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"The Struggle for the Supremacy of the Coast": Baseball and Identity in Boothbay Harbor, Maine

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**“THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SUPREMACY OF THE COAST:”
BASEBALL AND IDENTITY IN BOOTHBAY HARBOR, MAINE**

A THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
AMERICAN AND NEW ENGLAND STUDIES
BY
CHRISTOPHER G.F. HOFFMAN

2014

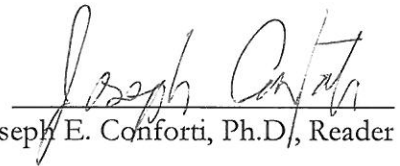
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We hereby recommend that the thesis of, Christopher G.F. Hoffman, entitled,
"The Struggle for the Supremacy of the Coast:" Baseball and Identity in Boothbay Harbor, Maine
be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.



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Thank you to my parents, Russ Hoffman and Sarah Foulger, for supporting my interest in history, specifically the history of my home state. If we take the long view, this project began when you decided to move to Maine in the 1980s. More recently, of course, you've nurtured my connection to the communities that this project features, which served as the spark that began this project.

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ABSTRACT

During the summer months of the first decade of the twentieth century, the Boothbay Harbor region was invigorated with baseball fever. By 1900, Americans had come to understand baseball as its national game, and Boothbay Harbor discovered and nourished the game in the final decades of the nineteenth century. But as the twentieth century began, baseball became more than a game: it was a business, a spectacle, and an opportunity for inhabitants of the region to define themselves based upon the team they supported.

By 1900, Boothbay Harbor had experienced a tumultuous period of economic growth. What was a small, isolated town in the middle of the nineteenth century, almost entirely reliant upon farming, fishing, and shipbuilding, exploded as the twentieth century approached. New economic activities more deeply connected to the global economy, including fish processing and ice harvesting, changed the dynamics of the town and created new types of people on its streets. The greatest economic shift of all, however, was the introduction of tourism. During Boothbay Harbor's summer months, therefore, the population of people in the region was incredibly diverse, and older systems of cultural organization of members of the community had broken down.

As members of the Boothbay Harbor region sought new means for creating identity in a heterogeneous place, baseball stepped in. The sport, America's game, allowed for all kinds of individuals to participate, first as players, and eventually as spectators. But in the region, two distinct traditions of baseball existed. On the one hand, wealthy vacationers brought an upper-middle class form of the game with them, a tradition of baseball that had always been closely connected to class identity through social association and competition. On the other hand, permanent residents of Boothbay Harbor also played baseball, but for them the game was rooted in rural life. In Boothbay Harbor, these conflicting traditions could literally be played out on the baseball field. Such was the case in the late nineteenth century and in 1902, when "locals" and "tourists" could see themselves as such during the annual Boothbay Harbor-Squirrel Island rivalry game.

As the first decade of the twentieth century developed, the symbolic showdown between Squirrel Island and Boothbay Harbor became a wildly popular spectator event, one that local businessmen could capitalize on. The commodification of baseball meant changing the schedule to allow for the two teams to play against each other multiple times each summer, recruiting semi-professional players to bolster the local team's chances, and wild press reports to help bring people to the region. In 1906, the two played against one another in eight games, with the semi-professional local team defeating the amateur vacationing team six times. As the number of fans at each game increased, the popular spectator sport allowed individuals in the stands to continue to see themselves either as small-town locals or visiting tourists.

The story of baseball in Boothbay Harbor is thus a story of identity. The game became a means for creating a simplified "us" and "them" dynamic in the community, now defined along the lines of "local" and "tourist."

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INTRODUCTION

Baseball has been called America's game, a national pastime. Every year, millions watch the "boys of summer" in major league stadiums across the country and on television. Kids from coast-to-coast grow up with a bat and glove close by, playing on Little League teams with others from around the block or down the road. Films like *Field of Dreams* have romanticized the importance of "having a catch" with your father to the point that it signals the strength of a father-son relationship. My own father still shakes his head at the fact that I first learned to catch a baseball with someone else's dad, not him. Few children have not dreamt of the chance to hit a grand slam to win the World Series for their favorite team, or heard of baseball greats like Lou Gehrig, Ted Williams, and Hank Aaron. There is perhaps no better illustration of this than in the 1993 baseball film *The Sandlot*, when unpopular protagonist Scotty Smalls borrows and loses his father's baseball signed by "some lady named Ruth...Baby Ruth."¹ To the horror of the entire gang Smalls plays with, he has never heard of the great Babe Ruth, and has no conception of the value of the ball he has just lost. Needless to say, baseball — its heroes, its champions, its past, its future — is deeply embedded in American culture.

My own experience echoes that of most young American boys. I played in countless little league games while growing up in Harpswell, Maine, mostly for the A's (like most such leagues, the teams were named after Major League clubs). One famous family portrait shows me at the bat, my older brother playing catcher behind me, and my father behind him calling balls and strikes. When we weren't playing for our respective little league teams, we played catch in the yard before school, trying to set each other up for an incredible diving "snag."

¹ *The Sandlot*, directed by David M. Evans (1993; Los Angeles: 20th Century Fox, 2002), DVD.

In the afternoons we played home run derby with a plastic Wiffle[®] ball and bat in the yard (if the ball struck the house on the fly, it was a home run). As we grew up, we also did what most kids do, which was quit the game; neither of us played organized baseball after seventh or eighth grade. Though I'd always been a strong infielder, I was a smaller kid and as pitchers threw faster, I couldn't hit. In high school, I played lacrosse instead. But I've continued to be a fan of the game, and have now witnessed what seemed an impossibility when I was a kid: three Boston Red Sox World Series championships.

It's probably the fan in me that was drawn to a poster painting at the Monhegan Museum when visiting the island in 2008. At the time, I was working as the caretaker and activities director at Ocean Point in East Boothbay, about the closest mainland soil to Monhegan. As a part of my job, I made the lemonade for and then played in Ocean Point's weekly game of softball, so my regular participation in ball games probably also helped me notice the poster, which hung high on the museum's wall. The words "Base Ball Today" surround a large, red lobster, with the game's match up listed at the bottom: "Men vs. Lobsters." The painting is one of several amusing advertisements for baseball games by Frederic Dorr Steele, the famous American artist best known for his illustrations for the Sherlock Holmes series. A summer resident on Monhegan during the early 1900s, Steele also played in games on the island's field. It's likely that the poster's proclaimed showdown of "Men vs. Lobsters" was simply a joke, but given Steele's position on the island, one of many famous artists, the poster was also representative of the social dynamic behind the teams that played. The Monhegan Museum proclaims that in the early decades of the twentieth century, "every day that the fishermen could assemble a team practically everyone on the Island would climb the hill to the field in the back of the Lighthouse. The games would be between

the fishermen and rusticators — the latter being the summer visitors.”² The combination of seeing Steele’s painting with the museum’s wall text served as the motivation for this entire project.

This game, a showdown between local islanders and summer tourists, seemed to echo the story of the entire state. As much as I am a child of the game of baseball, I’m also a child of the state of Maine. I was born here, have lived here for most of my life, and do not plan on leaving. But I’ve always wondered about my place in the state. My parents were not Mainers; they were both children of the baby boom, growing up in the teeming Long Island suburbs of New York City, and moved here in the 1980s to work and raise a family. So because my lineage is not rooted in generations of Maine life, I may not be a true Mainer according to some whom you ask. Looking at Steele’s painting on Monhegan, I wondered which team I identified with: if the game were re-played today, would I play with the fishermen, or the summer rusticators? This question led to two years of research about baseball on the Maine coast and, ultimately, the words that you now read.

My research quickly led me to another regular baseball showdown, one based in the region my parents moved to in 2005, Boothbay Harbor. I found that in the same years that fishermen and rusticators crossed bats on Monhegan, locals from Boothbay Harbor faced off against summer tourists based on Squirrel Island. I discovered that such games took place first from a 1981 *Sports Illustrated* article by Ted Smiley entitled “Corncobs And A Babe Ruth Bat Set The Story Straight On Curveballs.” Smiley, never a professional ballplayer, wrote the short memoir to reflect on his own youth and his baseball lessons from his brother: “... it was the summer of 1929 when Chas taught me to hit the curveball, because that was the summer our father died. I’m not sure whether it was the summer of 1930 or

² Wall text, “Baseball,” *Permanent Exhibition*, Monhegan Museum, Monhegan Island, Maine.

1931 that the lesson paid its big dividend on Squirrel Island, which is off the coast of Maine, where the same families had been summering since the mid--1800s.” To most readers, Smiley’s story is little more than a classic sports memoir, the story of young siblings growing up with baseball on their minds and in their hearts, an integral piece of their relationship: “All that summer, an hour or two every sunny day, we played Pirates and Yankees in our backyard. Occasionally other boys would join in, but mostly it was just Chas and me. Chas was the Yankees and I was the Pirates. The Pirates were given nine outs per inning to the Yankees’ three, but my Pirates and I still got clobbered the whole month of June.”³ Many American boys can relate to Smiley’s tale of baseball’s role in alleviating summer sibling boredom.

But as Smiley’s story develops, it becomes a view into a much larger social dynamic of life on the coast of Maine in the early 1930s, when his story is set. The boys on the island decided to “revive the traditional annual baseball game with the town team of Boothbay Harbor, the mainland jumping-off place for the island. The challenge was issued and accepted and a Sunday afternoon date set for a game on the Boothbay ball field.” Smiley was younger than most of the able-bodied college boys who stayed on Squirrel for most of the summer, but as a result of some good luck and injuries to other boys, Smiley found himself on his way across Boothbay Harbor’s waters to face the local team. He recalls that “The Boothbay town team was composed of lobstermen, fishermen and farmers, all of them seasoned ballplayers. They were fast, experienced, talented, used to playing as a team, and they outclassed us shamefully. [...] The townies took out their innate dislike of invading Summer People on us in the bottom of the first, batting around and scoring half a dozen runs.” As we can see, Smiley’s story is about much more than how a teenager benefitted

³ Ted Smiley, “Corncobs And A Babe Ruth Bat Set The Story Straight On Curveballs,” *Sports Illustrated* 55 No. 16 (October 19, 1981), 138.

from curveball lessons from his older brother. It is, in fact, one story of the social divisions of the Boothbay region in the first half of the 20th century. Nonetheless, Chas' teaching did pay off for the author:

Ahead by nothing and two, Herb [the Boothbay pitcher] decided to polish me off with his curveball. It was just like a session with the corncobs in our backyard. The ball started off right at my chin, but analyzing Herb's wrist snap was nothing to someone who had faced Chas. I waited for it, subconsciously calculated the trajectory of the break, shifted my weight and swung. The ball went on a line over the first baseman's head and rolled all the way to the fence, while I turned on full speed and made it standing to third base.⁴

Unfortunately for Smiley's Squirrel Island team, his triple was perhaps their only highlight, and the game ended early: "We did nothing in the top of the fifth, and the game was called off to the very vocal annoyance of the entire population of Boothbay Harbor, which was enjoying seeing 'them rich loafers from the island' getting their teeth kicked in. The final score was something like 27-3 or 26-2."⁵ Smiley's solid hitting and fielding overshadow the trouncing his team took in his memoir.

