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Sport and the public house have been linked since its emergence in the sixteenth century, with many a sporting event being twinned with excessive drinking and gambling. During the nineteenth century, as the countryside became developed, the more entrepreneurial publican became gatekeepers of sport and, in cities like Manchester, sports such as pedestrianism developed alongside these establishments, creating a niche for such endeavours and enabling the publican to successfully transcend into the world of sport. On one hand these individuals were deemed saviours, but in reality they were fully aware of the profit-making potential of such an enterprise and throughout the century, the survival of the public house relied on extensive programmes of entertainment provided by the innkeepers. The relationship between entrepreneurial sportsmen and public house has long been noted and there are abundant examples of individuals who combined sporting activities with the role of licensee. However, many have approached this topic by documenting achievements of these men as athletes rather than exploring their impact as trainers and promoters. This paper addresses these issues by considering pub culture and pedestrianism in Manchester 1840-1880, exploring some individuals in more detail through individual and collective biographical studies using a small-scale prosopographical approach.

Although many argue that the economic expansion of Britain started in the sixteenth century, it was not until the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century that the influence of new and sophisticated technology, such as the steam engine, impacted on the workforce (Allen, 2006). It was at this time that the industrial revolution transformed Britain, giving birth to the most powerful nation in the world, but to the detriment of the British population (Justman & Gradstein, 1999). Long working hours, poor housing and sanitary conditions, and high death rates lay the foundations for one of Britain's most prosperous eras as the country became enthralled by the money making potential of the industrial empire (Black, 1973).

In 1801, of the 11 million residents in Britain, 82 percent lived in rural dwellings (Friedlander, 1969) where occupations relating to agricultural work were well represented, however by 1851, the populace had increased to over 20 million (Census Office, 1851) and Weber's study of population growth (1899) noted a significant change in the landscape, with 50 percent of inhabitants now present in major cities and towns. This number only increased during the next fifty years and by 1901, of the 40 million citizens, 74 percent were located in overpopulated urban environments (Weber, 1899; Census Office, 1904) where many were seeking work in the ever expanding cities which had enveloped much of the countryside.

Economically, Great Britain was thriving, becoming the leading trade nation of iron, textiles and manufactured goods, but politically the country was struggling to manage the workforce who had not yet reaped the benefits of the financial explosion and were continuing to live under deplorable circumstances (Szreter, 1999). Tory ran Government offered little help, and this, combined with a lack of political change, only created more hostility. Politics was ruled by the upper class gentlemen, who were increasingly concerned with Britain's dependence on the uneducated working classes and continued to rule in such a way as to prevent these individuals from revolting; any political meeting was quickly halted and members punished for their actions (Tholfsen, 1976). Much of the animosity was associated with only financially affluent men having the power to vote, but these were easily bought, creating an unrepresentative parliament. The voting system disregarded areas which had expanded during the industrialisation of Britain, such as Birmingham and Manchester, but smaller settlements, known as 'rotten boroughs', still had political power due to the means of a select few individuals, and it was not until after the Reform Act of 1832, and several thereafter, that the British communities saw a change occur which started to empower the middle classes and revolutionise society for the working class (Young, 1936).

Manchester, with its steam-powered cotton mills, was known as the first industrial city. Nicknamed 'Cottonopolis', the city thrived during the nineteenth century effectively becoming a port and exporting cotton by means of the canals systems and rivers. As steam developed, the railways all led to Manchester, enabling the city to expand even further and envelop the rural landscape. As Tocqueville wrote in 1835, "Thirty or forty factories rise on the tops of the hills... Their six stories

tower up... [and] give notice from afar of the centralisation of industry... [The] crunching wheels of machinery, the shriek of steam from boilers, the regular beat of the looms... are the noises from which you can never escape.” With a population of 250,000 in 1840, this new city became an area of wealth and hope; many moved to Manchester for work and to build a better life for their families; and by 1850, with a community of over 400,000 people, the overpopulated city, an area of regeneration and development, could not look after the needs of its inhabitants, transforming this prosperous city into unhealthy ‘slums’ where death, criminal activity and social discord was rife (Jones, 1984). Areas were strictly one class or another and there was no combination of rich living with the poor; business men moved to the outskirts of the city, such as Alderly Green, whilst the lower classes remained in the city which was in extremely poor conditions. Engels discusses the state of Manchester in 1844, concluding that “the disgraceful unhealthy slums of Manchester and the disgusting condition of that part of the town in which the factory workers lived. I declared that I have never seen so badly built a town in my life...and yet there is a great deal of money made here”.

The Public House

The pub, since its emergence in the sixteenth century, provided an alternative environment to the workplace, offering alcohol and entertainment to all who sought it (Girouard, 1975). A traditional social and cultural practice, the pub became a meeting place for men, who after long and hard days at work, would congregate to relax before returning to their large families and hectic household (Harrison, 1971).

