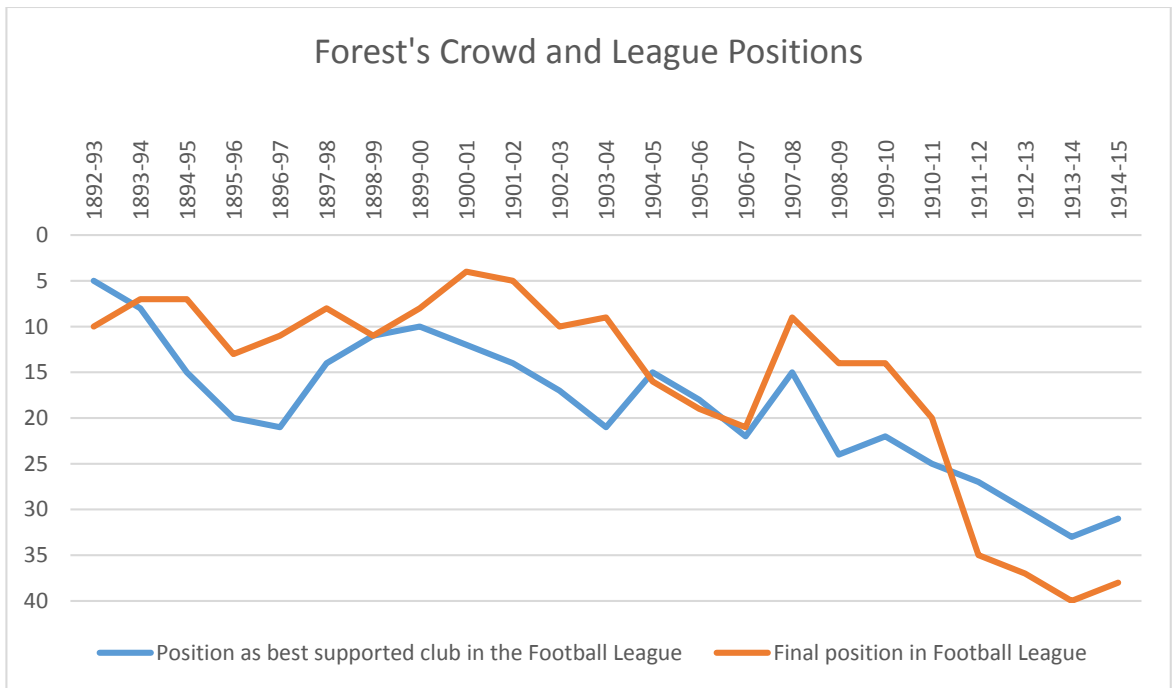
<sup>39</sup> See Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, pp. 100-4.

**Figure 5.1: Notts' League Positions and Relative Crowd Positions (1)**



Notes- (1) see Appendix 5 for data relating to this chart.

**Figure 5.2: Forest's League Positions and Relative Crowds Positions (1)**



Notes- (1) see Appendix 6 for data relating to this chart.



Moreover, as Table 5.1 demonstrates, a smaller percentage of Nottingham's population watched Forest and Notts than in two cities of a comparable size, each with two major professional football clubs, Sheffield and Liverpool.<sup>40</sup> While it would be unwise to regard these figures as a definitive indicator as many spectators would have travelled to matches from locations beyond the city boundaries, they do underline the conclusion regarding the relative paucity of support for the two Nottingham clubs compared to city-based clubs elsewhere. The excitement of a fresh rivalry for Everton and Sheffield Wednesday, with Liverpool and Sheffield United respectively, was one factor which may explain this phenomenon. That both of Nottingham's clubs played outside the south-eastern boundary of Nottingham at Trent Bridge and the City Ground in Rushcliffe in 1901 with Forest continuing at the City Ground outside of the city boundary in 1911 may help to explain why Nottingham was behind Sheffield and Liverpool in this respect. However, neither ground was far from the city centre nor were they difficult to reach. It has already been highlighted that one of the reasons that Notts had been chosen as a founder member of the Football League was because of the good transport links to Trent Bridge, actually the ground furthest away from the city centre in 1901 and 1911.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> The population figures in this table are taken from the 1901 and 1911 census records using records from the University of Portsmouth at <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/> (accessed 3 April 2017). In 1901, both Notts and Forest were actually playing outside the Nottingham boundary in Rushcliffe. In 1911, only Forest remained outside the Nottingham boundary.

<sup>41</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 67.

**Table 5.1: Percentage of the Populations of Nottingham, Sheffield and Liverpool attending Football Matches (1)**

	<u>1901 population</u> <u>/1900-01 season</u>	<u>1911 population</u> <u>/1910-11 season</u>	<u>% of population</u> <u>watching football in</u> <u>1901</u>	<u>% of population</u> <u>watching football</u> <u>in 1911</u>
Nottingham's population/average home gate of Forest and Notts added	239,743/18,800	259,904/22,450	7.84	8.64 (2)
Sheffield's population/average home gate of Wednesday and United added	229,454/23,550	267,132/24,025	10.26	8.99
Liverpool's population/average home gate of Everton and Liverpool added	147,405/31,225	128,673/35,600	21.18	27.67

Notes- (1) <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/> (accessed 3 April 2017); Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, 97, 102. (2) There is actually a rise in Nottingham's percentage of people watching football for this season because of Notts' move to Meadow Lane. However, the relevant percentage for Nottingham is still lower than for both Sheffield and Liverpool.

Large gate receipts and the money that those brought into a club were clearly instrumental in increasing prospects of success, not least because wealthier clubs could afford higher transfer fees to tempt other clubs to part with their most talented players, could give larger benefit payments and bonuses to players, or could evade the maximum wage ruling with 'under-the-counter' payments or other rewards.

Liverpool, as we have seen, could attract large attendances and paid wages of £7 a week, rising to £10 with bonuses. Middlesbrough were a well-supported club being consistently in the top fifteen best-supported clubs between 1900 and 1909.<sup>42</sup> They could afford the first £1,000 transfer fee when Alf Common joined them in 1905 and helped them to become a well-established First Division club. Blackburn Rovers had consistently good support and followed their League success of 1912 by being the first club to spend £2,000 when Daniel Shea joined them from West Ham United in 1913, helping them win another title a year later.<sup>43</sup> Manchester City were also well-supported and were consistently in the top five best-supported clubs between 1899 and 1908. The resolution for a maximum wage of £4 a week was passed in May 1900 and enforced from May 1901.<sup>44</sup> Yet, between 1902 and 1906, Manchester City paid Welsh international Billy Meredith £2 a week above the maximum wage and more than £50 a year in bonuses before he was fined and suspended. Their star player helped them win the FA Cup in 1904 and would probably have escaped notice for longer had he not been involved in a bribery scandal in the 1905-06 season. When, in 1906, Meredith moved to Manchester United, a club with a similarly strong base of home support, he was paid a £500 signing-on fee and his weekly wages matched those paid at City but he was fined and suspended again. In return, Meredith helped United to win the FA Cup in 1909 justifying the money that United had invested in him. Holt argues that richer clubs almost certainly 'went on evading the maximum wage regulation'. This was especially so after the Football League gained governance from the FA with respect to financial affairs in 1904 as 'it was not likely that club chairman would encourage investigations that might damage themselves'.<sup>45</sup> Forest and Notts, as we have seen, were less well supported and in an era when the principal revenue stream was derived from money taken at the turnstiles, were unable to afford big transfer fees and high wages. They could not compete with clubs like

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<sup>42</sup> Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, pp. 96-104.

<sup>43</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 January 1913.

<sup>44</sup> *Sporting Life*, 30 May 1900; 28 November 1900, 1, 8 May 1901

<sup>45</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, pp.72-75; Holt R., *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 294-5; Taylor, *The Leaguers*, pp. 39, 106-7, 112;

Newcastle, Aston Villa and Sunderland, all of whom put up more than £1,000 at least once to acquire talented players before the Daniel Shea transfer to Blackburn (see Appendix 7).<sup>46</sup> The information in Appendix 8, meanwhile, shows the players who played in the Notts-Forest game of November, 1908. The general picture is one of local players or players bought from modest clubs. Two exceptions for Notts are the signings from Aston Villa, Billy Matthews and Jimmy Cantrell, though Cantrell's early years had been spent with local Nottinghamshire sides Bulwell and Hucknall Constitutional. The *Athletic News*, whilst describing Notts' signing of these two players and Harper from Villa, claimed that 'Notts as a rule cannot afford heavy transfer fees'.<sup>47</sup> Cantrell was an excellent goalscorer for Notts but was sold on to Tottenham for £1,500 in 1912 as highlighted in Appendix 7. Meanwhile, an exception for Forest is Glenville Morris who was bought for £200 - a considerable sum at that time - in 1898 just after Forest's FA Cup triumph and just before the period, 1900-1915, that this section is focussed on.<sup>48</sup> It appears that between 1900 and 1915, Forest and Notts were wary of taking risks with big signings because of the falling crowds in relation to elsewhere. An indication of falling quality is that only one player from the 1908 encounter, Harry Linacre, is in Catton's international elevens of Forest and Notts players that featured in Chapter 3 on pages 169-70.

Aside from club finance, however, other factors have to be taken into account when considering what could make a football club successful. It seems likely that these may have become relatively more important when the maximum wage of £4 a week was enforced in 1901 with the aim of achieving greater parity between clubs and enhancing competition.<sup>49</sup> Yet, the extent to which this was achieved is very much open to question as the subsequent emergence of Harding's 'Super Eight' suggests. Fred Rinder, chairman of Aston Villa and an opponent of the maximum wage, claimed

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<sup>46</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 January 1913.

<sup>47</sup> *Athletic News*, 1 November 1909.

<sup>48</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*: Special Edition, Bygones, Forest- The First 100 Years, 29 September 2014, p.7.

<sup>49</sup> Taylor, *The Leaguers*, p. xx.

that clubs from the big cities were still able to gain an advantage by having large squads of players, each on a £4 wage. FA Chairman Charles Clegg, who also chaired the two major Sheffield clubs, furthermore felt that the richer clubs were able to attract whichever players they wanted.<sup>50</sup>

The relative strengths of local grass-roots and schools football may also have been an important factor. Though football had by now established itself as an important feature of culture and society in and around Nottingham it was, perhaps, not quite as firmly rooted as in some cities with more successful clubs. In 1879, for example, Sheffield had 40 clubs with about 5,000 players whereas, six years later, Nottingham had 36 clubs but only 1,630 players.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, some other towns and cities were ahead of Nottingham in establishing organised schools football. Birmingham (1885), South London (1885), Sheffield (1887) and Manchester (1890) all preceded Nottingham (1891) in this respect.<sup>52</sup> Strong leadership at club level could also lead to success. Forest were one of the few clubs left in the country to be run by a committee and have been described as ‘an enclave of the old school and seemed equally cautious in their business dealings’.<sup>53</sup> Notts, too, had made no change in their directorate between becoming a limited company in 1900 through to 1914 and were subservient to their landlords during their time at Trent Bridge being unable to play football there in the cricket season. Appendix 9 identifies this directorate and their occupations.

Meanwhile, the rising powers of Liverpool, Manchester United and Chelsea were run as ‘virtual dictatorships’.<sup>54</sup> The arrangements at Notts and Forest appeared

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<sup>50</sup> Taylor, *The Leaguers*, p.182.

<sup>51</sup> Mason T., *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915* (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), p.31; Garnham N., *Association Football and Society in Pre-Partition Ireland* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2004), p. 90; Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 77.

<sup>52</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, p. 85.

<sup>53</sup> Goldblatt D., *The Game of our Lives: The Meaning and Making of Modern Football* (London: Penguin, 2014), p. 122.

<sup>54</sup> Tischler S., *Footballers and Businessmen: The Origins of Professional Soccer in England* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1981), p.86; Lewis R.W., ‘The Development of Football in Lancashire, 1870-1914’, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Lancaster, 1993, p. 86.

outdated especially in comparison with a modern club of the time, Chelsea, with its impressive new stadium, Stamford Bridge, powerful owner, Gus Mears, and huge growing supporter base with home gates averaging from 18,425 in 1907-08 to 37,900 in 1913-14.<sup>55</sup> Like Mears, Henry Norris, (Fulham and Arsenal) and Houlding (Liverpool) were maximising their profits as much as possible through catering, high rents or establishing grounds close to transport networks.<sup>56</sup> Forest, on the other hand, were relatively conservative in their approach and took few risks. It was reported at the end of the 1902-03 season that Forest's gate receipts had amounted to £6,416 whilst they had spent £3,867 on wages which, after other expenses, left them with a modest £1,200 in profit.<sup>57</sup>

Forest had made moves to become a limited company in 1906. The Football League president even had a letter printed in the *Nottingham Evening Post* which highlighted Forest's large committee, which included 24 vice-presidents, and supported the idea of reform at the club stating:

It is a matter of football history that the successful clubs have been more or less in the hands of the few, and long ago in commercial concerns - and football to-day is commercial as well as sporting, necessarily so - large committees were condemned as unwieldy and unworkable.<sup>58</sup>

The proposed capital was to be £5000 made up of £1 shares and this was agreed unanimously by the members of the club.<sup>59</sup> A year later, however, the share issue had not materialised. Complications had arisen on account of the relationship between the club and the City council which had owned Forest's previous ground

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<sup>55</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 71.

<sup>56</sup> Vamplew W., *Pay Up and Play the Game- Professional Sport in Britain, 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p.85; Mason, *Association Football*, pp.45-46; Taylor, *Association Game*, pp.71-72.

<sup>57</sup> *Football Post*, 5 September 1903; Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, p. 283.

<sup>58</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 11 June 1906.

<sup>59</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 21 July 1906, 26 July 1906.

(the Town Ground) and also owned its current ground (the City ground).<sup>60</sup> In June 1908, the limited company proposal was actually rescinded. It was stated that two separate leases on the ground had complicated matters. Forest, however, sought consolation in being the 'only first-class club in England that was carried on on old-fashioned lines'.<sup>61</sup>

Notts also appeared reluctant to or incapable of changing their ways. Throughout the 1900s they continued to use Trent Bridge for home fixtures, using Forest's City Ground when cricket took precedence. From 1905, the Football League made representations to Notts that they should be playing all their fixtures at one ground. Though Notts identified Meadow Lane, just over Trent Bridge towards the city, as a potential new site for a ground, they were not pro-active. Only in 1908, when the trustees at Trent Bridge gave notice that they were not prepared to renew the club's lease after 1910, did the Notts board move to resolve the situation.<sup>62</sup> The land at Meadow Lane was rented from Nottingham City Council and it was reported in February, 1910 that the directors had accepted the plans set up by 'Messrs. W. and R. and F. Booker, under the personal superintendence of the partner, Mr William Shepherd'. Work began immediately on creating the new ground with a 'Spion Kop', pavilion, and various 'banks'.<sup>63</sup> One stand was dismantled at Trent Bridge and re-erected at the Meadow Lane end of the new ground, which saw its first League game, against Forest, on 3 September, 1910.<sup>64</sup> 'Most Notts. friends and supporters will agree', observed the city's Saturday evening football paper, 'that the lack of their own headquarters, and of adequate accommodation for their followers has been the biggest hindrance to their success'. Significantly, the opening of the new ground, purchased for £6,000, was a civic occasion: 'Mayor and Sheriff, wearing their chains of office, headed the procession on to the playing field and formally declared the

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<sup>60</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 4 May 1907.

<sup>61</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 26 June 1908.

<sup>62</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 35; Inglis, *Football Grounds of Great Britain*, p.145.

<sup>63</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 2 February 1910.