Notice how Smiley divides the participants of the game into "islanders" and "townies." The islanders consist of college and prep school boys, kids from Dartmouth and Williams, kids whose families have been "summering" on Squirrel "since the mid-1800s." They are members of an elite New England leisure class, a group who can afford a summer vacation even during the worst financial depression in U.S. history. The latter group, the townies, are working class locals, "lobstermen, fishermen and farmers" with an "innate dislike of invading" summer tourists. This game, as Smiley remembers it, reflected and reinforced a divided community. It was an opportunity, in this case for the locals, both on the field and in the stands, to assert some level of dominance over the summer population.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid, 140-144.

Baseball has a complex history in the Boothbay region, where the population multiplies five or six fold in the summer time. In fact, the game is about as old as the summer colonies that dot the shores of the mainland and islands in and around Boothbay Harbor, dating to the 1870s. By the 1900s, fierce rivalries had developed between different summer colonies, such as Ocean Point and Squirrel Island, as well as these summer destinations and local teams. Baseball therefore offers an interesting angle on the dynamics of community and identity in the Boothbay region. Newspaper records point to storied games between the Squirrel Island and Harbor teams, a game between summer visitors and year-round residents. For both local and summer tourist alike, baseball games offered an important opportunity to assert one's place in this divided community. Putting on one's cleats and uniform meant an individual would represent his community or summer colony, and supporters of each team could likewise use the games to shape their identities.

The story of baseball in Maine has been told through the work of many local historians and lovers of the game. Perhaps most well known in this effort are Don McWilliams' *Yours in Sports: A History of Baseball, Basketball, Boxing, and Bowling in Maine*, the works of Will Anderson, including *Was Baseball Really Invented in Maine?*, as well as more recent works like Jim Baumer's *When Towns Had Teams*. All of these works help recount baseball's history in the state. Yet while all are suitably local, none look at the roots of the game, ask why baseball became so popular, and what cultural purposes the game served in the state's communities. This American Studies approach to baseball in Boothbay Harbor attempts to fill such a void. To understand the place of baseball in the Boothbay region is to witness the confluence of two great rivers: from one direction flows the developing economy and culture of tourism, with all its significance for Maine's communities, while

from the other direction runs the rise of baseball, a game now known for its national prominence, but then developing in the mid-19th century. Both of these trends in American society rose from a new culture of leisure in the country. In the Boothbay Region, baseball helped transform a region of diverse populations into one with ordered, simplified identities of “local” and “tourist.”

Chapter One provides background on the shifts in the Boothbay region’s economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries from a community reliant upon fishing and shipbuilding to an entrenched tourist mecca. Using existing theories of leisure and tourism provided by Dona Brown in *Inventing New England* and Gary Stevens’ 2000 ANES thesis “*Our Shangri-La*,” the chapter will follow the new summer class of tourists as they enter the Boothbay region. By examining the shifting economics of the region, I will demonstrate that homogenizing labels like “tourist” and “local,” and the social divisions they caused, did not exist prior to the interaction between these groups. In reality, both such groups included a wide variety of social actors. Boothbay Harbor’s year-round community included independent farmers and fishermen, businessmen, day laborers, and small-scale industrialists like Luther Maddocks. The group “from away” was equally diverse.

Chapter Two further develops these divisions by closely examining the individuals who played baseball, specifically for the Squirrel Island and Boothbay Harbor teams in the season of 1902. Through the examination of the history of baseball in the United States and Maine, the chapter demonstrates how baseball traditions differed between urban and rural, as well as middle and working class populations. It becomes clear that baseball teams, especially the local team in Boothbay Harbor, consisted of a diverse group of social actors. Using the work of historians Benjamin Rader, David Vaught, Ronald Story, and Warren Goldstein, I will demonstrate how baseball teams, rooted in different traditions of the game,

served to forge homogenized communities from such diverse populations. In short, baseball allowed “locals” and “tourists” to see themselves, and their opponents, in these simplistic terms. The social make-up of these rivaled opponents in the first years of the twentieth century will show the vast and growing divide between the intersecting communities of the region in the summer.

Finally, Chapter Three will examine the nature of the baseball games themselves. By examining both who played, and witnessed, these games in 1906, specifically, we will see how the game of baseball itself offered the opportunity to establish and reinforce one’s identity in a divided place. What did it mean to play baseball in Boothbay in the late 19th and early 20th centuries? Carrying over the theoretical analysis from Chapter Two and using period newspaper reports, this chapter will at long last answer this question. Games themselves functioned on a variety of levels. Foremost, these games allowed players and spectators to recognize these new aspects of their identity as “local” or “tourist.” But by 1906, baseball had also developed into an important business. The cultural importance of the showdown between locals and tourists was symbolically too important to pass up as a commodity, and the promotion of the game also served to help bring additional tourists to the region.

Ultimately, the story of baseball helps us understand the story of Maine, a place that today relies heavily upon the “devil’s bargain” of tourism, as Hal K. Rothman put it.⁶ Individuals consistently seek ways to profit and survive from tourism-related businesses along the coast of Maine. Visiting Boothbay Harbor during the summer months, it does not take long to find the cultural divisions that define life for all people here. Early 1900s baseball helps us understand where such divisions come from.

⁶ Hal K. Rothman, *Devil’s Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth Century American West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1998).

ONE

From Fishing Hamlet to Thriving Village: The Boothbay Region in 1900

Luther Maddocks nearly bought Squirrel Island and, looking back in the late 1920s, he wished he had. The estate of William Greenleaf, the owner in the mid-1800s, had offered the island, two cows, and twenty sheep for \$2,200 in 1870. The 130-acre island might have been the ideal location for a variety of marine business interests in the economic environment of late-nineteenth century coastal Maine; Maddocks was, after all, a businessman first and foremost. Born in 1845, Maddocks would become one of the Boothbay region's most prominent citizens during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He established his first fish oil factory in the region in 1865 and during his lifetime became one of the region's largest employers in the fisheries, manufacturing, trade, and ice industries. At times, he employed more men and paid more in taxes than any other person around. During the late 1800s, he would serve on the local school committee, represent the region in the Maine state legislature, and become secretary of the National Fisheries Association, using his power to lobby against the regulation of the fisheries and protect the unbridled harvest of the product that had made him rich. Given his many accolades and extensive community involvement, Mr. Maddocks was surely well respected, but must have been an imposing figure in the small towns of this coastal region.¹

In search of a place to locate a fish-canning factory in 1870, Maddocks offered Greenleaf \$2000 for Squirrel Island, hoping to strike a bargain. Looking back, Maddocks explains that “[Greenleaf] stuck for his original price so we looked further and finally decided to locate at Dogfish Head across in the Sheepscot River.” His business did just fine there, but little did Maddocks know the opportunity that had passed him up. Squirrel Island

¹ Francis B. Greene, *History of Boothbay, Southport, and Boothbay Harbor, Maine: 1623-1905* (Portland, ME: Loring, Short, and Harmon, 1906), 292, 296, 582.

would go on to become one of the most exclusive summer colonies anywhere on the Maine coast, and the value of its real estate skyrocketed in the fifty years after its sale in 1871 for the full asking price. “In view of the subsequent development of Squirrel Island and the prices folks pay for lots there,” reflected Maddocks, “one can’t help thinking of the time it might have been acquired for a mere 2,200!”² By 1927, Maddocks was an 82-year old man, but he had plans to open yet another factory, for sardines, elsewhere in the region. He was still in business. By the same time, however, Squirrel Island had grown to attract summer cottage owners from around the country and beyond, the value of its lots ever-increasing.

Given Squirrel’s tourist development and eventual cultural exclusivity, something I will develop in the coming chapter, it is ironic that it nearly became an industrial fish processing center; the tranquility of a Maine coastal vacation spot seems hardly compatible with the stench of mass caught porgies or sardines. Nonetheless, the presentation of two possible roads for Squirrel Island in 1870 shows us the terrific shift the population of Boothbay experienced in the final years of the nineteenth century. Shipbuilding, fishing, and other industries closely connected to the sea had dominated the economy of the region for decades. This was no different in the final years of the century, though developments in each economic area brought booms and busts previously unheard of as fishing became increasingly industrial. The largest change in the lives of Boothbay folks, however, was the arrival of tourists who came in the summer months hoping to experience coastal Maine leisure. Not as volatile as the shipbuilding and fishing industries, the growth of summer tourism dramatically changed the economy and culture of Boothbay, resulting in a diversification of the social demographics and identities of the people in the town. The arrival of industrialization in tandem with an increase in tourist populations during the

² Alfred B. Elden, “Chat with Hon. Luther Maddocks of Boothbay Harbor, Dean of Maine’s Salt Water Fisheries,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 6 Aug. 1927, Magazine Section A-2.

summer greatly shifted the dynamics of the community, creating and defining a diverse array of social actors. Farmers, fishermen, and day laborers mingled on the streets of Boothbay Harbor and in its waters alongside businessmen, investors, and artisans. All these people learned to brush shoulders with day-trippers, vacationers, and proud new summer cottage owners alike. This diversity defined the community in the years approaching 1900.

*

The Boothbay region sits at the end of a peninsula in southern Mid-Coast Maine, flanked by the Damariscotta and Sheepscot rivers to the east and west, respectively. Maps of the region demonstrate the epitome of Maine's jagged coastline, its *mélange* of rocky landmasses and glacier-cut rivers. The image of this coast is perhaps best captured by author Edwin Valentine Mitchell in the introduction to *Maine Summers*:

No word summarizes the character of the Maine coast better than the one Shakespeare used to describe the coast of Scotland. He called it 'nook-shotten.' Certainly few coastlines are so honeycombed with coves, bays, inlets, estuaries, sounds, and harbors as that of Maine. The great rivers eating their way out of the land and the sea biting deeply into it have left a series of long, dark-green peninsulas, many with bold headlands, and an infinity of islands.³

Reaching Boothbay Harbor, the economic and touristic center of the region, takes just over a ten-mile drive on Route Twenty-seven, which connects with Route One in Edgecomb across the Sheepscot River from Wiscasset. Summer drivers often wait with the throngs of tourists to cross the Sheepscot via the Donald E. Davey Bridge, many waiting for a lobster roll at Red's Eats. Looking south from the bridge, drivers get a sense of Mitchell's "nook-shotten" nature of Maine. Ten miles down one such "long, dark-green peninsula" of rolling hills, forests, and farms, brings drivers to Boothbay, a place that feels isolated in winter. The region consists of many islands and otherwise secluded locations, with rivers "eating their

³ Edwin Valentine Mitchell, *Maine Summers* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1939), 13.

way” through the land. It is difficult to keep track of the many different inlets and islands that exist in the region, most of which now carry the names of early settlers or famous Boothbay residents like Hodgdon, Hendrick, and Barter. The large Southport Island, to the southwest, and Linekin Neck, to the southeast, create a kind of basin, within which several further protected harbors exist. In this bay sit several prominent islands, including Squirrel and Capitol Islands. Both of these islands, along with other neighbors, became summer tourist destinations in the late 1800s. Boothbay Harbor is the most developed town, though villages also exist at Boothbay Center, in East Boothbay, and to a lesser extent on Southport.⁴

The isolation that tourists later sought out was one of the primary difficulties of life for people in colonial Boothbay, and the town’s early history was one of slow, steady growth. Several of Maine’s earliest European settlements sit very near, including Damariscove Island, which lies directly south of Boothbay Harbor in the open ocean. Colonization of the mainland regions began in the 1620s and after steady growth in a variety of settlements around the region the coming century and a half, William Fullerton, Ichabod Pinkham, Samuel Barter, and twenty-five other men petitioned the colonial governor to incorporate the town in 1764. The West Harbor area was the site of a revolutionary war skirmish, a section of which retains the name “Powder Hill.” During the eighteenth century, economic development in the region was limited primarily to a smattering of mills. The 1840 U.S. census shows the population in Boothbay at more than 2,600. Every household was at least “part-farmer,” probably also part fishermen, and self-sustenance was a way of life. Only five people fit the category of “learned or other engineer,” while the census lists hundreds in the fields of “Agriculture” and “Navigation of Ocean,” primarily fishermen. Almost three-

⁴ For a complete physical description of the region see Greene, *History*, 9-34.

fifths of the people in town were under the age of twenty, and only 150 had reached the age of 60. An 1856 map of the town of Boothbay, which then included both modern day Boothbay and Boothbay Harbor, reveals that only about 350 homes and other buildings existed in the town, while an additional 100 plus existed on Southport. Boothbay's connection to a larger capitalist industrial economy was limited, indeed.⁵



Chart of the Boothbay Region, Boothbay Harbor at Center⁶

Traditionally, the region had relied primarily upon two major economic lifelines:

⁵ Barbara Rumsey, "Boothbay in 1840" and "The 1840 Boothbay Census" in *Boothbay Region Historical Sketches Vol. II* (Boothbay Harbor, ME: BRHS, 1999), 93-102; Greene, *History of Boothbay*, Back Cover Insert, 135.