Throughout the nineteenth century alcohol was ever present and the changing nature of the drinking place caused many to question its place in society (Shiman, 1988), nevertheless Couling (1862) points out that although many criticise drinking culture of the Victorian period, there is a significant change from the eighteenth century’s traditions when “nothing could be done without drink” (p.10). Smith (1983) discusses the range of businesses, in order of respectability, from inns and taverns to alehouses and gin-shops, which catered for the different social classes who entered them. The term ‘public house’ applies to both the inns and taverns, well respected institutions whose licensed victualler would play host to the various classes by providing different grades of care; “the inn developed from the coaching tradition of providing refreshments and lodgings for travellers” (p. 367) with the best rooms provided the wealthy man every comfort and were regularly used for private societies, and even political meetings, throughout the century (Harrison, 1971). Conversely, the alehouses and gin-shops proprietors catered for their lower division of custom, providing stronger spirits and ale for a small price (Spiller, 1973); Charles Dickens paints a clear picture of these in classic novels such as *Oliver Twist* (1838) and *Sketches by Boz* (1836) showing

the dilapidated and decrepit neighbourhoods, including the sketchy and unruly patrons, where alcoholism, immorality and violence prevail.

Class segregation within the drinking establishments, although present in the latter part of the eighteenth century, became severe in the 1830s after the Beer Act encouraged a new class of drinking place to evolve (House of Lords, 1830, July 23); “the ‘beerhouse’ – which, through drawing its customers from the same social level as the alehouse, was exempt from magistrates’ control and drew its licence direct from Excise” (Harrison, 1971, p. 45). Designed to reduce illegal drinking and curbing public drunkenness through exclusion of spirits, such as gin, the 1830 Beer Act enabled any householder, for the small price of two pounds and two shillings, to sell and brew beer, ale and cider from their home (House of Commons, 1830, April 6; Sibley, 2006). Within the first year around 400 beerhouses surfaced however, only four years later, a staggering 33,000 materialised, causing widespread mayhem and increased public awareness of disorderly behaviour (Porritt, 1895). Manchester in particular embraced the beerhouse, with over 1000 emerging by 1860, doubling that of the public houses within the city and neighbouring towns.

The once respected and valued public houses were suffering; the state of the lowly regarded beerhouses and gin-shops was widely publicised, causing political groups to endorse alcohol prohibition within England. Lees (1857) blamed the publican for the current economy suggesting their ‘art’ in promoting alcohol produced working class intemperance, however Jennings (2002) reports that it was the beerhouse publican who was responsible for such negligence, destroying the trade of the traditional public house whilst tarnishing the occupation of licensed victualler. Public opinion surrounding teetotalism was split and the proprietors, knowing this was the case, would ensure sales by highlighting the popular belief that alcohol was good for health, advertising their contents as prescribed by doctors (Shiman, 1988), as physicians frequently used spirits as remedies for influenza and cholera, and even teetotalers found it difficult to argue against this view; Dr. Paris reported the benefits of beer and wine in *The Morning Chronicle* (1826, July 14, n.p), revealing “table-beer is recommended as highly wholesome, as well as ale, and even porter, to those who take much exercise, and have strong digestive powers”.

The argument surrounding alcohol continued throughout the nineteenth century and the public house maintained its population due to the recreational and social nature of drinking, but when Victorian England tried to move away from alcohol by promoting art, theatre, music, sport and outdoor pursuits, the pubs, undeterred by such attempts, were quick to recognise the money making potential of such enterprises, and through entrepreneurial vision, transformed into hot spots for entertainment, thus cementing their place in the forefront of British society (Bailey, 1978).

Today I will be introducing how the publican used sport to create a foundation for success through an exemplar of the Holden family, a sporting dynasty in mid-nineteenth century Manchester.

The Holden Family

Born circa 1799, James Holden was reputable within Manchester's pedestrian faction, being noted as "the great stakeholder in Lancashire pedestrianism" (The Era, 1843). Owner of the White Lion, Long Millgate, his establishment became a well-recognised pedestrian haunt during his reign of over 35 years; newspapers printed his name and pub as a place to congregate (Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle, 1838), for stakes to be held (Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle, 1859), and for sporting bodies to hold important meetings (New York Clipper, 1865). James was not only renowned for his public house; he became involved in pedestrianism himself as a referee, judge and stakeholder (Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle, 1854) until his death in 1865.

James lived a long and healthy life but unfortunately, the same cannot be said for his wife Elizabeth. After having around 14 children, although only five survive into adulthood, she died circa 1850 before the age 40. Of the five children traced through the census, Alice, Sarah and James Jr. are explored further.