<sup>64</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, p. 96.

ground open'.<sup>65</sup> The attendance of 25,000 was the equal highest home crowd for that season, though below the 30,000 crowds which saw Notts play away at Newcastle United and Manchester City. The 12,675 average for the season was the best yet. Furthermore, the averages for the following three seasons of 10,950, 12,050, despite relegation, and 11,800 would also have beaten Notts' previous record of 10,675, achieved in 1898-99. This suggests that the move to Meadow Lane was a popular one with the public and probably somewhat overdue.<sup>66</sup>

### **The Press and Nottinghamshire Football**

Mason has stated how 'By the 1890s few towns were without their football specials' with them being very much 'part of the cultural scene'.<sup>67</sup> Fishwick, meanwhile, has asserted how football specials formed part of the process by which football became a national game.<sup>68</sup> As seen in the previous two chapters, the *Football News* had begun in Nottingham in 1891. The advent then of Nottingham's *Football Post*, in September 1903, both reflected and reinforced football's central role in local culture as well as its position as the nation's winter game. Its debut was announced as follows:

Football holds the field. With the virtual close of the holiday season, and the end of what ought to have been summer, cricketers are putting by their flannels, and the vast crowds who own its sway have once more gathered on a thousand grounds to acclaim the King of Winter Games, whose imperious rule extends over a constantly widening dominion. In popularity none can rival this pastime, nor is the zest of its votaries equalled in any other form of recreation. With more or less

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<sup>65</sup> *Football Post*, 3 September 1910.

<sup>66</sup> Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, pp. 92-103.

<sup>67</sup> Mason, *Association Game*, p. 193.

<sup>68</sup> Fishwick N., *English Football and Society, 1910-1950* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 94-110.



insistence it appeals to all, and a generous concession of its legitimate demands has become impossible in the ordinary newspaper. Hence the appearance of the *Football Post*.<sup>69</sup>

The *Football Post*, which was published from the start of September until the end of April or early May, featured extensive coverage of Notts, Forest and Derby. The range of its coverage was significant. It carried results and reports, not just on the major professional clubs in its area of circulation, but on other important matches up and down the country. Its first issue contained reports on Aston Villa, Bury (the FA Cup-holders), Sheffield Wednesday, Southampton, and Sunderland, thus demonstrating the popularity of association football throughout all of England and the belief that its readers would be interested in the wider national game of which its local clubs were a part.<sup>70</sup> In addition, local leagues - not only in Nottinghamshire but also in neighbouring Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire - were given extensive coverage. Indeed, the number of local league competitions demonstrated both the strength of the game in Nottinghamshire and the level of interest it attracted. By October 1903, the *Football Post* was covering the Football League and Midland League alongside 9 local Nottinghamshire leagues, and leagues from Derby, Mid-Derbyshire, Long Eaton, Heanor, Loughborough and Grantham (see Appendix 10).<sup>71</sup> By May 1908, the coverage had extended further to embrace the Midland Amateur Alliance, Nottingham Elementary Schools League and Notts Church League as well as three more Derbyshire leagues.<sup>72</sup> By April 1914, *The Football Post* was covering the Football League, Midland League, 13 local leagues and thirty-four leagues from Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Leicestershire together with the Southern League (see Appendix 10).<sup>73</sup> At the start of the 1914-15 season, two more leagues

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<sup>69</sup> *Football Post*, 5 September 1903.

<sup>70</sup> *Football Post*, 5, 12, 19, 26 September, 3 October 1903.

<sup>71</sup> *Football Post*, 10 October 1903.

<sup>72</sup> *Football Post*, 2 May 1908.

<sup>73</sup> *Football Post*, 18, 25 April 1914.

had attracted the *Football Post's* attention, the Notts and Derbyshire League and the Hucknall Junior League.<sup>74</sup>

It is important to recognise, however, that the emergence of another local weekly newspaper devoted to football did not preclude coverage in other regional and local dailies or weeklies. In the *Mansfield Chronicle*, for example, 'Spectator' contributed a column which was principally concerned with how teams from the Mansfield area were fairing in the Notts and District League and the affairs of the Mansfield and District League. The *Mansfield Chronicle* had a particular interest in the Notts and District League as this twelve-team league featured several local teams - Mansfield Wesley, Sutton Town, Sutton Junction, Stanton Hill Victoria, Mansfield Woodhouse and Mansfield Mechanics.<sup>75</sup> In short, the regional and local press continued to reflect both the strength and the depth of the association game throughout the county of Nottinghamshire.

The strength of football in Nottinghamshire was also reflected in the coverage it received in the principal national sports weekly, the Manchester-based *Athletic News*. Notts and Forest were prominent in the issue of November 18, 1901 in which the upcoming Notts-Forest derby match was the subject of a special feature. The game was described as 'the oldest fixture in the calendar' and short biographies of the chairmen of both clubs were present. Mr Heath, of Notts, readers were told, was a county councillor and magistrate, reflecting continued civic involvement in football, as well as being captain of Bestwood Park Cricket Club. Forest's chairman, Mr Hancock, was also a fine cricketer demonstrating again the close ties between football and cricket in Nottinghamshire. Hancock, it was said, had been as famous a footballer in his own playing days as were current England internationals Iremonger

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<sup>74</sup> The *Football Post*, 19 September 1915.

<sup>75</sup> *Mansfield Chronicle*, 24, 31, August, 7, 14, 21 September 1906, 5, 12, 19, 26 April 1907; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 16 January 1908.

and Forman in 1901.<sup>76</sup> The November 18, 1901 edition of the *Athletic News* also contained a feature on Frank Forman. It highlighted how 'no other town in the provinces has provided so many fraternal footballers of international distinction'.<sup>77</sup> It was the kind of coverage that would have left readers in no doubt about Nottingham's important place in the national game.

Tityrus, the journalist, James Catton, who had been based in Nottingham but was now in Manchester with the *Athletic News*, described his journey to see this 1901 derby between Notts and Forest in the florid literary style that he had developed during his time on the *Nottingham Daily Guardian*.

Manchester was enveloped in gloom as the Great Central steamed out of the station on Saturday morning, and I wondered whether I was on a fruitless journey to Nottingham for the League encounter between Notts County and Nottingham Forest. However, in the Woodhead Valley the sun gladdened the hillsides and the prospect of play seemed brighter even at Sheffield. As we sped further south fog obscured the landscape, and again doubts were raised. At Nottingham, the weather was intensely cold, but beyond a November haze there seemed nothing to prevent the match being brought to issue. The branches of the elm trees on the Trent Bridge were fringed with white rime, and so was the grass of the enclosure. Indeed the playing area was very hard and treacherous, in no way leading itself to a scientific display or fascinating football. The low temperature, the frost, and the possibility of fog quite spoiled the game, which was one of the smallest seen at a Notts and Forest match.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> For Iremonger and Foreman see *Nottingham Evening Post*: Special Edition, Bygones, Forest- The First 100 Years, 29 September 2014, p.5.

<sup>77</sup> *Athletic News*, 18 November 1901.

<sup>78</sup> *Athletic News*, 18 November 1901. Warsop and Brown, *The Definitive Notts County*, gives the crowd as 12,000 which is actually good when compared with the season's average of 9,125.

Elsewhere in the November 18, 1901 edition of the *Athletic News*, the regular column, 'Notts Notes and News' by 'Trentsider' featured news and opinion on Notts and Forest as well the Notts League. That this continued to feature in the *Athletic News* alongside columns on other areas further demonstrates how Nottinghamshire continued to be seen as an important footballing centre in the country.<sup>79</sup>

As Figures 5.1 and 5.2 demonstrate, from 1892 to 1915, Forest's League position was regularly higher than where they were in the attendance table whilst the same could be said for Notts from 1888 to 1915. This suggests that other factors apart from attendances were helping Notts and Forest do better than other teams with more financial power. As covered in the previous chapter, the Nottingham Schools' FA was formed in 1891 and football was played in the area between elementary schools from 1891 and senior schools from 1892. Local teachers were keen to promote the sport and G.D. Radford and W.B. Syson, of Nottingham, attended the first meeting of the English Schools' Football Association [ESFA] in 1904. Radford, furthermore, was one of five members of the ESFA committee in 1908 and continued to play an active role in the organisation until at least 1918.<sup>80</sup> Nottingham entered a team in the English Schools' Shield competition from its inception in 1905 and the city was represented in England's first schoolboy international against Wales in Walsall in 1907 by Cornell of the Queen's Walk School.<sup>81</sup> Though the Nottingham Schools' FA was formed later than such FAs in Birmingham, South London, Sheffield and Manchester, it was still

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<sup>79</sup> *Athletic News*, 18, 25 November, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 December 1901, 21, 28 January, 4, 11, 18, 25 February, 1907. The other football columns featured on Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Scotland, Ireland, South Wales, Leicestershire, the North, North Staffordshire, Sheffield, East Anglia, Liverpool and District, the West of England, Lancashire, the Midlands, the South and the varsities. In 1901, the South Wales, West of England and Leicestershire columns were dominated by rugby news whereas, by 1907, Leicestershire was starting to attract much more association football news. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the Notts column had no rugby news.

<sup>80</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, p. 85; *Nottingham Schools Football Association committee minute book, 1891-1894*, Nottinghamshire Archives DD1705/1; *English Schools' Football Association Handbook, 1917-18*, Nottinghamshire Archives DD1705/17; Kerrigan C., *A History of the English Schools' Football Association 1884-2004* (Harefield: Yore, 2004), p.17.

<sup>81</sup> Kerrigan, *History of English Schools' FA*, pp. 19, 26-27.

the fifth equal oldest alongside Liverpool.<sup>82</sup> Football was always the dominant code ahead of rugby in Nottinghamshire too. Furthermore, Nottinghamshire had a historically strong local footballing scene even if it was not as large as Birmingham's and Sheffield's.<sup>83</sup> With all these factors in mind, Nottinghamshire's two major clubs did at least have a strong footballing base to work from and actually performed reasonably well in relation to their gates.

### **Nottinghamshire and English Football's 'Great Split', 1907-14**

Division in football between those who saw themselves as pure amateurs and everyone else in the game came to a head in 1906 after all county FAs were ordered by the FA to include professional teams. Clubs who refused to abide with the FA's laws initially formed the Amateur Defence Federation which was reformed in the summer of 1907 as the Amateur Football Association (AFA) and operated independently of the FA until 1914. A number of AFA county associations - Surrey, Middlesex, Kent, Essex and Suffolk had been formed by September of that year, effectively providing an alternative for the middle-class 'Old Boys' clubs and shadowing the already established county FAs, which continued to operate as before.<sup>84</sup> The rebel clubs, based mainly in the South-East, received strong support during the period of the schism from Notts Magdala, which joined the AFA in 1908 and hoped that other Nottinghamshire amateur clubs would follow. In this Magdala were to be largely disappointed as most amateur clubs in the county, as in most other counties, remained loyal to the Nottinghamshire FA and the Football Association.

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<sup>82</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, p. 85; It is perhaps worth noting how sides from Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Birmingham contributed significantly towards Harding's 'Super Eight'.

<sup>83</sup> Mason, *Association Football*, 31. As early as 1885, the Nottinghamshire F.A. had 36 first teams registered as compared with 24 in Burnley in 1883, 25 in Northumberland and Durham in 1880, 52 in Birmingham in 1882 and 40 in Sheffield in 1879.

<sup>84</sup> Porter D., 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's "Great Split"', 1907-14, *Sport in History*, 26 (3), December 2006, pp. 413-9.

Notts Magdala's role in the AFA has received no serious attention from historians to date though Nottinghamshire was probably the most important outpost of AFA football beyond the South-East. This section thus addresses a gap in the relevant historiography and makes a connection between the limited success and subsequent failure of the AFA movement in the county and the belated emergence of rugby union as an alternative to soccer for middle-class football enthusiasts.

Amateurism in football had deep roots in Nottinghamshire. Teams with the name 'Amateur' began to appear in Nottinghamshire as early as 1874. The term 'amateur' was virtually synonymous that of 'gentleman' in English sport in the mid to late-nineteenth century and it seems likely that it was this that lay behind the use of the term. Notts Amateurs (1874) were linked with a cricket club of the same name. Sneinton Amateurs, St Ann's Amateurs and Forest Amateurs followed soon after. These clubs were formed in the period before the FA legalised professionalism in 1885. As we have seen, Notts had fully embraced professionalism only as a result of nearly being wound-up in 1881 whilst Forest abandoned amateurism in 1889 only when it became clear that it was incompatible with their ambitions to play at the highest levels of the English game. A team playing under the name 'Notts. Amateurs' was amongst the sides that made up the newly-formed Nottinghamshire Football League in 1888 and the Midland Amateur Alliance, which existed between 1891 and 1893, included Notts County Reserves (or 'Rovers'), a 'Mansfield Town', Notts Olympic and Newark alongside Sheffield FC and sides from Lincoln, Grantham, Heanor, Matlock and Derby. Meanwhile, a side called Mansfield Amateurs played at Field Mill, the home of the current Mansfield Town side, from 1894.<sup>85</sup> In addition, the Notts. Amateur League and the Nottingham Junior League, also amateur, were started in 1894 and, on the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire border, the Long Eaton Amateur league appeared from 1902.<sup>86</sup> By this stage the 'amateur' designation

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<sup>85</sup> <http://thebeautifulhistory.wordpress.com/clubs/mansfield-town/> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>86</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 6 October 1894, 27 April 1895; *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 8 September 1902.

clearly distinguished these competitions and the teams taking part in them from their professional counterparts.

In 1897, the Nottingham Junior League became the Notts Alliance.<sup>87</sup> The champions before the First World War were church-based teams (Nottingham St. Peters, Lenton Church Athletic, Nottingham St. Albans and Kimberly St. Johns); town or area teams (Radcliffe-on-Trent, Basford United, Netherfield Rangers and Sneinton); and workplace teams (Notts Jardines, Boots Athletic and Players Athletic). Boots Athletic, as Morris has highlighted, 'provides a classic example of a team enthusiastically supported and heavily subsidised by the parent company'. Formed in 1895, it appeared to 'have grown substantially in the early years of the twentieth century'.<sup>88</sup> These clubs reflected the diversity of the county's football culture which was inclusive of amateur clubs related to workplaces and churches as well as to localities that were primarily urban and working-class, such as Sneinton, or rural, Radcliffe on Trent. It also included a number of middle-class clubs that were determined to sustain the ethos of gentlemanly amateurism in Nottinghamshire. A. G. Hines was a key figure in this respect. As seen, Catton later recalled that Hines would provide him with 'carefully-written' match reports for the Notts Olympic matches in the 1880s. Hines, Olympic's honorary secretary, did this 'without any fee or reward' to ensure exposure in the Nottinghamshire press.<sup>89</sup> He became a significant figure within the Football Association, refereeing important games such as FA Cup-ties and the 1904 FA Amateur Cup Final, and would eventually become chairman in 1938.<sup>90</sup> He also helped form the amateur Notts Magdala club in 1895.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> [http://www.nonleaguematters.co.uk/nlmnet/Regs\\_2\\_M/Notts94.html](http://www.nonleaguematters.co.uk/nlmnet/Regs_2_M/Notts94.html) (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>88</sup> Morris, *In a Class of Their Own*, p. 270; Phillips S., 'Fellowship in Recreation, Fellowship in Ideals': Sport, Leisure and Culture at Boots Pure Drug Company, Nottingham', *Midland History*, 29, 2004, pp. 107-23.

<sup>89</sup> Catton J.A.H., *The Story of Association Football* (Cleethorpes: Soccer Book Ltd, 2006; first published 1926), p. 27.

<sup>90</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 24 March 1904; *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 28 November 1938; *Edinburgh Evening News*, 23 January 1939.

<sup>91</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 20 September 1945.