⁶ NOAA Office of Coast Survey, "Damariscotta, Sheepscot, and Kennebec Rivers" [Map], 1:40,000 at 43° 52' (Washington, D.C.: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2010).

agriculture, including the fisheries, and shipbuilding. Dating to the 18th century, cod fishing was a crucial aspect of economic life in the region. In the lead-up to the Revolutionary War, Boothbay vessels carried cargo of fish to the West Indies, and perhaps Europe as well. The leading citizens of the region became wealthy and respected from fishing for cod, and it was by far the leading industry of the region for the first half of the nineteenth century. Greene cites only an “old Bristol fisherman,” some old, grizzled salt, for the following couplet on the subject:

Damariscotta for its beauty, and Bristol for its pride;
Had it not been for Codfish, Boothbay would have died.⁷

Until 1850, cod was essentially the only harvest of the sea for both Boothbay and Southport. But this white fish slowly began to disappear from local waters, and as the century came to a close, so too did cod fishing.

To support the seagoing economy of nineteenth century Boothbay, there was an obvious need: boats. Beginning primarily in the early 1800s, shipbuilding became an important economic lifeline of the region in Boothbay Harbor and East Boothbay, once known as Hodgdon’s Mills, in particular. By the 1850s, there were perhaps a dozen ship construction yards in the region operating both in Boothbay Harbor and East Boothbay. These shipyards employed many men from the region, and they produced a variety of different types of vessels, including those for fishing, but also merchant ships: brigs, barks, and schooners. The list of ships that were built in the region is long and detailed. George Wharton Rice’s 1938 book *The Shipping Days of Old Boothbay* provides a detailed overview of the many ships that were constructed at the various shipyards of the Boothbay region. In the final half of the nineteenth century, one shipyard alone, W.I. Adams and Son, launched

⁷ Greene, *History*, 363.

nearly one hundred different vessels from its yard in East Boothbay.⁸

By the late 1800s, however, the region boomed as a result of economic development in a variety of industries. This represented an important shift for the region, as the local or regional economy became increasingly tied to national and global markets, a tenuous connection at best. In this new economy the maritime industries that reigned supreme in Boothbay were at times unpredictable due to their dependence upon inconsistent factors of supply and demand. The economy ballooned and deflated with the production of fish oils, ice, and the beginnings of the lobstering industry, resulting in the eventual separation of Boothbay Harbor from Boothbay in 1889. Local historian Francis B. Greene wrote in 1906, “the citizen who has lived through this period of rapid development from a little fishing hamlet, with more lots vacant than built upon, to a thriving village, where parts of the business section are as congested with buildings as the average city, it needs no explanation. The wants of Boothbay Harbor Village came upon it in very few years.”⁹ What in 1820 had been a small outpost of subsistence fishermen and farmers, with a population just under two thousand, more than doubled in size by the turn of the century.¹⁰

Historically, as we saw with cod, the dominant business had been harnessing fish from the sea — fishing had always prevailed as one of the most important economic drivers of life in Boothbay. But fishing proved unpredictable, the strict reliance on cod shifted after 1850 and especially following the Civil War, and in the final years of the nineteenth century Boothbay experienced booms and busts in a variety of different major fisheries. One such new fishery became a boon for the region’s economy as “porgy,” or menhaden, oil

⁸ George Wharton Rice, *The Shipping Days of Old Boothbay* (Somersworth, NH: New England History Press, 1984), 68-73. Brigs were ships with two square-rigged masts, barks had three or more masts of the same style, while schooners were designed with fore-and-aft rigged masts.

⁹ Greene, *History*, 317.

¹⁰ Greene, *History*, 332; Rumsey, *Historical Sketches Vol. II*, ix.

manufacturers and cod and mackerel canneries opened along Linekin Neck and in modern day Boothbay Harbor. Between 1866 and 1878, investments poured into the region for the construction of large-scale menhaden processing plants. Luther Maddocks' first business, for example, was in this new fishery. The four largest companies earned more than \$1 million dollars annually on the production and sale of fish oil and chum fertilizer; at least 500 and in some years as many as 1000 men from the region worked in this particular fishery each year as fishermen and laborers in processing facilities, an astonishing total given the population of less than 4000. The boom increased the wealth of the region considerably: "No town in Maine of equal population and valuation enjoyed a greater degree of prosperity than Boothbay during the period [...] Boothbay Harbor, East Boothbay and Linekin Neck had many good and permanent homes built from the factory disbursements, and general improvement was noted in all the other parts of town and in Southport." But as with so many fisheries, the bottom fell out of the market as no porgies appeared off the coast of Maine for years after 1878. Historian and local lawyer Chip Griffin comments that, "Boothbay's citizens learned their lesson, at least temporarily — no single industry should be relied upon as the mainstay of the town's economy." Indeed, heading into the final years of the 1800s, Boothbay's fishermen looked for new possible harvests.¹¹

They found it in the form of two somewhat more permanent areas of industrial fishing: sardines and lobster. By 1895, the sardine industry reached Boothbay Harbor with the opening of F.C. Littlefield & Co., followed by several other large-scale sardine-packing factories. At the same time, individual fishermen who previously had sought cod, mackerel, or menhaden devoted themselves to the lobster catch. Lobster, too, was frequently processed and canned in local factories. At the turn-of-the-century, these twin industries

¹¹ For a full account of Boothbay's pogy boom, see Carl Griffin, III, "The Great Pogy Era" Parts I and II, *Boothbay Region Historical Sketches* (Boothbay Harbor, ME: Boothbay Region Historical Society, 1995), 150-156.

dominated Boothbay's working waterfront. Still, the town relied heavily upon catch numbers and available fish: "It may safely be stated that of the varied interests upon which the people of this locality have depended, since 1819, that of the fisheries, taken as a whole, has been far the most important."¹² But such reliance meant that the town lived in a manic state of alternating economic prosperity and decline: when times were good, so were the effects in Boothbay, and the reverse was also true. In looking at other industries, we see a similar trend.

Today, while industrial fish production is largely gone, Boothbay's fishing legacy remains fully evident. On the east side of Boothbay Harbor, a large metal dory sits atop a granite slab with the words "In Honor of the Proud, Independent Maine Fishermen Who Lost Their Lives at Sea." This "Fishermen's Memorial" remembers the many Boothbay region fishermen who have perished at sea. This was an unfortunately consistent aspect of life for Boothbay's local residents. Between 1739 and 1899 more than 200 Boothbay residents perished at sea, including the particularly perilous year of 1851, during which five different vessels sank and twenty-nine fishermen died. This goes "to illustrate the dangers of the deep and to indicate the many broken homes consequent upon a seagoing life." Of course, fishing remains important to the economy of the region: lobster boats and buoys are scattered throughout the harbor, and each spring the town hosts a "Fishermen's Festival" with events connected to Boothbay and Boothbay Harbor's maritime heritage. But the industrial production of the late nineteenth century is long gone.¹³

Shipbuilding, also still evident on a much smaller scale today, transitioned its scope and output in similar fashion in the final decades of the 1800s. Rather than producing larger

¹² Greene, *History*, 377. For a full account of the fisheries, see Greene, *History*, 358-377.

¹³ Alice T. Larkin, *Our Growing Years* (Boothbay Harbor, ME: Boothbay Harbor Bicentennial Committee, 1975), 29; Greene, *History*, 377.

fishing and trade ships, the great square-rigged brigs and barks, Boothbay's yards produced smaller craft, many for use by private yacht owners, as well as steamers rather than sailing craft. Writing in 1906, Greene reflected on the changes in shipbuilding in the region, while also pointing to its general significance for its economy: "While it is a lamentable fact that shipbuilding has been in a decadent condition for several years, and many business points of the past are now presenting but a waste of ruins,—sad reminders of past thrift and industry, — this village has grown gradually in the business, until at the present more capital and labor are employed than at any previous period."¹⁴ As in the fisheries, production at Boothbay's shipyards depended upon factors largely beyond the control of the region's people. What they could control, Boothbay's shipbuilder's did; most important in this regard was the reputation of the craftsmanship from shipyards in the region: East Boothbay retained a reputation for high quality boats in the final decades of the 1800s, which certainly helped its appeal with potential yacht buyers. As a result, shipbuilding remained a staple of life for the people of Boothbay, and builders of pleasure yachts and steamships continued to employ hundreds of Boothbay people in the first decades of the twentieth century.¹⁵

The 1890s brought yet another shift in the economy of the region, a further symbol of an increasing connection to the global economy. Given Boothbay's ease of access to the ocean for shipping, along with a variety of fresh water ponds, it became a prime location for the production and harvesting of ice to be used for refrigeration. Ice houses varying widely in size sprung up in Boothbay Harbor, East Boothbay, and further north along the Sheepscot and Damariscotta rivers. This seasonal employment provided many Boothbay residents with the opportunity to work in the winter; indeed most men probably harvested

¹⁴ Greene, *History of Boothbay*, 337.