In 1851, at the age of 22, Alice disappears from the census and her father's establishment, only to re-emerge as Alice Martin, married to George Martin, a publican according to the 1851 census. George Martin, ex-professional pedestrian and regularly reported as the 'Wizard of Pedestrianism', retired from the sport at the age of 24 to try his hand at training athletes, creating a 'stable' of pedestrians at this establishment in Salford, racing all over England and becoming successful as a result. In 1861 he travels to America with his athletes; Charles Mower, John Nevin and John White; returning later that year with American Indian pedestrians, the most famous being Louis Bennett or 'Deerfoot' as his race name was known. George tours the British Isles with Deerfoot and his professional athletes, setting up the 'Deerfoot Circus'; assembling tents with portable 220 yard tracks for four-mile exhibitions. The tour required the athletes to compete every day, other than a Sunday, for a year and was designed as an entertainment, introducing Native Americans to the eyes of the British public. The circus was shut down after allegations of match fixed emerged as it was difficult for the public to see the difference between the circus and legitimate races; as Deerfoot was the star of the event he regularly won but when competing in legitimate races he was far off the pace of the professionals.

In November 1863, George quits as a trainer/backer and becomes landlord of a new pub, the Royal Oak Inn, Oldham Road, Newton Heath. Location is perfect to gain big crowds as it is near to

the railway, buses and trams run past the ground regularly and it is within walking distance to the already well-established Copenhagen Running Grounds, proprietor Thomas Hayes, with who George and his father-in-law James have very good relations. George closes the pub and develops the ground, spending over £2000 to enclose the 16 acres surrounding the pub and turns it into “one of the most superior sporting arenas in England, if not the world”. He reopens the grounds early 1864, boasting two courses; one circular 651 yards and one straight over a quarter of a mile and on 24th June he hold the first meeting, the St Ledger Mile and attracts a crowd of around 20,000. He continues to work with Native American athletes, housing them in his hostelry and erecting a wigwam amidst the construction of the grounds in order for them and their family to feel at home. One of the last reports of George Martin sees him exploring his entrepreneurial skills further, requesting novelties suitable for his grounds, a first class pianist who can sing and a photographer for future endeavours. Unfortunately, less than a year after his grand opening, George dies in “difficulties and under deplorable circumstances”, entering a mental asylum for delirium, and there was concern that the grounds would never be the same again. His children continue his legacy in a fashion, his son Harry becoming turf correspondent and his daughter Elizabeth marrying a turf accountant, both bookmakers licensed to take bets on horse races.

Back to the Holden household, in 1852 James’ daughter Sarah becomes Sarah Piers, marrying a printer names George and they are living at the White Lion with James, sister Elizabeth, and daughters Elizabeth and Sarah by 1861. Although never noted as a publican on the census, George Piers is an ex-professional rower, racing regularly on the River Irk and being spotted in The Manchester Arms, a rower’s haunt only 20 doors down from the White Lion where we can assume he met Sarah. Before moving into James’ establishment, in 1853, just a year into his marriage, George Piers took over The Plasterer’s Arms from no other than brother-in-law George Martin, only strengthening this idea of family and kinship ties as important factors for continuing in sport. George Piers was regularly in the sporting papers taking on the role of starter and referee in James Holden’s absence, thrusting him into the world of pedestrianism. It is important to note that although a pub, The White Lion held copies of ‘Bell’s Life’ and local Manchester magazines behind the bar whilst also producing photographic prints of local sporting icons including George Martin; maybe this is where George Piers’ skills as a printer were utilised. More information about George is needed to strengthen his case study.

Finally, son James Holden became a pedestrian himself albeit not as successful as his brother-in-law’s George Martin and George Piers. Born in 1835, one of only two surviving boys, he stays close to his father and continues in his footsteps, becoming a publican and assisting at multiple events, even travelling to Sheffield to officiate pedestrian races. He marries a barmaid by the names of Mary Ann Moorhouse, who could be the Mary Ann Moore described as a servant at The White Lion on the 1861 census. By 1871, James, Mary Ann and their daughter Alice, moved to Chetham, within walking distance of The White Lion now owned by Mary Ann’s shoemaking father

Edward, (no doubt using his sporting ties to develop running shoes for Manchester peds) and just across the river from James' father's new hotel in Salford.

In the near future, to further progress this research, I will be putting together a template of collective traits in order to identify common characteristics of these sporting entrepreneurs. As I have illustrated in the case study of the Holden family, the success of these individuals relies on kinship ties, knowledge and prestige (most are well known ex-professionals themselves) and a sense of community. Previous views of the publican being a male dominated role have emerged but it is also important to note that the women occupy crucial positions within this environment, being the figures of the public house and also running establishments (as many of the females take on the responsibility of licensee from their husbands/fathers), which enable the males to continue to strengthen their association with sport. I have identified further 'publicans of interest' and would like to start to pull their biographical dossiers together with the same detail as the Holden family. Family relationships are strong within the research; further to George Martin's death, the Royal Oak was taken over by John Cooper in 1866 who continues to work with James Holden in making the grounds a successful sporting arena. John and his son, James Henry Cooper, run this establishment with them both being noted as starters, referees and stakeholders for the sport within the papers; just another example of the importance of family within this business.