Magdala's members were of a social class that would probably have played rugby union in some other parts of the country. Initially, Magdala played friendlies against other clubs in Nottinghamshire and adjacent counties such as Park Bridgford, Melton Town, Radcliffe and Lincoln Lindum. In 1904 however, they became founder members of the reformed Midland Amateur Alliance which also included Forest Amateurs, Bridgford Athletic and Magdala Amateurs. Thus four Nottinghamshire sides were among the original seven members of this league, which also included teams from Grantham, Burton and Derby.<sup>92</sup> They were joined in the following season by Loughborough Corinthians and Notts University College, ensuring that, whilst the league represented the East Midlands, Nottinghamshire was its hub.<sup>93</sup> Two more Nottinghamshire clubs, Mansfield Amateurs and Notts Old Foresters, joined in 1907.<sup>94</sup> A membership comprising clubs which had chosen to adopt the names 'Amateurs' or 'Corinthians', not to mention a club representing the local university, was a clear indication that the Midland Amateur Alliance was more socially exclusive, certainly more middle-class, than most amateur leagues in and around Nottingham. Notts Magdala contained many players who had come from Repton School in Derbyshire.<sup>95</sup> Repton was a leading public school whose head teacher, Steuart Adolphus Pears, advocated 'healthy exertion of body and spirit together, which is found in the excitement, the emulation and the friendly strife of school games' and is said to have 'laid the foundations for Repton's reputation for sporting excellence'.<sup>96</sup> In addition to fulfilling their Midlands Amateur Alliance fixtures, Notts Magdala played friendly matches against the top amateur sides of the country such as Corinthians, Casuals, Dulwich Hamlet and Oxford City and public school sides such as

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<sup>92</sup> <http://www.thefootballarchives.com/network/competition.php?CID=25&Season=1904-1905> (incomplete results) (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>93</sup> <http://www.thefootballarchives.com/network/competition.php?CID=25&Season=1905-1906> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.thefootballarchives.com/network/competition.php?CID=25&Season=1906-1907> (accessed 3 April 2017);

<http://www.thefootballarchives.com/network/competition.php?CID=25&Season=1907-1908> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>95</sup> Holland E.L. (ed.), *The Amateur Football Association Annual (Season 1908-09)*, (London: The Marshalsea Press, 1908), pp. 138-9.

<sup>96</sup> <http://www.repton.org.uk/history-of-repton>, (accessed 3 April 2017).



Shrewsbury, Malvern, Old Carthusians and, naturally, Repton.<sup>97</sup> On their day Magdala could give some of the professional teams in the East Midlands a competitive game, reaching the final of the Notts Senior Cup in 1907. In this match against Nottingham Forest Reserves, Notts Magdala were under strength as two of their regular players were appearing for Old Reptonians in the final of the Arthur Dunn Cup, the premier competition for public school Old Boys teams.<sup>98</sup> This emphasises the wider framework of elite amateurism within which Notts Magdala were operating.

Notts Magdala became the first local club to join the breakaway Amateur Defence Federation.<sup>99</sup> The FA initially banned this organisation but sufficient pressure was exerted by the disaffected gentlemen amateurs to force the reversal of this decision, thus perhaps encouraging more disaffected clubs to join the protest against the FA's policy. Magdala played a prominent part in these momentous events. The first annual published by the AFA, during the course of a lengthy account of the events leading to its formation in 1907, claims that they 'forced the Football Association single-handed for the right to combine and compelled that autocratic assembly to rescind its resolution declaring its illegality'. The word 'combine' here refers to clubs having the liberty to choose their opponents and not being forced into playing against professionals. Further to this was that:

In January, 1907, a motion was actually carried by a majority of the F.A. Council that nothing in their Rules required an affiliated Association either to admit or refuse professional clubs to membership- the very point upon which the amateurs had insisted! Moreover, the Council having thought over their previous action in declaring the Amateur Organisation an illegal body repented of it and solemnly placed on record the

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<sup>97</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 15 October 1906.

<sup>98</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 23 March 1907; <http://www.oldreptonianfc.com/club> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>99</sup> Holland, *Amateur Football Association Annual (Season 1908-09)*, pp. 138-9.

obvious fact that all the clubs had the right to combine for their own interests.<sup>100</sup>

The result of this was that the chairman of the FA, Charles Clegg, resigned. The FA then reneged on the resolution of January 1907 to allow Clegg to return. As a consequence, in the summer of 1907, the Amateur Football Alliance was formed from the Amateur Defence Federation.<sup>101</sup> Its name was soon changed to the Amateur Football Association (AFA) and Notts Magdala were seen as taking 'a leading part in supporting the Amateur Football Association'.<sup>102</sup> Notts Magdala were present when the AFA was formed and the following was reported:

The representative of Notts Magdala asked if the public schools were supporting the movement and what provincial clubs were likely to join. With regards to the first query, it was stated that Malvern had already intimated their intention of joining and others were expected to do so. The other query could not be answered until the application forms for membership were returned to the hon. secretary after the meeting.<sup>103</sup>

The situation was confused, especially for middle-class amateur clubs in the North and Midlands, and this probably explains Magdala's decision to proceed with caution at this stage. Clubs were reluctant to lose fixtures as the FA imposed a ban on its members playing matches against AFA affiliates.

It was not until their end of season dinner on 10 April, 1908, that Notts Magdala made the decision to join the ranks of the secessionists. A.J. Winstanley of Crouch End Vampires and B.A. Glanville of Clapham Rovers, from two leading London amateur clubs who had already made the decision to join the AFA, were present and may have helped persuade Magdala to join them. It was reported in the Nottingham

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<sup>100</sup> Holland (ed.), *Amateur Football Association Annual (Season 1908-09)*, p. 10.

<sup>101</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 84; Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires', pp. 418-9.

<sup>102</sup> Holland (ed.), *Amateur Football Association Annual (Season 1908-09)*, pp. 138-39.

<sup>103</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 9 July 1907.

press that the other clubs in the Midland Amateur Alliance would follow so that its league could continue with two divisions of nine teams, even though Derby YMCA and Bridgford Athletic were, as of yet, supposedly undecided.<sup>104</sup> A.G. Hines subsequently chaired a meeting of the Midland Amateur Alliance where it was proposed by A.W. Lymbery of Notts Magdala, the son of Walter Lymbery, that the organisation should affiliate to the AFA and this was agreed.<sup>105</sup> Magdala then officially resigned from the Notts FA in May 1908. However, their optimism that all the other Alliance clubs would follow them was unfounded. The Midland Amateur Alliance lost Derby YMCA, Old Loughburians, Grantham, Bridgford Priory and Nottingham University College, these clubs joining the newly-formed Midland Amateur League and remaining within the FA fold. Notts Magdala then changed their name to Nottinghamshire FC and the Midland Amateur Alliance began in the following season with two leagues of six and seven, with some reserve sides included to make up numbers.<sup>106</sup> However, Nottinghamshire FC, as if to highlight overlapping city and county identity, were listed as Nottingham FC in AFA Annuals until 1921, though it was certainly the same club, as the 1908-09 edition testified.<sup>107</sup>

When the Nottinghamshire AFA was formed in 1910, it was the ninth AFA county association to be formed. By this time, the original five had already been joined by Hertfordshire, Sussex and Cambridgeshire, so that the Nottinghamshire association was arguably the most northerly outpost of the AFA, though the claims of some individual clubs - Lincoln Lindum, Northern Amateurs and Northern Foxes (both from

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<sup>104</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 11 April 1908.

<sup>105</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 13 April 1908; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 19 May 1908.

<sup>106</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 25 January 1908, for details of the two Midland Amateur Alliance divisions, each with nine teams. These included Notts Magdala, Magdala Amateurs, Notts Magdala Reserves and Magdala Amateurs Reserves and the five teams that would leave it at the end of that season. *Nottingham Evening Post*, 24 October 1908, for details of the Midland Amateur Alliance with two divisions of six and seven teams respectively, and the newly formed Midland Amateur League. It is also worth noting that, unlike other amateur leagues, the Midland Amateur Alliance tables were not updated consistently in the local press.

<sup>107</sup> Amateur Football Association Annuals from 1908 to 1914; also *The Amateur Football Association Annual (Season 1921-22)*.

Kirkstall), and Bradford Wanderers have to be taken into account.<sup>108</sup> In the small world of gentlemanly amateur football, Nottinghamshire (Notts Magdala) proved a significant force, reaching the semi-final of the AFA's cup competition in the 1910-11 season, but losing to Old Malvernians. The rebellion against the FA had gained a significant foothold in Nottinghamshire because there were already a number of teams grouped together in the Midland Amateur Alliance that could continue to play against each other with or without the FA's blessing. In this respect Nottinghamshire was similar to some of the counties in the South-East which were able, for a few years at least, to support rival AFA and FA county associations without any negative impact on the popularity of the association game. English football's great split proved to be short-lived. The disaffected gentlemanly amateurs overestimated the support they would get from amateur clubs more generally, most of which remained affiliated to the FA, and a reconciliation with the FA was negotiated in 1914. Nottinghamshire, however, where middle-class amateur football was relatively strong and well-established, had played a significant part in this critical episode.

Though the AFA failed to make a long-term impact in Nottinghamshire, rugby union finally established a proper foothold in the county in the Edwardian period after barely registering during Victorian times. After the split with the Northern Union over broken-time payments clubs in 1895, English rugby union was an exclusively amateur game and in most parts of the country a predominantly middle-class game too.<sup>109</sup> In 1903, Nottingham Rugby Club, commonly referred to as 'Notts', joined the Rugby Football Union (RFU). During this year they played Five Ways Old Edwardians in front of a crowd of around 600 which was described in the Nottingham press as 'quite a record "gate" for a rugby match in this district'.<sup>110</sup> A year later, the club found its first permanent ground in Beeston due to the generosity of their benefactor, Leslie Birkin.

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<sup>108</sup> *The Amateur Football Association Annual (Season 1913-14)* (London: William Brown and Co. Ltd., 1913); Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires', pp. 418-19; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 11 April 1914.

<sup>109</sup> Collins T., *A Social History of English Rugby Union* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), pp. 96-129.

<sup>110</sup> *Football Post*, 31 October, 1903; *Nottingham Journal*, 31 October 1903.

One significant indicator of the club's playing strength was that two of its players gained international honours, V.H. Cartwright playing 14 times for England between 1903 and 1906 and H.A. Hodges twice in 1906.<sup>111</sup> What is striking, however, is the relatively low profile of rugby union compared to association football in the Nottingham newspapers. The *Football Post*, for example, remained largely devoted to football. Reports of Notts rugby club's matches were relatively short and would usually appear beneath a report on a Leicester game and alongside reports on local golf, hockey, athletics, cycling or billiards in the *Football Post*. That such reports followed roughly a dozen pages of league and non-league football coverage, suggested that rugby was unlikely to mount a serious challenge to soccer in and around Nottingham, though the FA-AFA split had possibly provided a small space in which it could grow.<sup>112</sup>

With rugby union relatively undeveloped and certainly less popular with the public than football, Notts Magdala were the flagship club for gentlemanly amateurism in Edwardian Nottingham. Unlike either Notts or Forest, they could be represented as survivors of a 'golden age' of amateur innocence before professionalism supposedly ruined the game. Nottingham's Mayor, Alderman J. A. H. Green, reflected on this when he spoke at the club's annual dinner in January 1907:

The Mayor, in proposing the toast, said that [this] gathering of footballers took him back to the old days, which, he thought ... were the best days of Association football- to the days when the golden age was not gold, and when football had not become a great commercial institution of the country. It took him back to a time when he saw the first great football match in Nottingham between the Royal Engineers and the Forest club, when the former came and played a great game that taught Nottingham footballers a good deal of the science of football. As a spectator he had

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<sup>111</sup> Drapkin J., *Nottingham Rugby Football Club* (Nottingham: N.R.F.C. Publications, 1993), pp.A1-2, C1.

<sup>112</sup> *Football Post*, 10, 31 October 1903, 12, 26 December 1903; 15 February, 14 March 1908; 28 March, 11, 25 April 1908; 24 January, 21 February, 14 March, 18 April 1914.

followed the game closely until the last couple of years, and, although it embraced the great portion of the population as active or passive followers, he doubted whether, from a spectator point of view, the game had improved since the days he referred to. It was then a pretty and pleasing game and one could not help wishing that in every respect the game was as good now as it was then.<sup>113</sup>

There was, in AFA circles a tendency to look backwards and to reflect on the former glories of the amateur game as played by gentlemen. Thus the AFA's *Annual* for the 1913-14 season noted that 'H.A Cursham (Notts), J.A. Dixon (Notts) and T. Lindley (Nottingham)' were among the 'Old Internationals' now identified as sympathetic to the Amateur Football Association and what it represented.<sup>114</sup> N.V.C. Turner (Nottinghamshire) was able to demonstrate a continuing attachment to this cause when he travelled to Brazil with the Corinthians - the most socially-elite club of all and leading lights of the AFA - in 1913-14. It was still considered an honour to be invited to play for this famous club, though its reputation, like that of the gentleman amateur footballer, was fading away.<sup>115</sup>

Most amateur football in Nottinghamshire during the years of the FA-AFA split continued to be played under the jurisdiction of the FA and its long-established county association. The history of Bridgford Athletic, one time regular opponents of Notts Magdala, took quite a different course between 1907 and 1915, not least because they decided to remain with the FA rather than following Magdala into the unknown territory of AFA football. Bridgford Athletic, who essentially became South Nottingham, instead joined a prestigious regional league, the Amateur Alliance, while

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<sup>113</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 January 1907.

<sup>114</sup> *The Amateur Football Season Annual (Season 1913-14)*.

<sup>115</sup> For this tour see Cavallini, R., *Play Up Corinth: A History of the Corinthian Football Club* (Stroud: Stadia, 2007), pp. 113-14.

retaining the option of playing friendlies against professional opposition.<sup>116</sup> The *Nottingham Evening Post* reported:

South Nottingham Football Club: The above club has been admitted to the newly formed Amateur Alliance, which for the coming season will consist of the following clubs:- Grimsby Rangers, Hull Amateurs, Leeds St. Martins, Leicester Nomads, and South Nottingham. In addition to the foregoing competition, a strong side will take part in the Midland Amateur League, while the English Amateur, Notts Senior and Junior Cups will be competed for. The fixture list will be completed by friendly games with powerful amateur and professional organisations. The old members of the Bridgford Athletic F.C. will be supported by F.W. Chapman, W.H. Rastall and C.A. Price, late of the Notts Magdala F.C. while the services of other prominent amateurs will be at the command of the club.<sup>117</sup>

Moreover, South Nottingham's continuing membership of the FA meant that its players could be considered for international recognition. One of its players, Frederick Chapman, benefited from this in 1908 when he was selected by the FA to represent Great Britain – though it was a team composed entirely of English amateurs - in the football tournament at the 1908 Olympic Games in London. Though Great Britain eventually won this tournament, with Chapman scoring in the final against Denmark, the event made little impression on the English football public which, in Nottingham - and even in London - tended to be more interested in the fortunes of professional clubs and the parochial rivalries played out week by week in the many local leagues.<sup>118</sup> The *Nottingham Daily Guardian* was quite dismissive, observing that the British Olympic team was rather like an England Gentlemen's cricket eleven who would be no match against a full England side selected to play in

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<sup>116</sup> South Nottingham were also referred to in the press as 'South Notts', another example of overlapping city and county identity.

<sup>117</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 24 July 1908.

<sup>118</sup> For the priorities of the football public in London see Porter, 'Coming on with Leaps and Bounds', pp. 101-122.

a test match against Australia.<sup>119</sup> It did not carry a report of the final. The *Nottingham Daily Express* did report the final but gave precedence and greater prominence to its Notts and Forest match reports and made no mention of Chapman.<sup>120</sup> Nottingham's football culture expressed itself primarily via identifying with the local rather than the national perspective on football. What people wanted to read about and what the press was keen to promote were local fixtures and how Notts and Forest were doing.

Opinions regarding the relative merits of amateur and professional football were divided in Mansfield even before the split. In 1906, with Mansfield Mechanics and Mansfield Wesley, both ambitious clubs, vying for dominance in the town, a call was made for a staunch amateur club to be formed. The Deputy-Mayor of Mansfield, Alderman D.H. Maltby, was also inclined to look backwards rather than forwards:

... he had always been a strong advocate of amateur teams. He had not seen a football match for many years, because the present conditions under which was played were not conducive to the best sport and he never went.<sup>121</sup>

In June of that year, Mansfield Amateurs were formed with the support of local magnate, the Duke of Portland.<sup>122</sup> Meanwhile, Mansfield Wesleyans, who had joined the Mansfield and District Football League in 1902 as Mansfield Wesleyan Boys' Brigade, had joined the Notts & District Senior League.<sup>123</sup> By the start of the season, by which time they were playing as Mansfield Wesley, they had signed eleven new players and alienated the founders of the original club who were dismayed that they should enter a league that was not purely amateur.<sup>124</sup> Mansfield Wesley now took their place in the Notts Senior Cup alongside Mansfield Mechanics, previously the

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<sup>119</sup> *Nottingham Daily Guardian*, 24 October 1908.

<sup>120</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 26 October 1908.

<sup>121</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 15 March 1906.

<sup>122</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 21 June 1906.

<sup>123</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 11 July 1902; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 July 1906.