¹⁵ For a full account of shipbuilding in the region, see Rice, *Shipping Days*. In addition, James P. Stevens' *Reminiscences of a Boothbay Shipbuilder* (Boothbay Harbor, ME: BRHS, 1993) provides strong personal insights into the nature and history of shipbuilding in the region.

ice at one time or another. It became so important that the local newspaper, the *Boothbay Register*, regularly reported on ice depths in the region, much like other publishers might quote stock prices for investors. Historian Barbara Rumsey calls it “an exciting but worrisome time: a hard winter spelled prosperity while a mild winter spelled slim pickings for local people.” An 1890 *Boothbay Register* article cites six major ice operations, employing 650 people in the business, though “there were at least five times as many small operations as large ones.” Ice harvesting continued as a major winter industry into the 20th century, fully dying out by the 1950s. But its peak at the turn of the century was yet another temporary boom in Boothbay’s economy based upon its resources and proximity to the sea.¹⁶

Through this history of the Boothbay region’s economy, we see a place with a variety of economic opportunities for individuals to latch onto, and the result was that most did what they could to independently survive. Part-time farmers, fishermen, ice harvesters, shipwrights and more all co-mingled in this place. It was a town like many others in late nineteenth century America, a place historian Robert H. Wiebe may have had in mind in his work *The Search for Order*: “From a distance the towns exemplified a levelled democracy, sustaining neither an aristocracy of name nor an aristocracy of occupation. [...] But beneath that flat surface, each community was divided by innumerable, fine gradations. Distinctions that would have eluded an outsider—the precise location of a house, the amount of hired help—held great importance in an otherwise undifferentiated society.”¹⁷ Wiebe’s words ring true about Boothbay: certain individuals prospered, yes, but for the most part the region was laboring class, representing a variety of different areas of the economy. The shifts of the nineteenth century saw the Boothbay region connect more deeply with the larger national economy, adding to the gradations of the community. Independent, small-scale fishermen

¹⁶ Barbara Rumsey, “The Ice Boom of 1890,” *Historical Sketches Vol. II*, 53.

¹⁷ Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 2-3.

gave way to large draggers, and thus captains and processing workers and deckhands were born as differentiated aspects of the economy. Fish were no longer sold locally, but processed in large plants financed by investors largely from outside the region. Ships were constructed for large investors and wealthy tourists in search of pleasure boats. And ice harvesting became yet another important supplement to the average citizen's annual wages, as Boothbay's ocean resources needed to stay cold for shipment far and wide.

The booms and busts that came with these economic activities were part of a competitive and unregulated capitalist economy, but they proved important in the diversification of the region's economic life. The result was that the first decades of the twentieth century were particularly prosperous for the proprietary capitalists of this working class town. By the 1910s, according to local historian Barbara Rumsey, the "region was booming, with ice cutting still going on, the shipyards busy, and portable mills coming to town, bringing extra jobs. Fishing was still big business, the 'mackerel killers' competing with one another, and the cold storage always busy."¹⁸ Despite the tumult of the preceding decades of development, by the first decades of the twentieth century Boothbay possessed a more diversified economy involving many different types of players. But in addition to all of the aforementioned economic activities, the final decades of the nineteenth century brought another juggernaut that drastically changed life and culture in the region by further altering the diversity of people on Boothbay's streets. It was an economic force far more predictable than the depth of pond ice in winter or the catch of cod, menhaden, or lobster. Indeed, one could expect them every summer: tourists.

* *

¹⁸ Barbara Rumsey, "Introduction: The 1910s in the Boothbay Region," *Historical Sketches Vol. II*, 167. Portable mills were mobile sawmills that moved around the region, settling temporarily in timbered locales.



Tourist Map of Boothbay Harbor in 1885¹⁹

Boothbay's history as a summer vacation destination mirrors that of Maine as a whole, though in some respects the region lagged slightly behind the rest of the state in terms of chronology. Bar Harbor, perhaps Maine's most famous summer tourist destination, saw its first hotel built in 1855 with summer cottage building to follow in the late 1860s through the rest of the nineteenth century. Other affluent tourists flocked to Old York, while destinations such as Old Orchard Beach developed for less affluent summer visitors. These places offered different experiences depending upon the vacationer's income and desires, but certainly a stay on Maine's coast represented an escape from an increasingly urban world. A vacation by the sea offered certain natural, leisurely pleasures, as well as perceived health benefits. Local historian and author Lew Dietz writes: "Healthy hard-working men and women commenced to think about a respite from the monotony of

¹⁹ Image from: Larkin, *Our Growing Years*. It was originally produced by the steamship companies which included stops in Boothbay. The Steamship companies were crucial to the development of tourism in Boothbay. Hotels were financed by Steamship companies, for example.

making a living. The summer vacation became an American institution, and Maine, forever the synthesis of the great outdoors, was rediscovered.” The Boothbay region provided just this respite that many vacationers were looking for.²⁰

Boothbay’s natural beauty allowed many Mainers to see the peninsula and islands as excellent maritime locations to escape to for vacation enjoyment, as well as for health, and many of Maine’s own successful businessmen came to the region to vacation. Local historian Francis B. Greene wrote in 1906, “an annual outing combines health and pleasure and is in fashion.”²¹ An amateur poem entitled “Eden by the Sea” by Donald McCormick, minister of the Congregational Church of Boothbay Harbor from 1895 to 1902, brings further light to the history and attractions offered by the Boothbay Harbor region:

When nature carved those ragged rocks that form
Our rugged coast, and scooped those devious
Paths by which the sea comes up to view the
Land, and see her country cousins, with taste
Artistic, and with skill made perfect by
Trials many, and in divers places,
In plan original, she undertook
To make a Harbor where fishing craft might
Feel at home and merchant ships stay over
Night, or till the storm was passed. When finished
Men came to see it from afar, and fell
In love with what they saw, and would not go
Away to stay, [...]
Why! Boothbay Harbor! one of the fairest
Pearls round Ocean’s neck, one of the rarest
Gems in fair Atlantic’s crown.²²

McCormick’s poem certainly praises Boothbay for its aesthetic, a “gem” to be admired not only for its natural beauty, but also for the success of its people at creating and maintaining a

²⁰ “Town of Bar Harbor History,” *Bar Harbor Historical Society*, <http://www.barharborhistorical.org/bhhistory.html>; Dona Brown, *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (Washington: Smithsonian, 1995), 173-177; quotation from Lew Dietz, *The Story of Boothbay*, 30.

²¹ Greene, *History*, 411.

²² McCormick’s poem, “Eden of the Sea,” appears in Greene, *History*, 455-456.

society in the region. Particularly interesting is the praise that McCormick offers for the types of people that inhabited Boothbay; both “workers” and “those in search of pleasure or of health” came together to make the place what it is.

There is strong evidence of the initial foundation of Boothbay’s future vacation economy beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Unlike Mount Desert Island and the Bar Harbor region, however, Boothbay seems to have begun as a tourist destination primarily for Mainers themselves. An August 26, 1864 article entitled “Grand Excursion to Boothbay” shows the early development of the place as a tourist destination for Mainers. “Excursionists from Brunswick and Topsham,” as the article refers to them, planned to take a day trip to the region: “A mammoth chowder will be served up at Boothbay. The hall will open for those who wish to dance. [...] A good time may be expected.”²³ This kind of tourism began to drive economic development in the Boothbay Region. As one Portland newspaper noted in 1869, “Building is brisk in Boothbay Harbor.”²⁴ The evidence shows that already in the 1860s Boothbay could expect summertime visitors who came to enjoy the region’s maritime setting. Most who did so stayed at one of the region’s newly established hotels, which would become one of the drivers of Boothbay’s economy, as well as one of its principle marketers, in the decades to come.

Boothbay Harbor contained a number of prominent hotels, including the Menawarmet Hotel on the east side of the harbor, and Oak Grove House to the west, as well as the Boothbay House and Weymouth House in the village of Boothbay Harbor. These hotels formed in the 1890s and while the latter two of these were open year-round, the former opened only for the summer months. In addition, many other summer hotels dotted

²³ “Grand Excursion to Boothbay,” *Bath Daily Sentinel and Times*, Aug. 26, 1864. Notes of Elizabeth Reed, Clippings from 19th C. Maine Papers, File 024A, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

²⁴ “Building is Brisk in Boothbay Harbor,” *Portland Transcript*, June 12, 1869, Notes of Elizabeth Reed, Clippings from 19th C. Maine Papers, File 024A, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

the shoreline of the region, and these hotels were important marketers of the region. A 1901 supplement to the *Boothbay Register* featured an overview of the offerings of each hotel. The Oak Grove House offered a view where “harbor, ocean, islands and shore combine in perfection of scenic beauty and all nature is lavish with abundance of charm.” Most descriptions read very similarly, boasting of the “natural” retreat offered by a stay at the hotel. They are, indeed, advertisements, attempting to command the attention of possible visitors, competing with one another to offer the best stay in Boothbay Harbor. The advertisements for a number of other hotels, including the following for the Capital Island house, boasted of the leisure activities available to visitors: “Adjoining the hotel proper there is being completed a handsome bowling alley, billiard room, and dancing hall. [...] On the island are tennis courts, croquet grounds, base ball grounds, fine wooded lands for walks and rambles and every facility for boating, fishing, and bathing.” The consistency of such advertisements gives us a sense for what summer visitors were looking for: a natural escape complete with a range of leisure activities to fully enjoy the place of visit.²⁵

Other Mainers came to the Boothbay region to establish more permanent summer colonies and cottages, and by 1900 a variety of permanent summer communities had been built around the Boothbay region. In Boothbay Harbor, Mouse and Capital Islands both had permanent homes of wealthy summer residents, as did various locales on Southport Island, including at the southern tip of the island, known as Cape Newagen. Elsewhere at Isle of Springs, Bayville and Murray Hill on Linekin Bay, and at Ocean Point at the southern tip of Linekin Neck, other colonies also sprang to life during the summer months. Local historian Francis B. Greene wrote in 1906 that as of 1905, 218 homes were owned by non-residents in Boothbay, 279 on Southport, and 177 in Boothbay Harbor. Considering that in 1856 at most

²⁵ “The Capitol Island House” and “Oak Grove House,” *Boothbay Register* XXVI, 27 July 1901, Supplement.

500 homes existed in the entire region, the presence of nearly 700 summer homes by 1905 is astonishing.²⁶

The most developed summer colony, however, was at Squirrel Island, the largest in the immediate basin of Boothbay Harbor. Jacob B. Ham outbid Luther Maddocks and purchased the island from William Greenleaf for \$2,200 in 1870, obtaining a charter from the Maine legislature for twenty-two families from Lewiston and Auburn to organize the Squirrel Island Village Corporation. Ham had been coming to the Boothbay region for a few years and, having tented on the island as a part of a fishing excursion, decided to purchase it, “desirous of having an outdoor chowder in an out-of-the-way place, they were told that Squirrel Island would be a delightful and secluded spot for such a feast. Thither they went and, filled with chowder, exhilarated by the spring water, decided to purchase the Island and use it as a tenting ground.”²⁷ Ham was a wealthy Lewiston-based trader who immediately began developing the island with summer cottages. By the end of the nineteenth century, the island featured a summer post office, chapel, and two hotels, along with around one hundred privately owned cottages. Isolated as an island all its own, Squirrel became the most exclusive summer colony in the region, even featuring its own publication by 1876, the *Squid*. By 1905, it was no longer merely an escape for wealthy Mainers from Lewiston and Auburn: the 910 summer visitors to the island that year came from 114 different cities and towns in twenty-two U.S. states and four countries. Squirrel may not have reached the lavish extravagance of the Bar Harbor homes, but it certainly came close.²⁸

* * *

Why did so many tourists suddenly flood the streets, or float the coves of Boothbay

²⁶ For a general overview of the growth of summer colonies, see Greene, *History*, 411-423.

²⁷ Quoted in: “Summer Colony - The First Fifty Years” in *Squirrel Island Maine - The First Hundred Years*, John and Suzanne Merrill, Eds. (Freeport, ME: Bond Wheelright, 1971), 2.