<sup>124</sup> *Mansfield Chronicle*, 20 July, 24 August 1906.



only senior club of the town.<sup>125</sup> To complicate local rivalries still further, Mansfield Amateurs, who had joined the Midland Amateur Alliance, were also invited to play in the Senior Cup competition, even though it was only the first season of their existence. Other elite amateurs, Notts Magdala and Magdala Amateurs, were also in this competition for the 1906 and 1907 seasons.<sup>126</sup> By 1908, however, Mansfield Amateurs, having followed clubs Notts Magdala and Magdala Amateurs and joined the ranks of the AFA, were no longer eligible for the Senior Cup competition and their reputation began to fade, leaving the field clear for the rivalry between Mansfield Wesley and Mansfield Mechanics to be played out.

Wesley, in 1910, made it clear that they were an ambitious club by adopting the name 'Mansfield Town' - they had previously considered and rejected 'Mansfield United' - and, at the same time, changed their colours from chocolate and blue to red and white, a fairly comprehensive rebranding exercise.<sup>127</sup> The name change especially annoyed the Mansfield Mechanics club who complained unsuccessfully to the FA over what they saw as a clear attempt by their rivals to assume the right to be the town's principal football representatives. Later, during the First World War, Mansfield Town negotiated successfully with the Duke of Portland to become the sole tenants of Field Mill ousting Mansfield Mechanics. Mansfield Town have remained there since whilst Mansfield Mechanics went into decline. Mansfield Town, therefore, like Notts in an earlier era, became professional, changed name, ruthlessly ousted their opposition in a quest for dominance that belied their amateur roots, eventually securing election to the Football League in 1931.

The divisions within English football that became apparent in the FA-AFA split of 1907 were very evident in Nottinghamshire. By this time elite professional football was well-established, both Notts and Forest having long ago shaken off their origins

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<sup>125</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 4 October, 1902; *Nottingham Evening Post*, 6 September 1906.

<sup>126</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 12 September 1907; 27 September 1907.

<sup>127</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 18 June 1910.

as middle-class amateur football clubs. There were, however, until the relatively short-lived crisis of 1907-14, no restrictions on professionals and amateurs playing against or with each other. Langley Mill, from just across the border into Derbyshire and who advertised for professional players, played Notts Jardines, who played in the FA Amateur Cup, in the Notts and District League for instance.<sup>128</sup> Notts Magdala, meanwhile, had, of course, played professional Nottingham Forest's reserve side in the Notts Senior Cup final.<sup>129</sup> Most of those who played football in the county, were, of course, amateurs in that they regarded football simply as a form of recreation and without financial reward. Indeed, most footballers would have paid a small club subscription in order to take part but the split revealed a class division within the amateur ranks. As we have seen, Nottinghamshire had been a stronghold of gentlemanly amateur football since the days of Tinsley Lindley and rugby union, though beginning to make its presence felt in the county through the Nottingham club, had yet to attract the levels of middle-class support that it enjoyed in most other parts of England. Thus, when the crisis came in 1907, there was a group of amateur clubs in the county that seized the opportunity to show solidarity with the Corinthians and the Old Boys clubs in London and the South-East by joining the AFA and establishing their own exclusive competition locally, the Midland Amateur Alliance. It should be noted, however, that not all of the county's socially-elite clubs joined the breakaway movement; thus while Notts Magdala went to the AFA, South Nottingham stayed with the FA along with the majority of amateur clubs within the county, some of which performed creditably in the prestigious FA Amateur Cup competition, which had started in 1893 but was now firmly established as the flagship for senior amateur football throughout the country. Notts Jardines reached the last sixteen in 1910 and Netherfield Rangers did the same in 1913; the Sherwood Foresters, based in Derby but formally associated with Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, went further, reaching the semi-final in 1913. Amateur football at this level was already subject to the practices associated with 'shamateurism' but

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<sup>128</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 18 October 1906; 21 February 1907; 31 May 1906.

<sup>129</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 23 March 1907.

Nottinghamshire clubs appear to have steered clear of this kind of problem, unlike some clubs elsewhere who were disciplined by the FA for breaches of the amateur rules.<sup>130</sup> Most of the county's amateur clubs would hardly have noticed that the split had taken place as they catered for working-class players, played in leagues where most member clubs were near neighbours and would not have encountered the likes of Notts Magdala and Magdala Amateurs, either on or off the field.

### **Trade and Tours**

The traditional theory of how football initially spread from Great Britain to become a game played throughout the world is well exemplified in the work of Murray.<sup>131</sup> Whereas the other dominant British sports of cricket and rugby were more likely to spread throughout the British Empire, football, it is argued, followed trade routes and links through education. Murray details how football arrived in the late nineteenth century in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Portugal initially through networks involving British education whereas, in Denmark, Sweden, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Uruguay and Argentina, trade was the key factor.<sup>132</sup> Murray's stance is that:

By 1900 football teams had been formed in most countries in Europe, eventually to be followed by a national controlling body. Most of these teams were founded by Britons or people who had been to Britain and become infected by the game there.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Barton, *History of the F.A. Amateur Cup*, pp. 11, 20, 27, 29, 44, 56, 59, notes breaches of FA Amateur Cup rules by West Auckland, Northern Nomads, Rutherford College (Northumbria), Tow Law, Kirkley, Royal Artillery, Tufnell Park and Sheppey from the South in matches relating to the F.A. Amateur Cup.

<sup>131</sup> Murray, *History of the World Game*; Murray B., *The World's Game: A History of Soccer* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1998).

<sup>132</sup> Murray, *History of the World Game*, pp. 52-60, 115: see also Taylor, *Association Game*, pp. 160-61.

<sup>133</sup> Murray, *History of the World Game*, p. 52.

More recent work, however, has suggested that the dissemination of football was a much more complex process involving a variety of cross-cultural interactions. Taylor has exemplified how Lanfranchi argued that 'Britons on the spot were in fact less important than those members of the continental elite who associated all things English (football included) with innovation and modernity'.<sup>134</sup> It was fashionable to adopt names that acknowledged the game's British origins: hence Grasshoppers of Zurich, Old Boys of Basle, Young Fellows of Zurich and Young Boys of Bern in Switzerland and Be Quick of Groningen and Go Ahead Eagles of Deventer in the Netherlands. Furthermore, Switzerland played a particularly strong role in helping the game become international as its private schools embraced English sports including football whilst it was a continental hub of technical education. In Spain, the origins of FC Barcelona also involved a mixture of nationalities, its founders - as in other parts of Europe and in South America - seeing football as modern, fashionable and cosmopolitan.<sup>135</sup>

Lanfranchi has furthermore discovered cases where European clubs were formed with names that indicated an affinity with Britain but actually had no connection. In Italy, clubs called Sporting Club, Football Club, Black Star and Racing Club appeared in Bologna, Bari, Naples and Milan; in France in Lyon and in the Basque region of Spain in Irun. The adoption of English club names, however, is an important indicator in that it was a reflection of 'a broader mood of anglophilia amongst the continental bourgeoisie which also included wearing English clothes, giving English first-names and adopting terms such as "gentleman" and "fair play"'.<sup>136</sup> Members of such clubs could represent themselves as modern in that, when they adopted football, they were effectively rejecting traditional local games and customs and, in making up their

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<sup>134</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, p. 161.

<sup>135</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, pp. 161-2; Murray, *History of the World Game*, p.53; Lanfranchi P. and Taylor M., *Moving With The Ball: The Migration of Professional Footballers* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp. 19-20; Lanfranchi P., Eisenberg C., Mason T., Wahl A., *100 Years of Football: The FIFA Centennial Book* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2004), p. 46.

<sup>136</sup> Lanfranchi and Taylor, *Moving with the Ball*, p.20; Taylor, *Association Game*, p.162.

sides with different nationalities, showing that they were open to influences from countries where modern sport was more advanced.

Despite questions being raised about how much of an influence the British had abroad, Murray has stood by his traditional viewpoint:

The claim that soccer is Britain's 'most enduring export' has been repeated so often that it has inevitably come under scrutiny, with revisionists working in languages other than English claiming that such claims can no longer be made. As is often the case, however, it is the revisionists who have the weaker case. When the seeds of soccer were sown, there was almost always a British connection somewhere in the fine details as in the broad sweep.<sup>137</sup>

This section is concerned with the 'fine details' in that it considers the part played by Nottinghamshire footballers and clubs in the wider process of dissemination in Europe and South America. The county's trade links with Northern Italy, it is argued here, were particularly important in this respect, supplying an example of the crucial trade connection that Murray had in mind. Touring abroad was another way of making connections and historians have argued that British club sides helped to nurture the global game by visiting countries where football was newly established.<sup>138</sup> Thus Forest, Notts and other Nottinghamshire clubs that toured abroad helped to consolidate the British influence in South America, Denmark, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Austria. It will be argued here, however, that care should be taken to distinguish tours such as those undertaken by Forest to South America and by Notts to Denmark, where there was a strong promotional or

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<sup>137</sup> Murray, *The World's Game*, p.22.

<sup>138</sup> Mason T., *Passion of the People?: Football in South America*, (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 25-26; Taylor, *Association Game*, p.164; Brown M., *From Frontiers to Football: An Alternative History of Latin America since 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 2014), p.68.

commercial imperative, from Magdala's excursions to continental Europe where the emphasis was on sociability.

It might also be mentioned in passing here that some individual Nottingham-based players travelled abroad with representative sides or touring clubs based outside the county. J.D. Barnsdale, for example, played for English amateur representative side the Pilgrims, travelling with them to the United States in 1905 on a mission 'to encourage the game'.<sup>139</sup> Logan has argued that this mission was accomplished successfully as soccer in Chicago and collegiate soccer on the East Coast were revived as a result.<sup>140</sup>

Lace manufacture was Nottingham's main industry by 1900 and Thomas Adams and Co. was amongst the 'long-established leaders of the industry'.<sup>141</sup> Nottingham had a strong trading connection with Northern Italy through textiles and Thomas Adams had taken this a stage further by establishing a curtain factory in Turin in 1888.<sup>142</sup> The first football club in Italy, the Torino Football and Cricket Club, was started a year before this by Eduardo Bosio, a textile merchant, who had business connections with Thomas Adams and Co.<sup>143</sup> Bosio, had been inspired by the game whilst in England and brought back footballs, possibly with John Savage, when returning to Italy so that his workers in Italy could take up the English sport which had impressed him so much. It is clear that Bosio's efforts to introduce the game in Turin appealed to the fashionable element in local society as the Torino Cricket and Football Club

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<sup>139</sup> <http://www.englandsamateurs.com/the-first-england-amateur-international-match/> (accessed 3 April 2017); *New York Times*, 21 October 1905

<sup>140</sup> Logan G., 'Pilgrims' progress in Chicago: three English soccer tours to the Second City, 1905-09', *Soccer and Society*, 11, 3, 2010.

<sup>141</sup> See Chapman S.D., 'Economy, Industry and Employment', and 'Industry and Trade 1750-1900' in Beckett J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2006, pp. 480-83; 336-347.

<sup>142</sup> Mason S., *Nottingham Lace: 1760s – 1950s* (Ilkeston: Sheila A. Mason, 1994), p.151; Conn D., *The Beautiful Game?: Searching for the Soul of Football* (London: Yellow Jersey Press, 2005), p.175.

<sup>143</sup> The Torino Football and Cricket Club merged with Nobile Torino to form Internazionale di Torino in 1891.

numbered the Marquis of Ventimiglia and the Duke of Abruzzi, nephew of the king, among its members.<sup>144</sup>

There were other important connections. Herbert Kilpin, who had worked for Thomas Adams and Co., went to work for Bosio in Turin to help set up mechanical looms and witnessed an informal game in 1891 where players joined as they wished during the match as in a 'park kickabout'.<sup>145</sup> Born in Nottingham in 1870, Kilpin had played for Notts Olympic and the Nottingham church club, St. Andrews. He subsequently went on to play for Bosio's club, Internazionale di Torino, in the first two Italian Championships in 1898 and 1899. By 1899 Kilpin had moved to Milan and was instrumental in founding the Milan Football and Cricket Club, now known as A.C. Milan, designing the first version of their famous red and black striped shirt.<sup>146</sup> Another player, Arthur Rodgers, moved from Nottingham to play for FC Torinese in 1906. Rodgers was subsequently a founder player of Torino FC who were formed when Torinese joined forces with a dissident group who had left Juventus in a protest over professionalism.<sup>147</sup> This new club were led by Alfredo Dick, originally from Switzerland, who had been chairman of Juventus in 1905 and 1906. He also had textile industry connections that were likely to have brought him into contact with Nottingham-based manufacturers and traders.

The significance of the trade links between Nottingham and Turin is reflected in the 'semi-mythical' but widely accepted account of Juventus, who originally played in

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<sup>144</sup> Lanfranchi and Taylor, *Moving With The Ball*, p. 23; Foot J., *Winning At All Costs* (New York: Nation Books, 2006), pp. 3-4; Murray, *The World's Game*, pp. 30-31; *History of the World Game*, p. 59; Lanfranchi, Eisenberg, Mason and Wahl, *100 Years of Football*, p. 46.

<sup>145</sup> Foot J., *Calcio: A History of Italian Football* (London: Harper Perennial, 2007) pp. 3-4; Foot, *Winning At All Costs*, p. 4.

<sup>146</sup> Foot, *Winning At All Costs*, pp.10-12; Foot, *Calcio*, pp. 10-12; [http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/nottingham/hi/people\\_and\\_places/history/newsid\\_8291000/8291087.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/nottingham/hi/people_and_places/history/newsid_8291000/8291087.stm); <http://www.worldsoccer.com/blogs/the-man-who-founded-milan-357052> (both accessed 3 April 2017). Brown P., *The Victorian Football Miscellany* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Superelastic, 2013), p.174.

<sup>147</sup> <http://www.rsssf.com/players/eng-players-in-it.html> (accessed 3 April 2017); <http://facedatoro.altervista.org/campionato-calcio/1906-fondazione-torino-football-club.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

pink shirts, adopting Notts' black and white stripes as their own.<sup>148</sup> John Savage, a textile wholesaler based in Turin with connections to Nottingham, had played for Internazionale Torino in the late 1890s and for Juventus in 1901 and 1902; he had even appeared for an Italian XI in a representative match against Switzerland in 1899.<sup>149</sup> According to one version of the story, Savage, having been asked by Juventus to provide the club with a new set of shirts in 1903, contacted a manufacturer in Nottingham where a clerk chose Notts' black and white stripes to replace the faded black and pink shirts that Juventus had been wearing previously.<sup>150</sup> An alternative version centres on Harry Goodley, who was born in Basford, Nottingham and played for Basford Wanderers and Notts Rangers before moving to Italy to work in the textiles industry. Goodley joined Juventus in 1900 and it is possible that he was responsible for the Italian club adopting Notts' black and white stripes.<sup>151</sup> Both Goodley and Savage were prominent figures in the early years of Italian football. Savage refereed the championship final between Genoa and Milan in 1902.<sup>152</sup> Goodley refereed Italy's first-ever international match in 1910 and later served on the selection committee for the Italian national team and went on to write for the *Gazzetta Dello Sport*.<sup>153</sup> Thus it can be argued that the well-established links between Nottingham and Turin in the textile trade were undoubtedly a factor in facilitating football's growth in Northern Italy. This is not to say that it was the only influence, nor should the complexities of Anglo-Italian cultural interaction be underestimated

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<sup>148</sup> Foot, *Winning At All Costs*, p. 529.

<sup>149</sup> <http://facedatoro.altervista.org/campionato-calcio/1906-fondazione-torino-football-club.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>150</sup> [http://www.genesreunited.co.uk/boards/board/genealogy\\_chat/thread/730160](http://www.genesreunited.co.uk/boards/board/genealogy_chat/thread/730160) (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>151</sup> <http://www.rsssf.com/players/eng-players-in-it.html> (accessed 3 April 2017); Foot, *Calcio*, p. 9; Foot, *Winning At All Costs*, p. 9.

<sup>152</sup> Foot, *Winning At All Costs*, p. 529; <http://blog.guerinsportivo.it/blog/2010/09/03/quelli-che-hanno-fatto-litalia/>; <http://gottfriedfuchs.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/Harry%20Goodley>; [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Italian\\_Football\\_Champion\\_1902.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Italian_Football_Champion_1902.jpg) (all accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>153</sup> <http://www.rsssf.com/miscellaneous/ital-coach-triv.html>; <http://worldreferee.com/site/copy.php?linkID=3639&linkType=referee&contextType=bio> (both accessed 31 March 2017).



but the links are so specific that, at the very least, Murray's point regarding the British connection being evident in 'the fine details' appears relevant here.

British touring teams have also been identified as having played an important part in the global development of football. It seems likely, however, that these tours varied in what they were trying to achieve and this has not always been factored into previous accounts. In South America, the game was first established in the ports of Rio de Janeiro, Santos, Montevideo and Buenos Aires by British sailors. The development of football was enhanced in Argentina, as in Italy, on account of Britain's role as 'Argentina's largest trading partner' and also via the influence of education through teacher Alexander Watson Hutton who helped to make the game popular in Buenos Aires.<sup>154</sup> The game was then boosted there with the help of touring football clubs. The purpose of these tours was to promote the game and make money. As Mason argues, 'of course an important factor for British professional clubs was money. Tours helped to pay for summer wages and could make a profit besides'. In South America, Swindon made \$20,479 whilst Everton profited by £300.<sup>155</sup>

The first professional side to be invited to tour in South America was Forest, who declined thus leaving the way open for Southampton, one of the rising forces in English football, to venture across the Atlantic in 1904, 'for the purpose of educating the residents there in the art of football'.<sup>156</sup> Forest did eventually go to Uruguay and Argentina in 1905 where the authorities were promoting football as a 'set-off to horse-racing' which, according to Nottingham's *Football Post*, was having 'an evil effect out there upon the community'.<sup>157</sup> They were consequently both helping to

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<sup>154</sup> Mason, *Passion of the People?*, p. 1; Brown, *From Frontiers to Football*, p. 68.

<sup>155</sup> Mason, *Passion of the People?*, pp. 23-4.

<sup>156</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 14 March; 11 April 1904; *Football Post*, 22 April 1905. A possible reason for Forest declining the invite is that they engaged in a mini-tour to Ireland in late March playing Barrow-in-Furness (probably en route) and Belfast Distillery, *Nottingham Evening Post*, 23 March 1904.

<sup>157</sup> *Football Post*, 22 April 1905.

establish the game in South America *and* trying to steer locals away from a reliance on gambling when it came to sport. The tour was certainly seen to have been ‘more of an educational than a competitive character’ as football in Argentina was ‘in a somewhat nebulous state’.<sup>158</sup> Money, however, was a factor and it was therefore unfortunate that their first match against Penarol in Montevideo made a loss of \$250 due to forged tickets.<sup>159</sup> These problems appear to have been avoided in Argentina where season tickets were sold for Forest’s games in Buenos Aires.<sup>160</sup>

After defeating Penarol 6-1 on a muddy pitch in front of 4,000 spectators in Montevideo, Forest then travelled to Rosario in Argentina and defeated a side made up of the Athletic and Central clubs 5-0. It was very much a civic occasion with local dignitaries present, the police band playing, the ground suitably decorated and proceeds from the gate going to local flood victims. Forest then travelled to Buenos Aires and met Belgrano whose team comprised both British and Anglo-Argentine players, winning 7-0 in front of between seven and nine thousand spectators including local dignitaries and a noticeable number of ladies. The *Nottingham Daily Express* relayed a report of this game from a local English-language newspaper the *Buenos Aires Standard*.<sup>161</sup> Matches followed against the British players of Argentina (which Forest won by 13-1) and Rosario (6-1). Forest’s next game was against Alumni, a club that had originally derived from the English High School and Athletic Club. A mixture of British and Anglo-Argentines, Alumni were the Argentinian equivalent of the Corinthians club in England and claimed to put a higher value on sportsmanship than on winning matches. Their match with Forest in Palermo, Buenos Aires, which resulted in a 6-0 win for the visitors, attracted an attendance of 10,000, the biggest crowd ever in South America to that date. Forest’s tour continued with victory over an Argentine select eleven by 5-0. They then defeated a local league select eleven by 10-1. A farewell dinner was arranged at which a gold medal was

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<sup>158</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 3 August 1905.

<sup>159</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 25 July 1905.

<sup>160</sup> Mason, *Passion of the People?*, p. 23.

<sup>161</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 25 July 1905.

presented to the Forest club presented with silver medals for the individual players. One Argentine club, Independiente were so impressed by Forest that they adopted red shirts as their colours. This testified to the success of the tour from a promotional point of view as Independiente had been formed 'in opposition to English-dominated clubs' in Argentina and 'inevitably came to carry a nationalistic flag onto the pitch'.<sup>162</sup> The link between Forest and Independiente has lasted to this day as Independiente supporters are updated on Forest's progress on the *elgrancampion* website.<sup>163</sup>

Closer to home, Notts travelled to Denmark in 1910 on the invitation of Akademuisk Boldklub, from Gladsaxe on the northern outskirts of Copenhagen. As in most countries in Europe and South America football was first taken up by middle-class men, some of whom had connections with Britain via business or education, who saw British sport as synonymous with modernity. Rather typically, Boldklub had originated amongst students who had encountered football on their travels abroad; the Danes were at this time very attached to the ideal of gentlemanly amateurism, 'unbending Olympian Amateurism', as David Goldblatt defines it, but this did not preclude matches against English professional clubs, from whom they were eager to learn. The Corinthians, on whom such clubs tended to model themselves, had after all played top professional sides when touring in England since the 1880s.<sup>164</sup> Moreover, as McDowell has argued, though the Danish Football Association (DBU) was staunchly amateur it realised the importance of tours by well-known British teams from as a potential source of revenue from which Danish football and its clubs could benefit. Thus, when it came to issuing invitations, 'the DBU was interested in better clubs ... which represented the professional vanguard of British football'. In

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<sup>162</sup> Goldblatt D., *The Ball is Round: A Global History of Football* (London: Penguin, 2007), p. 119.

<sup>163</sup> Camponar A., *Golazo!: A History of Latin American Football* (London: Quercus, 2015), pp.62-3.

Mason, *Passion of the People*, pp.3-4, 17-18; *La Argentina*, 13 June 1905 as reproduced in *Nottingham Evening Post: Special Edition, Bygones, Forest- The First 100 Years*, 29 September 2014; *Nottingham Forest F.C.: The Official Illustrated History* (no author given) (Burton Joyce: Pineapple Books, 2009), p.60; <http://www.nottinghampost.com/Forest-inspired-clubs-world/story-12187597-detail/story.html> ; <http://www.elgrancampeon.com.ar/portal/columnas/item/8119-nottingham-forest-incluido-en-el-salon-de-la-fama-del-futbol.html> (both accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>164</sup> Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round*, pp.120-1; Mason, *Association Football*, p. 216.

terms of impact, he notes, British club tours of Denmark ‘strengthened the power and prestige of the Copenhagen clubs’.<sup>165</sup> Notts played three games, all against Danish select elevens, drawing their first game 2-2 in front of 5,000 spectators before winning 4-2 and 2-1. The closer score lines than Forest enjoyed in South America reflected the fact that Danish football was relatively strong at this point, the national team having won silver medal at the 1908 Olympics. Four years later, Notts travelled to Spain where they played three matches against Barcelona, who were predominantly Swiss and British in their origins in 1899, but were now becoming more cosmopolitan. Notts won their first two games in Barcelona 2-0 and 4-1 before winning the final game 10-3.<sup>166</sup>

For professional clubs, overseas tours in this era tended to be relatively comfortable in terms of the standard of opposition they could expect to encounter. Furthermore, with the expense of touring largely covered by guarantees from their hosts, they could reasonably anticipate some additional revenue while extracting more value out of the players they had under contract, who they would have to pay in the close season whether they toured or not. For socially-elite amateur clubs, like Notts Magdala and Magdala Amateurs, welcomed enthusiastically by anglophile football enthusiasts largely because they were gentlemen from England, the home of football, there was probably an emphasis on sociability and enjoyment, especially on the short trips to Europe, usually at Easter. As Mason states of the Corinthians’ tours, they ‘probably thought their trips were part holiday and part missionary work’.<sup>167</sup> As far as the Amateur Football Association were concerned in the years of English soccer’s ‘great split’ (1907-14) overseas trips, such as those undertaken by Notts

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<sup>165</sup> McDowell M., (2016), ‘To Cross the Skager Rack’. Discourses, images, and tourism in early “European” football: Scotland, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Scandinavia, 1898–1914, *Soccer & Society*, DOI: 10.1080/14660970.2016.1166779. DBU stands for *Dansk Boldspil-Union*, the Danish Football Association.

<sup>166</sup> *Nottingham Daily Express*, 3 June 1910, *Nottingham Evening Post*, 3 June 1914; Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, pp. 221, 58; state that the first two scores against Barcelona were 3-1 and 4-2; Wain, *Notts County*, p. 26; Lanfranchi and Taylor, *Moving With The Ball*, p. 30; Burns J., *Barca: A People’s Passion* (London: Bloomsbury, 1999), pp. 70-96.

<sup>167</sup> Mason, *Passion of the People?*, p. 22.

Magdala to the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Austria, were helping reinforce amateurism in those countries.<sup>168</sup> It was probably almost enough simply to be from England to receive the warmest of welcomes. For the match against Princess Wilhelmina on their four-match tour of the Netherlands in 1906, it was reported that:

Once more there was a military band to honour the players with “God Save the King” and a crowd of between 4,000 and 5,000 spectators to watch their exploits. This was the largest crowd up to that time which had ever been at a football match in Holland. The ground was very bad, bare and muddy in patches, with long grass on the wings.<sup>169</sup>

It is not surprising Notts Magdala should get such a reception as the Dutch *bourgeoisie* were anglophiles, had taken up cricket and football in the 1880s, and had a huge respect for certain British values like amateurism. Goldblatt reflects this when saying Dutch sports teams were rooted in the ‘culture magnetism of Britain for the Dutch in the late nineteenth century’ where photos of Dutch teams from the period reflect that ‘settings, postures and uniforms of the Dutch are an exact replica of their English counterparts’.<sup>170</sup>

In Austria, in 1908, Magdala played the Vienna Cricket and Football Club. Though Notts Magdala contained guest players from Notts and Forest, it was not stated whether they were paid above their travel expenses, whereas Forest, as a contrast, had been offered £200 plus expenses to travel to South America in 1905. It was, therefore, more common to see players from privileged backgrounds touring in the early years of football tours between 1897 and 1903. Corinthians and the Oxford and Cambridge University clubs were other clubs who contained players with the ‘necessary time and money’, and Notts Magdala matched this model.<sup>171</sup> At the very

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<sup>168</sup> Holland (ed.), *Amateur Football Association Annual (Season 1908-09)*, pp. 138-9.

<sup>169</sup> *Sportsman*, 21 April 1906.

<sup>170</sup> Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round*, pp. 121-2.

<sup>171</sup> Taylor, *Association Game*, 164; <http://www.nottinghampost.com/Forest-inspired-clubs-world/story-12187597-detail/story.html> (accessed 3 April 2017).

least, they could enjoy an interesting holiday - plus some exercise - in a mildly exotic location. In April 1914, Magdala Amateurs, a different club, but of the same social standing, travelled to France, as they had done two years previously, to play in the Le Havre Cup. Though they were successful in this competition, beating Havre Athletic (7-2) and a strong Paris Sports Club side (1-0) which included several French internationals, winning the trophy was only a part of what the trip was about for these amateurs. The Amateurs had travelled to France, as the *Football Post* reported, 'in search of pleasure and sport', adding that 'these games and social events afterwards go a long way towards keeping up the entente cordiale'.<sup>172</sup>

## Conclusion

Superficially, it would appear that Nottinghamshire football went into decline between 1900 and 1915 as the clubs that represented the county, Notts and Forest, could no longer be considered as being among the elite group of Football League clubs who would be amongst honours and consistently amongst the best supported clubs. However, it is important to recognise that this decline, if it can be so described, was relative rather than absolute. The two principal Nottingham clubs maintained and in some seasons even improved in terms of gates and match receipts but could not match the boom conditions experienced in professional football in other large urban centres in the last years of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth. In some instances crowds for Notts and Forest were actually very poor. This was seen when 1,500 and 6,000 saw Notts play Preston and Stoke in 1901 when they were in with a good chance of winning the First Division title and in 1902 when Forest, similarly, could only attract a crowd of 2,000 in a season when they finished a respectable fifth in the First Division and took less than 170 supporters on trains to see their FA Cup semi-final. Enthusiasm was not as high as elsewhere and they were

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<sup>172</sup> *Football Post*, 18 April 1914.

thus financially disadvantaged in comparison with their rivals in Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, London, Newcastle and Sunderland who were experiencing huge crowds. In such circumstances, it was perhaps merely prudent that clubs were managed in a rather conservative manner in this period – Notts' subservience to the interests of the County Cricket Club and Forest's unwillingness to take financial risks are relevant here – but this merely perpetuated the relative decline that both clubs were experiencing.

However, despite the inevitable disappointment, football remained as a significant element of popular culture in Nottinghamshire as elsewhere in England. The local press reflected and shaped this, helping to ensure that readers were aware of developments in local leagues and schools football as well as giving continuous publicity to Notts and Forest and their Football League and FA Cup rivals. As the local scene grew, it was sufficiently vibrant to generate intense rivalries in some places, notably in Mansfield. Amateur football in Nottinghamshire catered by this period for footballers drawn from all classes. One amateur league, the Notts Alliance, highlighted this with its works teams (such as Boots Athletic), urban teams (such as Sneinton), rural teams (such as Radcliffe-on-Trent) and church teams (such as Nottingham St. Peters) all competing together. With reference to the AFA and its breach with the FA in 1907 it is often assumed that 'the midlands and the north refused to join'.<sup>173</sup> Yet, as we have seen, gentlemanly amateur football had sufficient supporters in the county to ensure that Nottinghamshire - where rugby union had previously made little impact - became one of the AFA's northern outposts, certainly its most northerly county association. Significantly, however, not all the middle-class amateur football clubs followed Notts Magdala's lead; the secessionists were themselves somewhat divided. This helped to ensure that the impact of the split was minimised, though some footballers of this class, who wanted to play 'pure' amateur

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<sup>173</sup> Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round*, p. 48.

sport may have found solace as rugby union established some kind of foothold in these years.

When footballers from Nottinghamshire came into contact with others, their love of football could be infectious.<sup>174</sup> Nottingham itself, because of its links through the textile industry with Northern Italy, especially Turin, was a discernible influence - though not the only one - on the development of Italian football in the early twentieth century. The other way in which Nottinghamshire contributed to the dissemination of football globally in this period was through the agency of touring teams travelling to South America and to Europe. Reflecting to some extent the division between professionals and middle-class amateurs that characterised the great split in the county, these tours appear to have differed slightly in terms of underlying motivation. For professional clubs, the possibility of earning additional revenue during the close season and maximising the use of their playing staff were probably as important as any idea of promoting the game abroad. By this time, in Argentina and Uruguay (where Forest toured in 1905) and Denmark (where Notts toured in 1910) football was already well known, certainly in anglophile, middle-class circles who tended to look to Britain as a model of modernity. For Notts Magdala and Magdala Amateurs, however, touring appears to have been motivated primarily by pure enjoyment, though the desire to play against the Dutch, for example, may well have been influenced by the idea that they were similarly devoted to Corinthian ideals. Overseas tours, by well-known professional and amateur clubs from a part of England with a long-established and vibrant tradition of association football, undoubtedly helped to promote and publicise the game in both South America and Continental Europe.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Murray, *History of the World Game*, p. 52.

<sup>175</sup> Taylor; *Association Game*, p. 163; Goldblatt, *The Ball is Round*, pp. 112-70; Brown, *From Frontiers to Football*, p. 108.



## Conclusion

This conclusion addresses three broad historical themes implicit within this thesis – urbanisation, popular culture and class relations – and assesses the significance of football in Nottinghamshire in relation to these topics. Urbanisation, recreation and class were, after all, important components of Victorian and Edwardian life and have consequently been a source of great interest to historians of sport and leisure. In Nottingham, the growth of the town and its developing links with surrounding areas provided a basis from which a sporting culture could grow. Football and cricket were the two key sporting strands of local culture that managed to appeal to all classes, even if class division could be identified and were endemic within these sports.