²⁸ Greene, *History*, 412-414.

Harbor in the final decades of the 19th century? Cultural histories of tourism in New England are well-developed by scholars of American Studies, most notably Dona Brown, whose book *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* remains influential in the field today. Brown's findings easily match the tourism that suddenly dominated Boothbay's summer economy, and deserve our consideration. In her introductory discussion, Brown writes that "tourism has shaped the region's landscape, influenced (and at times invented) its culture, and played a crucial role in its economy."²⁹ Indeed, much of the Maine Coast today, Boothbay included, is hard to imagine without considering its connection to the tourism industry, a trend that began in the 1800s. Brown demonstrates that tourism was an intentional middle class leisure activity, a necessity of life for successful urban professionals living in an increasingly industrial world. Given the type of people who settled summer colonies in Boothbay, her words ring especially true:

More people than ever found it necessary and desirable to allocate part of their income to a vacation or trip. Urban professionals—doctors, lawyers, ministers—came to regard a month in the country as an absolute necessity. Influential religious leaders like Henry Ward Beecher came down on the side of vacations. Beecher insisted to his young, upwardly mobile parishioners in Brooklyn Heights that such vacations were crucial to their mental and spiritual well-being. Even office clerks and journalists, small shopkeepers and teachers found it possible to take a week or two away from home in summer. By the mid-nineteenth century, everyone with a remote hope of achieving middle-class status understood that a vacation was as essential to that status as owning a piano and a carpet.³⁰

So, while the vacation offered individuals and families the opportunity to escape urban life for a short time in a "natural" setting, something supported by cultural leaders like ministers, the vacation was also an act of class consolidation. Boothbay lagged behind other vacation destinations in Maine and elsewhere in New England, but the reasons for its rise remain the

²⁹ Brown, *Inventing New England*, 5.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

same.

And yet a vacation also fulfilled the more imaginative needs of those who could afford to take them, allowing tourists to avoid the hustle of a modern, urban, increasingly diverse world. Historian Jackson Lears put it this way: “For the educated bourgeoisie, authentic experience of any sort seemed ever more elusive; life seemed increasingly confined to the airless parlor of material comfort and moral complacency. Many yearned to smash the glass and breathe freely—to experience ‘real life’ in all its intensity.”³¹ What better way to return to an imagined “real life” than return to small town New England, to a town and place like Boothbay Harbor, which, as we’ll see, possessed many of the necessities for experiencing an older lifestyle? Tourists could imagine away the fish processing plants and focus instead on the wooden schooners in the harbor and white steepled church in town. Such tourists were a compelling part of the antimodernist movement that defined the decades around 1900 and helped spawn vacation destinations like Boothbay Harbor that preached a more “real life” based in romantic views of “rusticity.” It was a movement that encouraged “regeneration through preindustrial craftsmanship and a pastoral ‘simple life,’” something that could easily be found in and around the rotting eighteenth century shipyards of Boothbay Harbor.³²

Other scholars of New England Studies have advanced these same ideas about the reasons for the growth of the summer vacation or summer home, including Joseph Conforti in *Imagining New England*. Conforti, like Brown, affirms the place-based imagination that summer tourists used to appropriately fit their needs. Using the narrator of Sarah Orne Jewett’s 1896 novel *The Country of the Pointed Firs* as an example, Conforti demonstrates how

³¹ T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1983), 5.

³² *Ibid.*, 57-58.

summer visitors positioned themselves relative to the locals: “The narrator [...] is a summer visitor seeking release from modern life in the city who is rejuvenated by immersion among simple folk and local customs of small-town Maine, antiquities of Old New England.”³³ While Jewett’s narrator may have landed at fictional Dunnett Landing, she may have well been coming to Boothbay Harbor. Undoubtedly, and as we will see, a part of the summer tourist’s visit to Boothbay was immersion in a local culture of old — one where hard working fishermen and shipbuilders earned a dollar the hard way. It was also a small seaside town in the classic New England sense: a town green surrounded by the ecclesiastical and civic centers of the community defined Boothbay Center, and while today the most photographed church in Boothbay Harbor is Catholic, it did not exist in 1900; at that time ferry arrivals likely first noticed the 1848 spire of the Congregational Church atop the hill at the head of the harbor. The Boothbay region thus offered both the natural beauty and imagined cultural significance that tourists sought. As Conforti puts it, “Recoiling from the hurried pace, squalor, and ethnic din of urban life, summer visitors [...] imaginatively transformed graying backwater villages and Yankee country folk into embodiments of the ‘unmodernized picturesque.’”³⁴ To the tourist, Boothbay was not an ever-industrializing working class town, but a beautiful example of yesteryear’s New England village; a trip there was a return to a simpler time.

There is no stronger example to prove these cultural steam engines of tourism development than that provided by Ocean Point, a colony that grew at the southern tip of Linekin Neck in East Boothbay. Ocean Point remains a summer colony today with few year-round homes and residents. Its history is a model for many summer colonies in the

³³ Joseph A. Conforti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: North Carolina, 2001), 211-213.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 213.

Boothbay region. Development took place at the end of Linekin Neck, where the Ocean Point colony formed under the leadership of Leander J. Crooker and Peleg O. Vickery. Crooker, an accomplished doctor, and Vickery, a publisher, both hailed from Augusta, Maine's capital city. At the time of Ocean Point's development in the 1870s, Augusta was a major banking and commercial center in Maine, and both men benefited from the development in their own city. They saw Ocean Point as a promising maritime vacation destination, and turned what had been a peninsula of menhaden factories and lobstering into a key piece in the Boothbay region's tourism development. By 1880, Ocean Point had become a popular resort destination, along with many places in the Boothbay region.³⁵

The history of Ocean Point as a summer colony is best detailed by Gary Stevens in his 2000 thesis "*Our Shangri-La: New England as Commodity at Ocean Point, 1876-1930*." Stevens combines the theories of scholars like Brown and Conforti with the history of this particular summer colony to produce a cohesive narrative of tourism development in this region of Maine. As his title suggests, Stevens argues that in coming to Ocean Point, tourists purchased more than just a plot of land. Instead, the summer colonizers were purchasing a means to imagine the Maine of their vacations on their own terms. Dona Brown writes that, ironically, "Nineteenth-century tourists turn away from the allure of the marketplace to travel straight into the arms of the marketplace."³⁶ Such was the case at Ocean Point, where tourists may have come to escape the rigors of industrial capitalism, but in fact, by doing so, played a crucial role in extending the reach of an ever-expanding economic system. Ocean Point's original summer 'rusticators' came from the same city in Maine, Augusta, mainly because Crooker and Vickery served as real estate developers and salesmen in their community at home. Following the colony's initial founding, its primary developers, most

³⁵ Greene, *History*, 412-413.

³⁶ Brown, *Inventing New England*, 13.

notably Crooker, experienced a sharp rise in sales of property. Stevens writes that “A myriad of Augusta citizens participated in the boom at Ocean Point. Unlike Crooker and Vickery, many were middle-class people who sought the comfort (and status) that owning a summer cottage offered.”³⁷ Thus, for the very same reasons that others went on vacations, so too did those developing Ocean Point see their summer home as an important status symbol.

But health and status were only parts of the complex puzzle for why tourists settled at Ocean Point and elsewhere around Boothbay. Going on vacation also “satisfied tourists’ imaginative need to experience nostalgia.”³⁸ The very word “rusticator,” used so frequently to describe the actions of summer cottage owners and other vacationers, implies a return to some place simpler, older, and more casual, a place set in the past. Sarah Orne Jewett, like her leisure class audiences, created such a view of towns along the Maine Coast in *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, most notably in the conclusion of the novel. Departing by steamship, the narrator recognizes fisherman Elijah Tilley, hard at work pulling lobster traps in the harbor, and he becomes a lasting piece of the painting of the Maine coast Jewett creates: “The little town, with the tall masts of its disabled schooners in the inner bay, stood high above the flat sea for a few minutes then it sank back into the uniformity of the coast, and became indistinguishable from the other towns that looked as if they were crumbled on the furzy-green stoniness of the shore.”³⁹ Jewett, ever mindful of her leisure class audience, homogenizes the towns of coastal Maine, freezes its people in time, and even infers that they belong to the very landscape of the Maine Coast. As mentioned above, the simplicity of Boothbay’s major landmarks - its town green, steepled white church, and even its masted

³⁷ Gary R. Stevens, “Our Shangri-La: New England as Commodity at Ocean Point, 1876-1930” (MA Thesis, University of Southern Maine, 2000), 40.

³⁸ Ibid, 24.

³⁹ Sarah Orne Jewett, *The Country of the Pointed Firs and Other Stories* (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 139.

schooners - helped visitors characterize Boothbay as an idyllic New England village. Such was the imagined destination that many tourists came to visit.

Developers of the region and other local interests propagated this imaginary place through their promotional materials. Reading a 1901 edition of the *Boothbay Register*, modern day readers can feel the intended romance and nostalgia that tourists sought:

If one will climb McKown's Hill, and from this vantage point look out over the village of Boothbay Harbor and environs, he will realize that the first settlers made an admirable choice when they located here. Standing on this eminence one sees a natural ampitheatre, the beautiful harbor, dotted with charming little islands one way and beautiful hills in the rear and holding in its cent[er] the village of Boothbay Harbor, than which there is no lovelier town in New England.⁴⁰

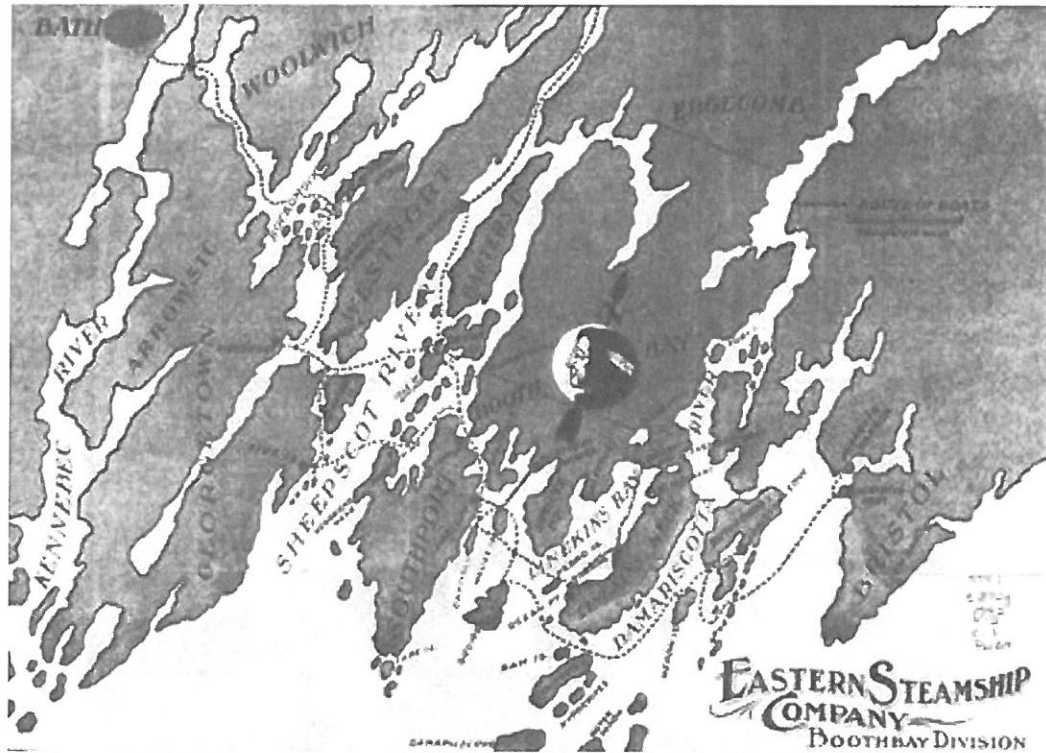
We recognize the parallels between the newspaper's account of Boothbay and Jewett's imaginative description of Dunnett Landing, most directly in terms of the connection between town and nature. But hotel and real estate developers also helped to carefully define Boothbay's image to match the leisure desires of turn-of-the century tourists. All spoke of the rustic, natural beauty of their locations. At Ocean Point, specifically, Leander Crooker emphasized the natural beauty of its peninsular setting. Such advertisements helped to craft an imaginary ideal of Boothbay Harbor before tourists even arrived. When they did arrive, they saw what they were prepared to see.⁴¹

Their very transport to the region, usually a steamship, further helped them imagine their vacation destination before arrival. Historian John F. Kasson argues for the importance of steamship travel to the imaginations to visitors to Coney Island, New York. In the same time period as Boothbay's "steamboat era," working class visitors to Coney Island sought the same escape from urban, working life that summer vacationers to Boothbay sought. For Coney Island, the ferry ride both established separation from city life and fueled the

⁴⁰ "Boothbay Harbor" *Boothbay Register* XXVI, 27 July 1901, Supplement.