An understanding of urban growth and development has underpinned many of the most significant studies of British sport in the Victorian and Edwardian era. The notion of ‘urbanisation’ conceals a number of interconnected processes that were crucial in explaining the transformation of the urban environment in this period. First of all, the sheer pace of urban growth was important. 1851 was pivotal year for urban growth in England. From this point, urban dwellers outnumbered those in the countryside. By 1871, 61.8% were living in urban areas and by 1911 this percentage of the population had risen to 80%. Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Newcastle, Bradford, Salford and Stoke were the first cities to follow London in surpassing the 100,000 mark. By the 1860s, the population growth of some centres was slowing, though others, such as Sheffield, Middlesbrough and Blackpool, took off. Much of this remarkable expansion was the result of migration into towns and cities, particularly in the mid-nineteenth century, with natural population increases accounting for much of the subsequent rise as migrants settled, married and had families.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Meller H.E., *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1976), pp. 1-4; August, A. *The British Working Class, 1832-1940* (Harlow: Longman, 2007), p. 16.

Oscar Handlin has identified how city life became modernised throughout this period through transport, local government management and a transformation of the economy, a contention supported by a range of scholars. Helen Meller has seen these as key to the creation of the 'modern' city yet, in line with the classic studies of Handlin, David Cannadine and others, has highlighted the different patterns of growth and development. 'Each town or city', Meller has noted, 'is a complex organism with variations in social structure, social institutions and traditions; and it is their very differences which are crucial to an understanding of historical development.'<sup>2</sup>

The expansion of small towns led to increased residential segregation based on wealth and social class – a development which, as we shall see, helped to construct the type of class-based 'communities' which historians of the British working class such as John Benson and Andrew August have paid such attention to.<sup>3</sup> New transport systems were crucial in this, initially bypassing poorer districts and linking affluent areas with the town or city centre, thereby reinforcing class segregation. In Birmingham, for instance, the flight of the wealthy from the city's central districts led to the creation of exclusive suburbs such as Edgbaston. Similarly, Clifton grew as an almost separate middle class entity in Bristol.<sup>4</sup>

The urban growth of Nottingham largely corresponded to the 'modernisation' of city life identified by Handlin and others. Transport links through the train and tram linked Nottingham with its suburbs and neighbouring villages and towns to a wider national framework; the need for local government management of sewerage especially meant Nottingham enveloped places such as Radford, Lenton and Basford

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<sup>2</sup> Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914*, pp. 1-4; Handlin O., 'The Modern City as a Field of Historical Study' in Handlin O. and Bunchard J. (eds), *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge: M.I.T., 1966), pp. 1-27. See also Cannadine, D., 'Victorian Cities: How Different?', *Social History*, 2, 4, 1977, pp. 457-87; Pendleton D., 'Sport and the Victorian City: The development of commercialised spectator sport, Bradford 1836-1908', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2016, pp. xxii-xxiii.

<sup>3</sup> Benson, J. *The Working Class in Britain, 1850-1939* (London: Longman, 1989), pp. 117-38; August, *British Working Class*, pp. 95-109.

<sup>4</sup> Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City*, pp. 19-21; pp. 33-4; pp. 35-9.

after the 1887 boundary extension which sprawled mainly to the North and West of the city centre and took the city's population from having been just under 75,000 in 1861 to over 180,000 by 1881. Meanwhile, West Bridgford, just to the South-East, remained as a separate town despite being part of the Nottingham conurbation. Significantly, however, there were certain characteristics which informed and influenced the development of leisure and sport in the city. For historians of Victorian sport, pressure on space was a crucial factor in the recreational take-up of sport and the move towards the enclosure of sporting ground.<sup>5</sup> Access to open space was a key factor in determining the pace and pattern of sporting culture. In Nottingham, the slow rate of enclosure meant that there were more open spaces than in many other cities.

Victorian Britain was a very young society with 'around a third of the population under fourteen'. Within this group, there was an enthusiasm for playing football on the streets, despite this being outlawed, or on any open space that was available. As a result, Richard Holt has argued that football began to lose its 'public-school aura'.<sup>6</sup> Adrian Harvey has similarly identified boys playing football on open space on the outskirts of Derby as sowing 'the seeds for this transformation' of football into an urban working class game.<sup>7</sup> Ultimately, of course, these boys would be the men who made up the numerous sides playing local football throughout the land. Football was played in connection with pubs, the church, works teams or as neighbourhood sides. Public spaces were generally in short supply throughout the country yet, in Nottingham and throughout Nottinghamshire, strong links with cricket and supportive councillors who ensured that open spaces remained protected for recreational use meant that this was not so much of an issue.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, there

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<sup>5</sup> Huggins M., *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2004), pp. 13-14.

<sup>6</sup> Holt R., *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 141; p. 151.

<sup>7</sup> Harvey A., *Football: The First Hundred Years- The Untold Story* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), p. 17; p. 91.

<sup>8</sup> Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp. 150-6.

were fewer pub teams and less reliance on the use of private land connected to public houses.

Patterns of support and identification can also be connected to the peculiarities of Nottingham's urban development. Nottingham's economy was dominated initially by lace and hosiery manufacture and, by the turn of the century, coal, cycles, cigarettes and pharmaceuticals. Coal and textiles, significantly, were features which linked Nottingham closely with a web of villages and towns across the county. The city's urban and industrial growth and its emergence as a commercial and cultural hub ensured strong links to its surrounding areas. This, in turn, provided a platform from which a robust footballing network could grow both locally and nationally. But it also affected the relationship between place and identity. As in countless other localities, the numerous church teams, works teams, teams associated with educational establishments and neighbourhood teams in Nottinghamshire gave a sense of belonging in an ever expanding urban world. Some clubs soon came to represent more than their immediate locality however; Aston Villa, Everton, Newton Heath, Ardwick and Tottenham Hotspur, for instance, all famously came to represent Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and North London to varying degrees. In Nottingham too, Forest became transformed from a club that played to a scattering of onlookers on the Forest Fields to a club that represented and carried the hopes of a city as it engaged in national competitions. Yet Forest, and especially Notts County, came to carry, unusually, a county identity with them too; one that reflected and built upon the closely bound connections between the county town hub and its satellite centres as well as the sporting pride and attachment that were felt with the county cricket club.

Patterns of suburbanisation reinforced the particularities of identification in Nottingham and its environs. Holt has demonstrated the importance of the suburb as cities expanded. Focussing on London, he cites Wimbledon, Twickenham and Epping Forest as becoming important sporting centres in tennis, rugby and football. In Nottinghamshire, West Bridgford developed practically as a middle class suburb of

Nottingham through its close proximity and good transport links with the centre even if it remained as a separate town. Crucially, however, it too served as a sporting centre, hosting as it did Trent Bridge, home to Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club and, between 1883 and 1910, Notts County. Nottingham Forest also played across Trent Bridge towards West Bridgford away from the city centre. Richard Holt argues that these suburban locations acted as a fusion between urban centres and the countryside.<sup>9</sup> This was vital in Nottinghamshire as it reinforced these major sporting clubs as representatives of both city and county; and as clubs that, contrary to the London institutions discussed by Holt, were supported by not only the middle classes but the working classes too.

To what extent did football in Nottinghamshire reflect the class relations of the Victorian and Edwardian period? Studies of social relations in Britain have become increasingly sophisticated in the past few decades, moving beyond simplistic notions of coercion, control and consent to embrace more nuanced understandings. One-dimensional views of largely homogenous 'classes' and the relationships between these groupings have been replaced by approaches that emphasise cultural diversity, regional differentiation and change over time.<sup>10</sup> As far as sport and leisure are concerned, social class has long been a key consideration of historians, many of whom were originally drawn from backgrounds in labour history and the 'new social history' of the 1960s and 1970s that increasingly emphasised the study of working class life in its entirety.<sup>11</sup> However, as Mike Huggins and others have emphasised, the abundance of studies of working class sport has meant middle class sport – and cross-

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<sup>9</sup> Holt R., 'The Amateur Body and Middle-class Man: Work, Health and Style in Victorian Britain', *Sport in History*, 26, 3, 2006, p. 358.

<sup>10</sup> See Reid, A. J., *Social Classes and Social Relations in Britain, 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Kidd, A. and Nicholls, D., 'Introduction: The Making of the British Middle Class?' in Kidd A. and Nicholls D. (eds), *The Making of the British Middle Class? Studies of Regional and Cultural Diversity since the Eighteenth Century* (Stroud: Sutton, 1998), pp. xv-xi.

<sup>11</sup> Taylor, M. 'Parallel Fields: Labour History and Sports History', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 32, 15, 2015, pp. 1769-1774.

class sporting relations – have often been marginalised and insufficiently developed.<sup>12</sup>

For historians of the middle class, diversity and complexity has been a dominant theme for some time. Classic studies of a homogenous and cohesive middle class gave way some time ago to conceptions of a class divided: a landed, commercial, financial, London-based elite on one hand and an industrial northern-based bourgeoisie on the other. This ‘two middle class’ thesis has, in turn, come to be considered ill-equipped to adequately capture the social and cultural diversity ‘of a society in great flux’.<sup>13</sup> Differences among middle class groups within localities and regions have increasingly been emphasised, though other historians have identified how professional and middle class groups could simultaneously act to highlight local identities and promote national cultural networks.<sup>14</sup>

Sport, as Huggins has recently confirmed, reflected the complexities of middle class life. Huggins’ work has reminded us that not all middle class sport was exclusive, that sporting connections with the working classes could be deep and long-standing and that respectability ‘was never particularly strong, even amongst the middle classes’.<sup>15</sup> He has also identified, as others have, the overlapping interests between the late Victorian lower middle classes – often the very groups that founded the association football sides of the 1870s and 1880s – and the working classes – the group that tended to support them. He highlights, for instance, how ‘industrialists and workers from the Cleveland Dockyard were prominent’ in the formation of Middlesbrough Ironopolis and that this had an effect on the middle class and amateur Middlesbrough FC as they subsequently employed more professionals.<sup>16</sup> Catherine

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<sup>12</sup> Huggins, M., ‘Second-Class Citizens? English Middle-Class Culture and Sport: A Reconsideration’, *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17, 1, 2000, pp. 1-35.

<sup>13</sup> Kidd and Nicholls, ‘Introduction’, p. xxxiii.

<sup>14</sup> See Gray, R., ‘The Platform and the Pulpit: Cultural Networks and Civic Identities in Industrial Towns, c.1850-70’, in Kidd and Nicholls, *Making of the British Middle Class?*, pp. 130-47.

<sup>15</sup> Huggins, *Victorians and Sport*, p. 37.

<sup>16</sup> Huggins M., ‘Leisure and Sport in Middlesbrough, 1840-1914’ in Pollard A.J. (ed.), *Middlesbrough: Town and Community 1830-1950* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1996), pp. 146-7.

Budd too has demonstrated how Middlesbrough Ironopolis contrasted with Middlesbrough FC in having skilled working class and lower middle class directors and shareholders that were much more supportive of professionalism than Middlesbrough FC had been.<sup>17</sup>

Middlesbrough grew at a faster rate than anywhere else in Britain in the Victorian era and had a rapidly expanding working class. It also had the essence of being as a 'frontier town'. Yet, Budd has argued that the middle class there retained a dominance on sport in the town. Huggins' study of Middlesbrough highlights the predominance of middle class exclusivity in cricket even if it generally 'was seen as a respectable cross-class activity'. Rowing, cycling, golf and swimming clubs were also exclusive yet, ironically in the case of cricket, golf and swimming, a professional was invariably utilised for 'support and skill'. Huggins exemplifies, however, how the 'middle-class minority who wished to espouse amateur values could only do so where there was little working-class spectatorship or where working-class participants could be excluded' so football was able to expand from its middle class origins to having a broader appeal. Huggins cites how the Cleveland Cup sparked working class interest in the game and that this was reflected in an emergence of teams in the late 1880s from workplaces, volunteer forces, sports clubs, local areas and church teams.<sup>18</sup> The involvement of the forces and church certainly helped enhance football's respectability even if the game was becoming more professional.

In Bristol, a larger middle class community existed than in similarly sized cities such as Sheffield and Bradford. Writing in 1976, Meller observed variances in middle class involvement in Bristol's sporting culture. Middle class exclusivity rested with cycling,

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<sup>17</sup> Briggs A., 'Middlesbrough: The Growth of a New Community' in Pollard A.J. (ed.), *Middlesbrough: Town and Community 1830-1950* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1996), pp. 1-31; Turner J., 'The Frontier Revisited: Thrift and Fellowship in the New Industrial Town, c. 1830-1914' in Pollard A.J. (ed.), *Middlesbrough: Town and Community 1830-1950* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1996), pp. 99-100; Budd C.A., 'The Growth of an Urban Sporting Culture: Middlesbrough c. 1870-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, De Montfort University, 2012, pp. 99-123.

<sup>18</sup> Huggins, 'Leisure and Sport in Middlesbrough', pp. 133; pp. 136-8; p. 140; Budd, 'Middlesbrough', p. 370.

cricket, rugby and rowing clubs. Lawn tennis, archery, roller skating and cycling were enjoyed by women but only those affluent enough to be able to afford the necessary equipment. With regards cycling, class distinction and social rivalries meant that the Bristol and more exclusive Clifton groups could never unite. Athletics, however, could not halt working class infringement and became 'the main spectator sport in the city'. That was until the 1900s when Bristol City could attract gates of 25-30,000 and Bristol Rovers gates of 5-6000. What was perhaps most significant about football in Bristol, though, was that it 'had universal appeal and there were no class barriers to actually playing the game'. This was evident in the range of clubs playing in 1901: 'old boys' teams, socio-religious teams of church, chapel and the YMCA, firms' teams, and trade union teams. However, even if these teams had middle class connections, Meller states that the true middle class game of Bristol was rugby.<sup>19</sup>

In Leicester, strong religious nonconformity, temperance and the relatively late rise of the factory system have offered fertile ground 'for the study of the interaction of bourgeois and working class cultures'. Jeremy Crump's study of sport here identifies nuanced differences in the middle class running of the popular sports of football, cricket and professional cycling in the city and the grounds that hosted them. The Leicester Cricket Ground Co. which hosted cycling as well as cricket was 'the province of the core of Leicester's nonconformist Liberal elite'. The Belgrave Road Ground Co. and Leicester Fosse FC, meanwhile, consisted mainly of a local petit bourgeoisie whilst Leicestershire County Cricket Club relied on the support of the 'suburban middle class'.<sup>20</sup> Crump argues that little profit was ever made from any of these ventures and the primary aim anyway was for sporting organisations representing Leicester to either bring cultural benefit, as with the Leicester Cricket Ground, or 'honour', as with Leicester Fosse, to the area.<sup>21</sup> Middle class involvement here was more about 'contributing to municipal well-being' than financial gain and football

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<sup>19</sup> Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City*, p. 38; pp. 229-34.

<sup>20</sup> Crump J., 'Amusements of the People; Recreational Provision in Leicester, 1850-1914', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 1985, pp. 10; pp. 338-347; p. 367; p. 388.

<sup>21</sup> Crump, 'Amusements of the People', pp. 341; p. 386.



particularly offered the lower middle classes a chance to enjoy the prestige that went with that.<sup>22</sup>

In Nottinghamshire, the Notts County directorate had a different complexion to that of Leicester Fosse in containing less of the lower middle classes whilst Forest remained as a large committee which drew concern from the Football League in 1906. Forest actually prided themselves in being run in 'on old-fashioned lines' whilst the Notts board between 1900 and 1914 was a mix of professional middle class, petit bourgeoisie and a gentleman.<sup>23</sup> Notts and Forest certainly appeared more conservative in approach than rising forces in the game during the Edwardian era such as Liverpool, Chelsea, Manchester United, Manchester City and Woolwich Arsenal who benefited from strong leadership. Notts and Forest in their early years demonstrated variances in their makeup of players too. Whilst both were predominantly middle class, Notts contained a gentleman, members of the professional middle class and ex-public school players whilst Forest contained scholars connected with the High School and lower middle class players involved in trade. This was reflected in Notts networking within a more exclusive framework, such as FA sides, whereas Forest were more inclusive in who they played and included more local sides in their fixtures.

Eventually, both Notts and Forest became professional in order to become successful. Success was especially achieved when Forest and Notts won the FA Cup in the 1890s and municipal well-being came with this as incredible scenes of joy welcomed the sides home. The FA Cup successes created extra impetus too for the game in Nottingham and throughout its county as more football sides emerged in the region. These teams continued to represent urban and rural neighbourhoods, schools, churches and workplaces and were, thus, both working and middle class. Yet, an exclusive element of the middle classes remained who may have been rugby playing in other areas of the country such as Bristol. These gentleman amateurs

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<sup>22</sup> Crump, 'Amusements of the People', p. 404.

<sup>23</sup> *Nottingham Evening Post*, 26 June 1908.

became more disenchanted with the commercial direction that the game was taking especially by the 1900s. When division occurred over whether sides could choose with whom they wanted to play, Notts Magdala were a vital element of the AFA rebellion. The split had little impact on amateurism in Nottinghamshire, and indeed the country, however and the AFA returned to the FA as an affiliate member. Even the gentleman amateurs in Nottinghamshire were divided as South Notts remained loyal to the Notts FA and were consequently content to play sides of a variety of backgrounds in its cup competition that reflected the cross-class appeal of football in Nottinghamshire.

Some of the earliest studies of football in Victorian and Edwardian Britain analysed it in the context of wider trends in leisure and entertainment history. In Peter Bailey's landmark *Leisure and Class in Victorian Britain*, for instance, football was treated as part of a 'new athleticism'; one arm of a wider middle-class 'rational recreation' movement aimed at transforming the leisure pursuits and values of the working classes.<sup>24</sup> Similarly in the work of Hugh Cunningham, James Walvin and others, sport was considered as just one example of the wider structural and socio-economic transformations in leisure and leisure cultures ushered in by the industrial revolution.<sup>25</sup> Yet as academic histories of different strands of leisure and entertainment - music hall, popular theatre, sport and football in particular – gained ground during the 1980s so these areas tended to develop in isolation. Separate scholarly societies, journals and departmental affiliations led to a narrowing of perspective and a reluctance to draw comparisons between fields presumably assumed to be distinct or even unique. There have been significant exceptions to this approach, of course. Historians such as Dave Russell and Gareth Williams continued to work across this historiographical divide throughout the 1980s, 1990s and beyond, penning important studies of popular music and of sport, asking similar questions of

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<sup>24</sup> Bailey, P., *Leisure and Class in Victorian Britain: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885* (London: Methuen, 1987 [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1978]), chapter 6.

<sup>25</sup> Cunningham, H., *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c.1780-1880* (London: Croom Helm, 1980); Walvin, J. *Leisure and Society, 1830-1950* (London: Longman, 1978).

both, and also outlining their social and cultural interconnections.<sup>26</sup> Andrew Horrall's important yet often surprisingly neglected study of popular culture in London from 1890 to 1918, meanwhile, specifically examined the varied interactions between stage, song, sport and cinema at a crucial stage in the development of each, while influential studies by Jeffrey Hill and Peter Borsay returned sport to its earlier leisure and recreational context, exploring the ways in which different forms of leisure were affected by traditions of commercialism, voluntarism and state intervention.<sup>27</sup>

In spite of this, there have been recent calls to relocate sport within wider histories of leisure and entertainment. As Dion Georgiou and Ben Litherland put it in introducing their volume on 'Sport and Other Leisure Industries', sport 'interacts with, influences, and is influenced by a broad range of leisure and cultural forms'. For that reason, they argue, historians of sport should 'continue conversations...with academic working in a wider set of fields, including – but not limited to – film studies, theatre studies, art history and music.'<sup>28</sup> While this thesis has not foregrounded these particular connections, it acknowledges that football's history in Nottinghamshire was heavily influenced by, and later closely connected to, the earlier established sport of cricket. It also recognises that because football came to be regarded as an intrinsic element of cultural life in the city and the county, it never grew entirely in isolation from other forms of leisure.

More specifically, it is helpful to see where football existed in relation to other forms of popular culture and entertainment in Nottingham. Here, as in many other parts of

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<sup>26</sup> See Russell, D. *Football and the English: A Social History of Association Football in England, 1863-1995* (Preston: Carnegie, 1997); Russell, D. *Popular Music in England, 1840-1914: A Social History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997[1st edition, 1987]); Smith D. and Williams G., *Fields of Praise: The Official History of the Welsh Rugby Union* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1980); Williams, G. *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales, 1840-1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998).

<sup>27</sup> Horrall, A., *Popular Culture in London c.1890-1918: The Transformation of Entertainment* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Hill, J., *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Borsay, P., *A History of Leisure: The British Experience since 1500* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> Georgiou D. and Litherland B., 'Sport's Relationship with Other Leisure Industries – Sites of Interaction', *Sport in History* 34, 2, 2014, pp. 183-197; p. 186.

Britain, music hall was the most significant form of working class commercial entertainment for most of our period, with the cinema beginning to make inroads in the decade before World War One. If London was the epicentre of the industry - with some 33 large halls with an average capacity of 1,500 by 1866 – most large cities and towns had a number of established halls by this time.<sup>29</sup> Emerging from the ‘free and easies’ at public houses and taverns, buildings were converted or built anew to accommodate a developing interest in this new form of popular theatre and music. During the 1860s and 1870s, Nottingham could boast the Theatre Royal, the Alhambra, St George’s Hall, the Malt Cross, the Crown and Cushion, and the Talbot (later the Palace of Varieties).<sup>30</sup> Crump has seen Nottingham as akin to Birmingham in having a flourishing music hall culture during the period from 1860 to 1890, before the arrival of the major national chains such as Stoll, Moss and MacNaughten.<sup>31</sup> Significantly, this success seems to have been based on Nottingham’s early integration into a national London-based touring circuit, which became crucial in the ‘nationalisation’ of music hall; a process which this thesis has suggested also occurred with football, although the geographical networks and patterns were more varied and less dependent on London.<sup>32</sup>

By and large, one could argue that football’s relationship with other entertainment forms like music hall was mutually beneficial. One important explanation for this is what Georgiou and Litherland have termed the ‘shared commercial geographies of sport and leisure’.<sup>33</sup> In Nottingham, as elsewhere, different leisure pursuits initially shared sites and aimed to benefit from the potential overlapping of audiences at different venues. We know, for instance, that the arrival of thousands of visitors for the annual Goose Fair stimulated other forms of entertainment. Robinson et al’s

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<sup>29</sup> Russell, *Popular Music in England*, p. 86.

<sup>30</sup> See Beckett, J. ‘Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment’ in Beckett, J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (? : Phillimore, 2006), pp. 385-417; p. 411.

<sup>31</sup> Crump, J. ‘Provincial Music Hall: Promoters and Public in Leicester, 1863-1929’, in Bailey, P. (ed.), *Music Hall: The Business of Pleasure* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), pp. 53-72.

<sup>32</sup> Russell, *Popular Music in England*, p. 87.

<sup>33</sup> Georgiou and Litherland, ‘Sport’s Relationship with Other Industries’, p. 189.

detailed mapping of the changing sites and instances of performance culture in Nottingham from 1857 to 1867 clearly shows how theatres, variety halls and other entrepreneurs sought to capitalise from the influx of visitors by putting on special and extra shows across the town.<sup>34</sup> This continued well into the twentieth century, by which point, as we have seen, the city's main football clubs were also conscious of the significance of the Goose Fair for increasing visibility of the football 'product', and ultimately improving gate receipts.

Even as both matured into seemingly independent institutions in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods, music hall and football continued to exist in a productively interlocking relationship. Paul Maloney has argued that the 'crossover between localised music-hall culture and sporting constituencies' could be a 'potent force'.<sup>35</sup> He outlines how this operated in Scotland, with former and current players regularly announced in the audience, and sometimes appearing on the stage, and topical football songs and sketches featured in the programme. In addition, clubs established mutual advertising relationships with theatres and other entertainment venues; an arrangement that was reinforced by the increasing use of football matches in early cinematograph shows.<sup>36</sup> In such cases, as Vanessa Toulmin has suggested, spectating at the match itself and the film of the match became intertwined. The particular focus placed on crowd shots, with 'views of local towns, friends and incidents', ensured that the cinematograph exhibition 'became an extension of both the sporting and local community'.<sup>37</sup>

All this was particularly true of Nottingham, where both popular entertainment and football were well-established by the 1900s. It was especially evident at times of

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<sup>34</sup> Robinson, J., Priestnall, G., Tyler-Jones, R. and Burgess, R., 'Mapping the Moment: A Spatio-Temporal Interface for Studying Performance Culture, Nottingham, 1857-1867', *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing*, 5, 2, 2011, pp. 103-126; p. 108.

<sup>35</sup> Mahoney, P., *Scotland and the Music Hall, 1850-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 201.

<sup>36</sup> Taylor, M., *The Leaguers: The Making of Professional Football in England, 1900-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), p. 262.

<sup>37</sup> Toulmin, V., 'Vivid and Realistic: Edwardian Sport on Film', *Sport in History*, 26, 1, 2006, pp. 124-149; pp. 132-3.

commemoration or celebration. John Beckett has shown how processions to celebrate the end of the Crimean War, anniversaries of local bodies, exhibitions of different types and royal occasions such as the Golden and Diamond Jubilees in 1887 and 1897 became important occasions for social mixing and the demonstration of a collective enthusiasm and civic unity, notwithstanding the divisions, hierarchies and inequalities projected during such events.<sup>38</sup> By the 1890s, celebrations to greet the return home of a successful local football team exhibited similar characteristics. In Nottingham, beginning at the train station and ending at local theatres, they came to represent among many other things the close and overlapping relations between different forms of commercial entertainment and the potential of football to offer 'a display of civic power and pride' to both the residents of the town and those who later read about it in the newspapers.<sup>39</sup> Here, football built on a tradition of collective celebration, weaving the players and officials through public spaces and private sites, and symbolically defining Nottingham to locals and outsiders as a 'football city' of some significance.

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<sup>38</sup> Beckett, 'Leisure, Recreation and Entertainment', pp. 411-3.

<sup>39</sup> Robinson, J., 'Mapping the Field: Moving through Landscape', *Performance Research: A Journal of Performing Arts*, 15, 4, 2010, pp. 86-96; p. 94.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: The Nottinghamshire footballing network 1864-76,

#### based on an analysis of team names (1)

PLACE NAMES	CHURCHES	WORKPLACES/ EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS/ OTHER	SELECT TEAMS
Nottingham FC (Nottinghamshire Club, Notts. Foot Ball Club, Notts County)	Sneinton Church Institute (Sneinton/ Institute)	Nottingham Manufacturing Company (Mansfield)	Mr Greenhalgh's Team
Nottingham Forest	St. Lukes	R. Morleys	Nottinghamshire Select
Sneinton Wanderers	St. Saviours	M. Hosiery Co.	Public Schools
Castle Gate (Castle)	St. James	High School	Local Clubs
Newark	St. Pauls	Grammar	
Bingham	St. Marys Institute	Trade (Newark)	
East Bridgford	St. Nicholas	Profession (Newark)	
Bulwell	St. Mary's Choir	Carvers and Morleys	
Norton	Good Templars (2)	Midland Railway Clerks	
Hounds Gate	St. Andrews Presbyterian Club	Thomas Adams and Co.	
Radford Excelsior	New Radford School Choir	Wells and Venns (Meadows Oak)	
Radcliffe	Trinity Institute	People's College	
Forest Rovers	Newark Christ Church	Mount Vernon School	
Basford	St. Peters Association	Heymann and Co.	
Trent Valley	Christ Church (New Radford)	North Nottingham Youth Club (North Nottingham Youths)	
Greyfriars	Mansfield Road (Wesleyans)	Trent College	

Meadows Juniors	St. Stephens	Simons, Son and Pickard	
Meadow Imperial	Minerva (2)	High Pavement Schools	
Worksop	Sneinton Sunday School	Nottingham Lace	
Southwell	Nottingham Catholic	Hucknall Commercial	
Broadway	Church Mission	Robin Hood Rifles	
Nottingham Trent		Law Club	
Basford Park		Junior Lace	
Mansfield Victoria		Atlas	
Forest Imperial		Royal Oak (Royal Oak Ruffs)	
Bramcote			
Nottingham Amateurs (3)			
Meadows United			
Derby Road Juniors			
Nottingham (Rugby Rules)			
St. Anns			
Newark Rangers			
Newark Rovers			
Albion (Newark)			
Albion Juniors			
Flintham			
Epperstone			
Basford Pioneer			
Sneinton United			
Lenton Victoria			
Cobden Park			
Bottesford			
Ratcliffe (4)			



Grove House			
Nottingham Lambs			
Mansfield Woodhouse			

**Notes:** (1) *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 1 January 1850 - 1 January 1877. From 1877, there was a huge increase in the number of sides. Appendix 2 demonstrates the sides from outside Nottinghamshire who were involved in this footballing network. (2) Regularly played other church teams. (3) Derived from the cricket club of the same name. (4) Ratcliffe-on-Soar.

## **Appendix 2 – Teams from outside the county that played against**

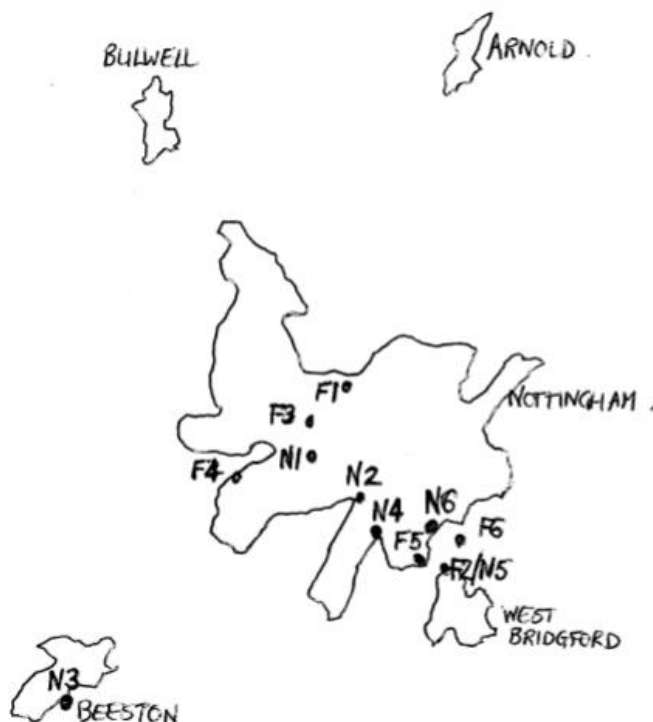
### **Nottinghamshire clubs, 1864-1876 (1)**

Sheffield FC, Hallam, Burton, Lincoln, St. Andrews (Derby), Derwent, Norfolk (Sheffield), Derby Grammar, South Derbyshire, Burton-on-Trent (Rugby Rules), Hull, Grantham, Tutbury, Stoke, Derby Wanderers (Rugby Rules), Sawley, Ockbrook (Ockbrook and Borrowwash, Ockbrook and Spondon), Castle Donnington, Sheffield Newhall, Queens Park (Glasgow), Excelsior (Burton), Long Eaton, Harthill, St. Lukes (Derby), Attercliffe, Wednesday (Sheffield), Chesterfield, Cambridge University, Sheffield Alliance, Broomhall (Sheffield), Birmingham (2), Ashbourne, Coventry (3), Derby Midland, Duffield, Sawley Commercial, Peterborough, First Derbyshire Rifle Volunteers, Mount St. Marys (Chesterfield), Derby Alexandra, Ronin Hood (Burton), Derby St. James, Sheffield Garrick.

Notes: (1) Sides mentioned in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* from 1 January 1850 to 1 January 1877. From 1877, there was a huge increase in the number of sides. (2) Not the current Birmingham City; (3) not the current Coventry City club.