⁴¹ Stevens, "Our Shangri-La," 72.

imagination of visitors: “As they disembarked from ferry boats with fanciful names like *Pegasus* [...] they felt themselves passing into a special realm of exciting possibility, a distinctive milieu that encouraged types of behavior and social interaction that in other contexts would have been regarded askance.”⁴²



1900s Eastern Steamship Company Route Map of the Boothbay Region⁴³

Just as the ferryboats to Coney Island fueled the experience of the place as a “realm of exciting possibility,” so too did steamboats to Boothbay Harbor. Because Boothbay existed at the end of a peninsula itself, most travellers arrived by steamship from Portland, Bath, or locations northward on the Kennebec, such as Augusta. Steamship companies thereby became important promoters of the Boothbay region, and thus wielded considerable cultural power in helping tourists imagine an idyllic place into being. The names of steamships played an important role: ships with names like the *Sebenoa*, *Samoset*, and *Wiwurna*

⁴² John F. Kasson, *Amusing the Million* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 41.

⁴³ Back Insert in Greene, *History*.

carried passengers to and from the region. Through these names, steamship companies “appealed to the imagination of travellers by portraying a trip up the back rivers of Lincoln County as a trip back in time.”⁴⁴ Far more than merely a means of transportation, steamship travel to Boothbay served the imagination to further the sense of the vacation as a natural, maritime event. Advertisements for the steamships echo this sentiment. An 1896 *Souvenir Handbook of Boothbay Harbor* contains an advertisement for both Maine Coast Navigation Company and for the independently operated steamship *Enterprise*. The Maine Coast advertisement for the steamer *Salacia* reads: “The run from Boothbay Harbor to Portland is one of those delightful, invigorating sea trips so much desired by the summer tourist, passing the most picturesque islands, headlands, rivers and beaches, and showing the rugged and diversified coast at its best.”⁴⁵ The advertisement for the *Enterprise* strikes a similar tone: “A sail over this route is one never to be forgotten, as it includes the beautiful Islands of Casco Bay, Famous Small Point, Seguin Island, Kennebec and Sheepscot Rivers, Linekin Bay, Damariscotta River, John’s Bay and Jamestown which has its history.”⁴⁶ Such advertisements helped tourists envision what their vacation would be like, beginning with the steamship ride to the Boothbay region. Remembering why vacationers came to the region in the first place, to escape an increasingly urban and industrial work setting for a relaxing, healthful, natural vacation, the steamship captured the imaginations of their travelers and promised to deliver the kind of vacation they sought.

Thus, thanks to the promotional materials of local tourism developers, thousands of tourists descended upon Boothbay Harbor each summer during the final decades of the 1800s. They have ever since. They did so to depart from an ever more industrialized world,

⁴⁴ Stevens, “Our Shangri-La,” 68.

⁴⁵ Francis B. Greene, *Souvenir Handbook of Boothbay Harbor and Vicinity* (Boothbay Harbor, Maine: Register Job Print, 1896).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

to reach both a picturesque natural destination as well as an idyllic New England town. In the minds of the leisure class tourists arriving in the region, Boothbay Harbor and its surrounding summer colonies provided just the vacation they had learned to want. Of course, this group was as diverse as those that lived in Boothbay throughout the year: just as those from Boothbay ranged from lobstermen to farmers to fish canners to factory operators, visitors ranged from affluent summer residents staying on Squirrel Island or Ocean Point to day trippers from Brunswick to weekend hotel guests. In this regard, tourism further diversified whom you might bump into in Boothbay Harbor around the turn of the twentieth century.

* * * *

For residents of Boothbay, like K.M. Barter, the region was not a place of rest and rejuvenation, but a home and a place of work. Barter, like many at the time, had an interest in Boothbay not for its tourists, primarily, but for its fish: beginning in the summer of 1898, he was the successful operator of a sardine packing facility, one of many in the region. His plant, described as “industrial,” “modern,” and “up-to-date,” was probably not included in most of the promotional materials that tourists had viewed about Boothbay Harbor, and therefore did not fit their imagined view of the town and region.⁴⁷ Contrasting Barter’s view of the region with that which most tourists had come to expect poses a number of challenging considerations about the Boothbay region at the turn-of-the-century. Indeed, we see a divided region.

Stevens demonstrates such a division by examining the community at Ocean Point. On the one hand, locals and tourists relied heavily upon one another. For locals, the growth of tourism obviously provided immense new economic opportunities. The construction of

⁴⁷ “Boothbay Harbor” *Boothbay Register* XXVI, 27 July 1901, Supplement.

hundreds of new cottages in the final decades of the 19th century created a “host of opportunities” for unskilled laborers. For fishermen, especially those catching lobster, the summer crowd became an excellent new market for their goods. At the same time, tourists enjoyed having the local population around—they were a necessary part of the region’s allure as a preserved New England community, “satisfying cottagers’ desires to live among and be friends with coastal types.”⁴⁸ A connection to local people was evidently an important part of the vacation in the Boothbay region in helping provide tourists with a “rustic” and “authentic” experience. When Ocean Point’s final native resident family sold its property to summer cottage builders, the cottagers felt they had lost a part of their community. The *Boothbay Register* reported that “This change robs Ocean Point of its only residing family.”⁴⁹ In this way, local and tourist needed to co-exist.

Yet the communities of the Boothbay region were also obviously at odds. Disputes between locals and tourists were not uncommon, as the traditional economy gave way to a thriving tourism industry. The tourism boom and existing fish processing factories often created tension in the region, as the smell from the fish factories was so potent: “[...] the bone-boiling establishments and oil factories at Boothbay are seriously interfering with the attractions of that beautiful place as a summer resort.”⁵⁰ One can imagine how the odor of industrial fish processing could detract from the natural and restful vacation that visitors sought. But some groups in town also opposed certain types of visitors to the region. In 1891, the *Portland Transcript* reported Boothbay Harbor’s attempt to end day excursions to the region on Sundays after locals heard vulgar and obscene language from the crowd

⁴⁸ Stevens, “Our Shangri-La,” 45.

⁴⁹ *Boothbay Register*, September 20, 1917. Quoted in Stevens, “Our Shangri-La,” 85.

⁵⁰ *Seaside Oracle*, August 3, 1872, Notes of Elizabeth Reed, Clippings from 19th C. Maine Papers, File 024A, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

waiting at the steamship pier.⁵¹ Such disputes demonstrate the divides in the community.

These divides existed on many levels. Economically, most locals were shipbuilders, fishermen, ice harvesters, farmers, and fish processors, though some were successful business owners or managers of local commercial interests, like Luther Maddocks. Tourists, meanwhile, were wealthy members of the industrial economy's new leisure class in many cases, while others were middle class professionals from cities along the Kennebec, and still others visited merely for the day. Socially, this mélange demonstrates the variety of classes with different tastes and interests that all co-existed in Boothbay Harbor during the summer months around 1900. While locals read the *Boothbay Register* year-round, summer people only read the summer colony columns during the summer months. Beginning in 1901, summer tourists could also subscribe to *The Gossiper*, a publication specifically for summer residents about the social happenings around the region. But most deeply, perhaps, the perspectives on the Boothbay region were distinct: locals viewed it as their home and place of work, while tourists viewed it as an idyllic vacation destination, an imagined Maine coastal town. And because of this divide, these various social actors could begin to exist and define themselves and each other as homogenized "natives" and "tourists." In this contest for control of the region, as we will see in the next chapter, summer tourists and locals could literally compete with one another on the baseball diamond, a field of play that would help each group perform this imagined division.

⁵¹ *Portland Transcript*, August 26, 1891, Notes of Elizabeth Reed, Clippings from 19th C. Maine Papers, File 024.A, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

TWO

Us and Them: Defining “Local” and “Tourist” through Baseball in 1902

Ralph Kendrick led the Boothbay Harbor Athletic Association baseball team during its 1902 season, hitting .310 and the only two home runs that the team mustered all year. You wouldn't necessarily have expected such power from Kendrick based upon photographic evidence: in the team photo for 1902 he is slim, almost gaunt, with rosy cheeks and appears physically unimposing compared to the men that surround him. Rotating between pitcher and catcher for the squad, Kendrick was nonetheless an important contributor to the team's success. By the few extant accounts it was a successful season for the Boothbay Harbor “nine,” as they finished with sixteen wins to one loss, having scored ninety runs on the year while allowing only fifty-three. The team's schedule featured wins over town teams throughout Mid-Coast Maine and the Kennebec river basin, including Augusta, Bath, Brunswick, Damariscotta, Rockland, and two wins over Wiscasset. A highlight of the schedule was surely the game against Squirrel Island, the only summer colony team that Boothbay Harbor faced all summer.¹

1902 proved a milestone year for Kendrick: he also married Caroline Murray in September. Kendrick's father, Charles, would surely have been proud of his son's performance on the diamond. For Ralph, born in 1880, playing baseball for the Boothbay Harbor team represented a degree of success for the family; it required a certain amount of leisure time to do so, while it also allowed the Kendrick name to represent his hometown throughout the region. Charles likely had not had the same luxury: born in 1846, Ralph's father's own parents were both dead before he reached adulthood. He had found his way to Boothbay after selling newspapers in Augusta and on the Boston and Kennebec steamship

¹ “Baseball Team, 1902,” BHGI007, File 13, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

line, and in 1888 purchased the *Boothbay Register*, the weekly newspaper of the region. Newspapers would become the family business, for Ralph would eventually take over for his father's work. But in 1902, Charles was likely proud just to print articles about his son's successful pitching and hitting on the baseball diamond, reports that reached readers in Boothbay throughout the summer of 1902.²

It would be easy to assume that the Kendricks were representative of certain class of Boothbay Harbor residents. As we have seen, the region included a diverse array of economic opportunities from shipbuilding to ice harvesting to, indeed, newspaper publishing and therefore incomes and consequent socio-economic identities varied throughout Boothbay. The team fielded by the Boothbay Harbor Athletic Association does seem to represent professional families like the Kendricks. But they are not alone - a close examination of the players on the 1902 team suggests that all young men were welcome to play on the Harbor nine. In the end, the team was as diverse in socio-economic identities as the Boothbay region itself.