### Appendix 3 - Grounds of Notts and Forest Map

Nottingham and its surrounding towns c.1900



F1- Forest mainly played on the Forest recreation ground between 1865 and 1879. One newspaper report talks of playing 'towards the Mansfield-road end of the ground'.<sup>40</sup>

F2/N5- Forest played most of their games at Trent Bridge between 1879 and 1883 whilst Notts played there between 1883 and 1910. The pitch was alongside Fox Road.<sup>41</sup>

F3- Forest played at Parkside between 1883 and 1885. As there were turnstiles on Ilkeston Road and Lenton Sands, the ground must have been roughly where Rothesay Avenue now stands and where the eastern end of Radford Recreation ground is. The pitch was notorious for its slope too.<sup>42</sup>

F4- Forest played at the Gregory Ground between 1885 and 1890 in the area which was just north of Derby Road and west of Lenton Boulevard.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Nottingham and Midlands Counties Daily Express* 9 February 1875.

<sup>41</sup> Wain, *Notts County: A Pictorial History*, 20-1.

<sup>42</sup> *Nottinghamshire Guardian* 18 September 1883.

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.lentontimes.co.uk/back\\_issues/issue\\_4/issue\\_4\\_12.htm](http://www.lentontimes.co.uk/back_issues/issue_4/issue_4_12.htm) (accessed 3 April 2017).

F5- Forest played at the Town Ground, renamed the City Ground in 1897, between 1890 and 1898. This was behind the Embankment pub as it is now where Turney Street and Pyatt Street now stand.<sup>44</sup>

F6- The City Ground is where Forest currently play. It is worth noting that Notts occasionally played here too when Trent Bridge was unavailable to them in the 1900s.

N1- Notts played in Park Hollow which is between Nottingham Castle and Derby Road before 1864.<sup>45</sup>

N2- Notts played at the Meadows Cricket Ground between 1864 and 1877 which is where the Queen's Walk Recreation Ground now is.<sup>46</sup>

N3- Notts played at Beeston Cricket Ground between 1877 and 1880 behind the railway station.<sup>47</sup>

N4- Notts played at the Castle Cricket Ground in the Meadows between 1880 and 1883 which is where Glapton Road and Wilford Crescent West now stand.<sup>48</sup> It is worth noting that Forest played occasional home games here between 1879 and 1881.

N6- Meadow Lane is where Notts currently play.

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<sup>44</sup> *Nottingham Forest F.C.* (no author given), 32-6; <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101603268> (accessed 3 April 2017); <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101603265> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>45</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, 35.

<sup>46</sup> <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101603268> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>47</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, 35; <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101603256> (accessed 3 April 2017).

<sup>48</sup> Warsop and Brown, *Definitive Notts County*, 35; <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101603268> (accessed 3 April 2017).

## Appendix 4 - References to Attendances in Nottinghamshire in the

### Nottinghamshire Guardian, 1880-1885

Event	How attendance is described
Forest v Sheffield at Trent Bridge 24-1-80	800
Forest v Blackburn Rovers FA Cup tie at Trent Bridge 31-1-80	3500
Forest v Scottish Canadian Team at Trent Bridge 10-2-80	5000
Forest v Wednesday at Trent Bridge 7-2-80	800
Forest athletics meeting at Trent Bridge 24-4-80	13000
Forest v Cambridge University at Trent Bridge 16-12-80	1000
Notts v Aston Villa FA Cup game at Trent Bridge 12-2-81	3000-4000
Notts v Aston Villa FA Cup game at Castle 7-1-82	7000
Forest v Nottinghamshire select team at Trent Bridge 18-3-82	'not so large'
Forest athletics meeting at Trent Bridge 29-4-82	3500
St. Mary's Institute athletics meeting 30-9-82	Less than 500
Forest v Blackburn Olympic at Trent Bridge 14-10-82	700
Notts v Liverpool Ramblers at Meadows 28-10-82	2500
Notts v Sheffield FA Cup game at Castle 4-11-82	2000
Notts v Blackburn Rovers at Trent Bridge 11-11-82	3000
Notts v Walsall at Castle 18-11-82	700
Notts v Queens Park at Trent Bridge 25-11-82	5000
Forest v Wednesbury Old Athletic at Trent Bridge 25-11-82	'meagre' (2)
Forest v Heeley FA Cup tie at Trent Bridge 2-12-82	1000
Notts v Cambridge University at Trent Bridge 18-12-82	300 (3)
Notts v Phoenix Bessemer FA Cup tie at Meadows 28-12-82	3000
Forest v Sheffield at Trent Bridge 28-12-82	'very moderate'
Forest v Bolton at Trent Bridge 27-12-82	700
Forest v Wednesday FA Cup tie at Trent Bridge 6-1-83	2500
Notts v Wednesbury at Castle 13-1-83	'poor'
Forest v Notts at Trent Bridge 20-1-83	3000
Notts v Birmingham St. Georges at Castle 17-2-83	1500
Notts v Aston Villa FA Cup tie at Castle 3-3-83	10000-12000
Forest Athletics Meeting at Trent Bridge 28-4-83	6000-7000

Forest v Small Heath at Parkside 22-9-83	'tolerably large'
Notts FA v Lincs FA at Parkside 6-10-83	'very small'
Notts v Wednesbury Old Athletic at Trent Bridge 6-10-83	2500
Forest v Notts at Parkside 20-10-83	5000
Notts v Forest FA Cup tie at Trent Bridge 1-12-83	10000 (4)
Notts v Lockwood Brothers at Trent Bridge 22-12-83	'few spectators'
Forest v Blackburn Rovers at Parkside 22-12-83	3000
Nottingham Rangers v Wellington at Trent Bridge 29-12-83	150
Trent v Wanderers at Meadows 29-12-83	2000
Notts v Swifts FA Cup tie 9-2-84	11000 (5)
Blackburn Olympic v Queens Park FA Cup semi-final at Trent Bridge 1-3-84	8000
Forest v Wednesday at Parkside 8-3-84	800
Forest v Trent Notts Cup Final at Castle 22-3-84	4000
Forest v Aston Villa at Parkside 29-3-84	6000
Forest Athletics meeting at Trent Bridge 26-4-84	8000
Wanderers v Swifts at Meadows 11-10-84	1000
Notts FA v Renfrewshire at Castle 11-10-84	500
Notts v Darwen at Trent Bridge 25-10-84	'largest of season' (6)
Rangers v Wanderers at Castle 25-10-84	'Anything but large' because of Notts game
Notts v Olympic FA Cup tie at Trent Bridge 8-11-84	2000
Notts v Brentwood at Trent Bridge 15-11-84	2000
Notts v Nottingham Rangers at Trent Bridge 22-11-84	1500
Notts v Blackburn Rovers at Trent Bridge 29-11-84	6000 (7)
Forest v Walsall Swifts at Parkside 29-11-84	'Small' because of Notts game
Forest v United Amateurs at Parkside 13-12-84	300 (8)
Notts v Acton at Trent Bridge 27-12-84	800-1000
Notts FA v Cambs FA at Parkside 27-12-84	Less than 800
Notts v Wednesbury Old Athletic at Trent Bridge 10-1-85	1000
Forest v Small Heath at Parkside 10-1-85	150
Notts v Queens Park FA Cup tie at Trent Bridge 21-2-85	Gate of £477 (9)
Blackburn Rovers v Old Carthusians FA Cup semi-final at Castle 7-3-85	Less than 2000

Notts v Bolton at Trent Bridge 26-12-85	10000
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Notes- (1) Where an estimate is given such as 3000-4000, 3500 is used. Given attendances in the *Nottinghamshire Guardian* are preferred. If these are not stated, *The Definitive Notts County* attendances are used. (2) Played before the Notts Queens Park game. (3) Played on a Monday. Only 2 Cambridge University players turned up. The game was cancelled. (4) The gate money of £350 was claimed to be the highest taken for a derby beating the £150 taken for Blackburn Rovers v Blackburn Olympic. (5) The *Nottinghamshire Guardian* describes how the Trent Bridge ground struggled to cope with the crowd. The attendance figure is taken from Warsop and Brown in *The Definitive Notts County*. (6) Warsop and Brown in *The Definitive Notts County* give this crowd as 3000. (7) Warsop and Brown in *The Definitive Notts County* give this crowd as 8000. (8) Notts FA Cup tie. (9) Warsop and Brown in *The Definitive Notts County* give this crowd as 17000. In 1892, *The Sportsman* was referring to this as 'the greatest gate ever known in Nottingham'. *The Sportsman*, 15 February, 1892.

## Appendix 5 - Notts County's Record of Crowds and League Positions (1)

Season	Average Crowd	Position as best supported club in Football League	League Position
1888-89	3,900	8 <sup>th</sup>	11th
1889-90	3,725	10 <sup>th</sup>	10th
1890-91	7,000	5 <sup>th</sup>	3rd
1891-92	5,300	8 <sup>th</sup>	8th
1892-93	6,925	8 <sup>th</sup>	14th
1893-94	3,125	22 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> in Division 2
1894-95	4,250	20 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> in Division 2
1895-96	3,125	24 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup> in Division 2
1896-97	4,850	22 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> in Division 2
1897-98	8,600	9 <sup>th</sup>	13th
1898-99	10,675	6 <sup>th</sup>	5th
1899-1900	8,950	8 <sup>th</sup>	15th
1900-01	9,450	11 <sup>th</sup>	3rd
1901-02	9,125	12 <sup>th</sup>	13th
1902-03	9,225	16 <sup>th</sup>	15th
1903-04	10,125	14 <sup>th</sup>	13th
1904-05	8,050	20 <sup>th</sup>	18th
1905-06	10,025	17 <sup>th</sup>	16th
1906-07	10,525	19 <sup>th</sup>	18th



1907-08	10,525	24 <sup>th</sup>	18th
1908-09	10,175	27 <sup>th</sup>	15th
1909-10	9,950	23 <sup>rd</sup>	9th
1910-11	12,675 (2)	18 <sup>th</sup>	11th
1911-12	10,950	22 <sup>nd</sup>	16th
1912-13	12,050	21 <sup>st</sup>	19th
1913-14	11,800	26 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> in Division 2
1914-15	9,050	21 <sup>st</sup>	16th

Notes- (1) Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, 92-104: Rollin, *Rothmans Book of Football Records*, pp. 28-35 (2) The leap in attendances here coincides with Notts' move to the new ground at Meadow Lane.

## Appendix 6 - Forest's Record of Crowds and League Positions (1)

Season	Average Crowd	Position as best supported club in League	League Position
1892-93	7,200	5 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
1893-94	6,525	8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
1894-95	5,525	15 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>
1895-96	5,575	20 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>
1896-97	5,125	21 <sup>st</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>
1897-98	7,425	14 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
1898-99	8,850 (1)	11 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>
1899-00	7,875	10 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
1900-01	9,350	12 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
1901-02	8,425	14 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
1902-03	8,825	17 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
1903-04	7,950	21 <sup>st</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
1904-05	10,775	15 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>
1905-06	9,725	18 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
1906-07	9,825	22 <sup>nd</sup>	1st in Division 2
1907-08	12,725	15 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>
1908-09	10,900	24 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>
1909-10	10,050	22 <sup>nd</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>
1910-11	9,775	25 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>

1911-12	9,625	27 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup> in Division 2
1912-13	8,625	30 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup> in Division 2
1913-14	8,050	33 <sup>rd</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup> in Division 2
1914-15	6,075	31 <sup>st</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup> in Division 2

Notes- (1) Tabner, *Through the Turnstiles*, pp. 93-104; Rollin, *Book of Football Records*, pp. 28-35 (2)  
The leap in average attendance here is probably explained by Forest's FA Cup victory in 1898.

## Appendix 7 - The '1,000 Men' (1)

Year	Player	Club left	Club joined	Fee (£)
1905	Common	Sunderland	Middlesbrough	1,000
1907	Reeves	Barnsley	Villa	1,200
1908	Shepherd	Bolton	Newcastle	1,600
1908	Wilson	'Belfast and Everton'	Newcastle	1,500
1908	Brown	Sheffield United	Sunderland	1,000
1911	Simpson	Falkirk	Blackburn	1,800
1911	Hibbert	Bury	Newcastle	1,950
1912	Speirs	Bradford	Leeds City	1,400 (2)
1912	Cantrell	Notts	Tottenham	1,500

Notes- (1) Information from the *Nottingham Evening Post*, 7 January 1913. (2) The number is indecipherable in the *Nottingham Evening Post* so the *Leeds Mercury*, 7 January 1913 was used.

## Appendix 8 - Players in the 'Trentside' Derby from November 1908 (1)

Player	Birthplace	Previous Club	Recruited
Iremonger (Albert)	Wilford, Notts	Nottingham Jardines Athletic	1904 (-1925)
Morley (Herbert)	Kiveton Park	Grimsby Town	1906 (-1914)
Montgomery (Jack)	Chryston	Tottenham Hotspur	1898 (-1910)
Emberton (Teddy)	Thryston	Stafford Rangers	1904 (-1914)
Clamp (Arthur)	Sneinton	Sneinton	1906 (-1914)
Craythorne (Ben)	Small Heath	Walsall	1904 (-1913)
Dean (R. Jerry)	Wellington	Wellington Town	1904 (-1911)
Matthews (Billy)	Derby	Aston Villa	1906 (-1911)
Cantrell (Jimmy)	Sheepbridge	Aston Villa	1907 (-1912)
Dodd (George)	Whitchurch	Workington	1907 (-1910)
Walker (Arthur)	Ripley	QPR	1908 (-1911)
Linacre (Harry)	Aston-upon-Trent	Derby County	1899 (-1908)
Dudley (Walter)	Rotherham	NONE	1902 (-1913)
Maltby (Ginger)	Long Eaton	Notts Rangers	1906 (-1913)
Hughes (Ted)	Wrexham	Wrexham	1905 (-1910)
Wolfe (George)	East London	Swindon Town	1905 (-1910)
Armstrong (Jack)	Tollerton	Keyworth United	1905 (-1922)
Hooper (Bill)	Lewisham	Grimsby Town	1906 (-1911)
Marrison (Tom)	Rotherham	Rotherham Town	1906 (-1910)
West (Enoch)	Hucknall Torkard	Hucknall Constitutional	1905 (-1909)
Morris (Grenville)	Builth Wells	Swindon Town	1898 (-1912)
Birch (William)	Rainford	Blackpool	1908 (-1908)

Notes- (1) *Nottingham Journal*, 23 November 1908; Joyce M., *Football League Players' Records 1888 to 1939* (Nottingham: Soccer Data, 2002). The Notts eleven are listed first.

## Appendix 9 - Directorate of Notts County 1900-1914 (1)

Name	Occupation
Arthur Ashwell	Solicitor
Arthur Barlow	Solicitor
Benjamin Blackburn	Hosiery Machine Maker
Arthur Chamberlain	Accountant
Thomas Cooper	Lace Manufacturer
William Gunn	Cricket Outfitter
Robert Halford	Estate Agent
Arthur Lofthouse	Surgeon
Frank Norris	Gentleman
William Scottorn	Hosier
Arthur Williams	Solicitor
Herbert Vickers	Contractor

Notes (1) William Denison was the President in 1900. The information here is from *Memorandum of Association of the Notts. Incorporated Football Club*, Nottinghamshire Archives DD1632/6.

## Appendix 10 - Leagues relating to sides from Nottinghamshire in 1903 and 1914

Name of League	Number of Nottinghamshire teams (1903)	Number of Nottinghamshire teams (1914)
Football League	2 (1)	2 (2)
Midland League	2 (3)	1 (4)
Notts. and District League	12	
Notts. Football Alliance	11	14
Notts. Amateur League	11	
Notts. Combination	13	13
Notts. Junior League	2 leagues of 13 and 12	9
Bulwell and District League	14	
Notts. Thursday League	9	2 Leagues of 11 and 9
Mansfield and District League	14	3 leagues of 10, 8 and 10 (5)
Newark and District League	10	2 leagues of 9 and 7
Notts. S.S. League		2 leagues of 10 and 13
Nottingham Spartan League		6
Mansfield Wednesday League		8
Skegby League		2 Leagues of 6 and 11
Nottingham Boys Brigade League		9
Notts. Church League		9
Central Alliance		2

TOTAL (non-league)	121	175
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Notes- (1) Forest and Notts (2) Forest and Notts (3) Worksop and Newark (4) Worksop (5) 'Mansfield and Forest Church League' (6) Mansfield Mechanics and Mansfield Town.



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