Meanwhile, 1902 also represented a successful baseball year for Fred Stanwood, who played for two teams of note during the year. In May and June, he was a member of the Bowdoin College baseball nine, though this "best center-fielder in the State"³ began the season late due to a wrist fracture. At Bowdoin, Stanwood hit an unremarkable .154, scoring four runs and hitting one home run. But Stanwood was always better known for his defense. In a loss to Amherst on May 17, Bowdoin's only highlight was Stanwood's outfield play, "throwing a man out at home and making a double play on a difficult running catch."⁴

Stanwood's fielding contributions in nine games did not help Bowdoin to a banner

² For a history of the Kendrick family to 1906, see Francis B. Greene, *History of Boothbay, Southport, and Boothbay Harbor, Maine: 1623-1905* (Portland, ME: Loring, Short, and Harmon, 1906), 552.

³ "Campus Chat," *Bowdoin Orient* XXXI (27 March 1902): 255.

⁴ "Athletics: The Amherst Trip," *Bowdoin Orient* XXXII (22 May 1902): 39.

year, and they ended the season with six wins and nine losses. But after graduation from Bowdoin, Stanwood joined members of his extended family for the summer at Squirrel Island and began his second baseball season of 1902. By available accounts, this was a much more impressive season for Stanwood. Playing alongside his cousin and fellow Bowdoin alumnus Ted, the Squirrel Island nine seemed unstoppable. On July 20th, Squirrel beat up on the summer team from Ocean Point, winning nineteen to one. Six days later, “much encouraged by the patriotic cheering of onlookers,” Squirrel trounced the Lewiston Volunteers twelve to three thanks to the help of both Stanwoods who “did excellent work at the bat.”⁵ And in August, with Stanwood doing “some fine batting,” Squirrel beat the summer colony Christmas Cove team ten to four in one of the highlights of “Fete Week,” the island’s annual summer carnival.⁶ One of Squirrel’s only defeats came at the hands of a strong Wiscasset squad, the same team that handed the Boothbay Harbor squad its only loss, by a score of nine to three.⁷

Frederic Stanwood’s journey to the baseball diamond at Bowdoin and Squirrel Island is as noteworthy as Kendrick’s. Stanwood’s father, Horace, was originally born in Augusta in 1848, one of eleven children, to prominent Augusta bookstore owner Daniel C. Stanwood. Horace ultimately moved to Columbus, Ohio, in 1880, the same year Frederic was born. The Columbus Board of Trade reported on Horace’s untimely death in 1894 by honoring his contributions to the Ohio business community. He is buried with his family in Augusta. As a result of the tragedy, Frederic and his brother returned to New England with their mother, moving to Wellesley, Massachusetts, and Fred eventually enrolled at Bowdoin College in 1898, just after his cousin Ted had graduated. Given his family associations, it is easy to

⁵ “The Squirrel Island News,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, July 29 1902, 2.

⁶ “Fete Week At Week,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, Aug. 15 1902, 4.

⁷ “At Squirrel Island,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, Aug. 5 1902, 5.

understand how Frederic ended up playing ball on Squirrel Island. The Stanwood family, predominantly of Augusta, were among the very first settlers of Squirrel at a time when, according to the *Lewiston Evening Journal*, the island was only open to Maine's highest echelon: "No one was admitted unless his pedigree was well established."⁸ Despite the challenges presented by the death of his father, Fred's college education and summers on Squirrel Island characterize a life of privilege and upper socio-economic class.⁹



A. DOYLE, Manager, W. E. STANWOOD, ED PRATT, DON WHITE, PHIL POTTLE, "DOC" MERRILL Umpire, TED STANWOOD, PAYSON ALDEN, BEN BRIGGS, WALTER KELLEY and FRED STANWOOD

*The Squirrel Island Baseball Team in the early 1900s. Fred Stanwood sits in the second row, far right.*¹⁰

Maine's elite had been playing baseball on Squirrel Island from its very founding as a summer colony in the 1870s. On the island, Stanwood rubbed elbows with an expanding group of the highest classes of American society. Though Squirrel was originally a Maine summer colony, by the turn of the century its clientele had expanded to include prominent citizens from throughout New England and indeed the United States. Here, wealthy Americans joined to enjoy summer island getaways, of which baseball was an important part.

⁸ Quoted in: "Summer Colony - The First Fifty Years" in *Squirrel Island Maine - The First Hundred Years*, John and Suzanne Merrill, Eds. (Freeport, ME: Bond Wheelright, 1971), 2.

⁹ The early family history of the Stanwoods can be found in Ethel Stanwood Bolton, *A History of the Stanwood Family in America* (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1899).

¹⁰ "Squirrel Island Athletic Association," *Lewiston Evening Journal - Illustrated Magazine Section* (20 Aug. 1921): 11.

For young men of this class, playing baseball was an opportunity to be active outdoors, something that often eluded them as lawyers, doctors, and businessmen. It was both a re-assertion of manliness and a healthful use of leisure time.

So when the Boothbay Harbor Athletic Association met Squirrel Island during that 1902 season, Ralph Kendrick and Fred Stanwood faced off against one another. These two men entered the game from vastly different social environments: both represented his community on the baseball diamond, but while Kendrick came to the field from the diverse entirety of Boothbay Harbor, Stanwood represented a much narrower group of wealthy summer residents. In this way, they came to the game of baseball from different roots. Kendrick's squad included young men of all walks of life who approached baseball for different reasons. For some, the game encouraged the adoption of gentlemanly principles and ordered behavior, while for others it was an opportunity to be rowdy. For Stanwood's team, playing ball was an important exertion of leisure class status. But in playing against one another, baseball ultimately served to homogenize the identities of the game's participants. As we saw in Chapter One, Boothbay Harbor was a diverse place in 1900. But institutions like baseball served to transform a region filled with a diverse population into one more simply divided along one line: native and tourist.

*

Why did these two people, one the son of a local newspaper editor and the other a member of Maine's elite, meet in 1902 on the baseball diamond? What brought them together? To fully understand this question is to first delve into the history of the baseball in the United States, one of the most widely studied topics in all of American history. Historian Mitchell Nathanson, author of *A People's History of Baseball* and one of the most recent scholars to consider baseball history, writes that "from the inception of the game, baseball

and America have been, in a symbolic sense, virtually synonymous.”¹¹ There is no doubt that by 1902, when Kendrick and Stanwood played against one another in Boothbay Harbor, baseball was a distinctly American game, and to play was to express one’s American identity. That said, it took decades in the nineteenth century for the game to evolve and popularize into the meaningful cultural experience that defined it by the dawn of the twentieth century.

Baseball’s history in the United States is convoluted, but one thing is for sure: it did not begin in 1839 in Cooperstown, New York, with a game organized by to-be Civil War general Abner Doubleday. Baseball historians have long disproven the Doubleday legend, a myth that was created in the early twentieth century to prove that baseball was truly an American game, and not a descendant of other British games, namely a game called “rounders.” Rather, baseball’s history in America is a challenging muddle to wade through. The most thorough exploration of baseball’s origins is offered by David Block in *Baseball Before We Knew It*. Block devotes himself to questioning all possible origins of the game, reasserting the falsehood of the Doubleday myth, while also debunking the notion that baseball was a direct descendant of British rounders, something previously claimed by a variety of baseball historians.¹² As Tim Wiles, Director of Research at the National Baseball Hall of Fame, puts it in the foreword to Block’s text, most Americans long “preferred the ‘immaculate conception’ of baseball by war hero Abner Doubleday to the messy evolution that historical evidence clearly indicated.”¹³ Indeed, early forms of baseball were most certainly played in colonial America, and Block’s book details a number of different British ball games, including “Old-Cat” and “Stool-Ball,” all of which played a likely role in the evolutionary process that brought baseball to the common form it took in the later decades

¹¹ Mitchell Nathanson, *A People’s History of Baseball* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 2012), 1.

¹² See, for example, Horace Seymour, *Baseball: The Early Years* (New York: Oxford, 1960), 4-8.

¹³ Tim Wiles, “Foreword” in David Block, *Baseball Before We Knew It* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska, 2006), XIV.

of the nineteenth century. Block writes that “there is little doubt that baseball’s implantation and nourishment in colonial America was almost exclusively the immediate product of English cultural influence.”¹⁴ It is likely that most children, especially young boys in Colonial America, played some type of ball game that pre-dated modern baseball.

Most historians give credit to the New York Knickerbockers, a men’s social club, for the initial codification of baseball rules in 1845, though it’s clear that other men played competitive games in New York as early as the 1820s. The rules set forth by the Knickerbockers include the organization of bases in a diamond formation, the definition of a foul ball and strike out, as well as the means for achieving outs in the field. Block points out that the Knickerbocker rules do not necessarily deserve all of the credit that they often receive, because by 1845 many rules of baseball had become convention already. In addition, several of their rules, including the requirement of underhand pitching, did not survive. That said, the Knickerbocker club and rules played an important role in codifying the game in New York and for other places as baseball’s popularity grew.¹⁵ In the New York area, baseball’s popularity grew wildly in the mid-1850s and by 1861, there were more than 200 baseball clubs in the greater New York area that frequently challenged one another to competitive games. By then, the game was also a popular spectator sport, having provided entertainment to fans who might have preferred foot races or boxing in earlier decades. Other forms of baseball, including major regional varieties in Philadelphia and Massachusetts, competed with the “New York game” into the late nineteenth century, but ultimately perished to the uniform rules of baseball as played at the base of the Hudson.¹⁶

By the conclusion of the Civil War, baseball was widely played across America,

¹⁴ Block, *Baseball Before We Knew It*, 104. See chapters 2-4 for an overview of common baseball origin misconceptions, and chapters 8 and 9 for likely British forerunners.

¹⁵ Ibid, 80-93.

¹⁶ Benjamin Rader, *Baseball: A History of America’s Game* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 2002), 5-19.

especially in cities, “when the popular New York version of the game spread rapidly to all corners of the nation. Baseball was now everywhere, in schoolyards and sandlots, and in large new ballparks built to hold the crowds flocking to see the heroes of the new professional leagues,” as Block puts it.¹⁷ Historians agree that the effect of the Civil War on the game of baseball was profound and lasting. Albert Spalding, well known as a professional player in the 1870s as the first player to use a fielding glove and for helping to organize the National League, and whose name remains attached to one the largest manufacturers of sporting products, including baseball gloves, recalls the influence of the Civil War as follows:

[Baseball] received its baptism in the bloody days of our Nation’s direst danger. It had its early evolution when soldiers, North and South, were striving to forget their foes by cultivating, through this grand game, fraternal friendship with comrades in arms. [...] It healed the wounds of war, and was balm to stinging memories of sword thrust and saber stroke. It served to fill the enforced leisure hours of countless men suddenly thrown out of employment. It calmed the restless spirits of men who, after four years of bitter strife, found themselves all at once in the midst of a monotonous era, with nothing at all to do.¹⁸

In short, the Civil War offered the ultimate opportunity for the spread of the New York form of the game. Just as World War I was the perfect feeding ground for the influenza virus, the Civil War allowed for soldiers from across the country to witness and join in the playing of the game, only to then return home and teach it to others.¹⁹ Its spread was truly infectious.

It is thus not challenging to understand how a game so fragmented in the mid-nineteenth century would become the “national game” by its conclusion. Several developments were important to solidifying baseball’s cultural status in the final decades of the 1800s. For one, professional teams, then leagues, became a staple of baseball and grew in

¹⁷ Block, *Baseball Before We Knew It*, 161.

¹⁸ Albert Goodwill Spalding, *America’s National Game* (New York: American Sports Publishing Company, 1911), 92-93.

¹⁹ Rader, *Baseball*, 17-18.

popularity. The classic example of this is the 1869 Cincinnati Red Stockings, the first team with full-time paid players, which toured the entire country, challenging any teams willing to accept in cities across the country. The Red Stockings travelled nearly 12,000 miles on the 1869 tour, playing in front of more than 200,000 fans. That they did not lose a single game, while simultaneously improving the image of the city of Cincinnati, ushered in the era of paid professional teams: "The national attention bestowed on the Red Stockings in 1869 provoked the envy of cities everywhere," writes historian Benjamin Rader.²⁰ Other travelling teams followed suit in the 1870s and 1880s, just as professional leagues became standard and games were organized more officially as a part of league schedules. The desire for dominance in an inter-urban rivalry was also a driving factor in the spread of baseball's popularity. According to Rader in *American Sports*, "A city's baseball team often rallied the citizens behind a common cause as nothing else short of a natural disaster could do."²¹ Finally, baseball reporting in newspapers became increasingly popular as editors looked for exciting spectacles to offer through the written word. The most striking example of this is in the founding of the *Chronicle* by Henry Chadwick, a guidebook that reported statistics to an apparent 65,000 subscribers each week already in the mid-1860s.²² For all of these reasons, baseball quickly became the national sport. Baseball was played professionally for growing crowds as an ever more-profitable business and at the same time youngsters and young men played for fun and in organized clubs: the game had solidified itself in the fabric of American life.

The story of the Davisville Oletas and Dixon Etnas is as good a representation of the spread of baseball across the United States as any. Davisville, today known as Davis, and

²⁰ Rader, *Baseball*, 32.

²¹ Benjamin Rader, *American Sports: From the Age of Folk Games to the Age of Spectators* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 111.

²² Ibid.

Dixon are two cities in northern California near Sacramento, both of which grew significantly as a result of the California Gold Rush in 1869, which also helped bring baseball from east to west once more. Both cities were rural, agricultural centers in the late nineteenth century, but by the 1880s, each had its own baseball team. The showdown between the two pitted mostly farmers against farmers, as historian David Vaught demonstrates: “The scheduled games, well-established venues, large crowds, newspaper coverage, fierce rivalries, high-stakes gambling, and close bonds between teams and residents all reveal that baseball—heretofore regarded by historians as a largely urban phenomenon—had become deeply rooted in the region’s rural culture.”²³ Ultimately, the two teams split their games in the 1869 season, but Vaught’s research demonstrates that by the final decades of the nineteenth century, baseball was developing a rural base and becoming a part of rural culture, entirely separate from the urban context in which it may first have grown. In this rivalry between two farming teams located about as far from New York City within the United States as one could travel, we see how truly national the sport of baseball had become.²⁴

Given baseball’s reign throughout the country, in metropolitan centers and rural towns, it is no surprise that it found its way to Maine and the isolated, seaside Boothbay region. Maine’s own history of baseball is perhaps best chronicled in Will Anderson’s sarcastically titled *Was Baseball Really Invented in Maine?* Anderson reports that, as with other parts of the country, early residents of Maine played baseball’s predecessors, including rounders and cat, in the late 1700s and early 1800s. By 1858, Portland newspapers reported the success of a Portland-based team against Boston’s Tri-Mountain club by the score of 47

²³ David Vaught, “‘Our Players are Mostly Farmers’: Baseball in Rural California, 1850-1890,” in *Baseball in America and America in Baseball* (No. 38, Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lecture Series), ed. Donald G. Kyle and Robert B. Fairbanks (College Station: Texas A&M University, 2008): 8-9.

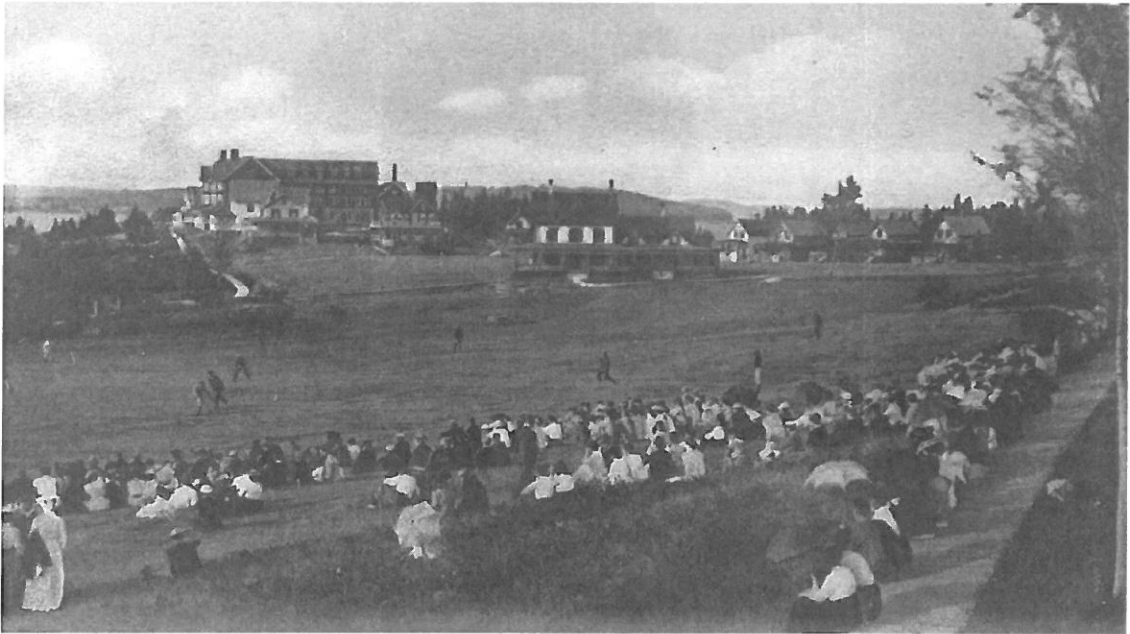
²⁴ *Ibid.*, 8-31.

to 42, not an uncommonly high score at a time when pitching had not developed and fielders did not wear gloves. The first documented all-Maine game was played between the Bowdoin College Senior Class team and the Sunrise Club of Brunswick at the Topsham Fairgrounds on October 10, 1860, with Sunrise winning 46 to 42 in another “scorer’s delight.” By the end of the 1880s, Maine had multiple professional teams in the New England League, an organization of teams that existed until the mid-twentieth century, though it always struggled economically in the shadow of the Major Leagues. Other professional teams also existed in northern Maine and often competed against Canadian maritime teams, such as at Halifax, where baseball had prospered beginning in the 1870s. By 1900, when Stanwood and Kendrick met, baseball had a firm footing in the state.²⁵

As with much of the game’s early history, when organized baseball first reached Boothbay Harbor is hazy at best and subject to available primary source material. But according to the *Squirrel Island Squid*, the island’s own fledgling publication, teams from Squirrel Island and Boothbay Harbor met at least as early as 1876, just five years after the development of Squirrel Island as a summer destination began. The *Squid* reported that “The Boothbay Club is made up of heavyweights, with Side Whiskers.”²⁶ The teams met on Saturday, July 29, and the Squirrels, as newspapers would begin to call them, trounced the Harbor team 22-8. Sporadic newspaper reports, postcards, and other evidence suggests that such games continued throughout the final decades of the nineteenth century, so the meeting between Stanwood’s and Kendrick’s teams was by no means the first in the rivalry. But by the time they did play in 1902, baseball was a great American game. It offered important opportunities for individual and community expression in rural Boothbay Harbor.

²⁵ Will Anderson, *Was Baseball Really Invented in Maine?* (Portland, ME: Anderson, 1992), 1-13; Colin D. Howell, *A Social History of Maritime Baseball* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995), 13-60.

²⁶ *Squirrel Island Squid* (Vol. 1 No. 4) Aug. 5, 1876.



Postcard of Baseball on Squirrel Island, Early 1900s²⁷

Baseball's status as America's game, however, did not necessarily mean that all players picked up a bat and ball for the same reasons. Ralph Kendrick and Fred Stanwood may have both been introduced to baseball at a similar age as it spread through the country during the late nineteenth century, and by 1902 understood its place as America's game. That does not mean that the son of a local newspaper editor and a recent college graduate were playing the game for the same reasons or approached it from the same point of view. As we will see, baseball's origins were clearly in the middle and upper classes, and only in the final years of the nineteenth century did the game spread to working classes, too. As we examine the differences between the 1902 Squirrel Island and Boothbay Harbor teams, we will recognize clear class distinctions between their players. Using scholarly understandings of the function of baseball for these distinct cultural groups, we can see that Stanwood and Kendrick, and the teams that they played for, swung the bat for divergent reasons.

²⁷ "Baseball game, Squirrel Island, early 1900s," Postcard, Squirrel Island Historical Society.



The 1902 Squirrel Island "Nine"²⁸

At first glance, the 1902 Squirrel Island baseball nine could be confused with any baseball squad of the day. The team members, young men in their late teens or early twenties, perhaps, appear in good health, and the classic props for a baseball photograph, a few bats and a catcher's mask, clearly identify what the group has been up to. And yet, at closer glance, one might wonder if this is one team at all. While they are wearing uniforms, not all are the same. A few versions of Bowdoin College uniforms are included, along with one from Princeton, while still a few others are unintelligible. In the back row, two men wear suits with ties: one is the traditional umpire for Squirrel Island games, Henry "Doc" Merrill. Indeed, this is one team. But from the visual evidence, we see a team of privilege, representative of the Squirrel Island community from which they have come. It is no coincidence that so many wear the uniforms of their college teams: this is actually a strong

²⁸ "A Lively Scrap," *Lewiston Saturday Journal* (23 Aug. 1902): 12.

indication of the point-of-view from which the Squirrel team came to baseball.

A closer look at the individuals on the Squirrel Island team in the first years of the twentieth century establishes their elite status: Squirrel Island fielded the sons of leading politicians, businessmen, and so on. The team's coach, Alexander Doyle, lived primarily in New York City, though he was born in Steubenville, Ohio and had studied sculpture in Italy. He was one of the premier sculptors in the United States in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and his work can be seen around the country to this day, much of which is devoted to famous figures from the Civil War.²⁹ Don White, Bowdoin College class of 1905, became a Lewiston-based merchant in the same year, where he lived most of his life. He continued to spend his summers on Squirrel with his brother, William Frye White. The two were grandsons of William P. Frye, Maine senator from 1881 to 1911.³⁰ Other players in 1902 included Paul Murphy, son of Arizona territorial governor Nelson Oakes Murphy, and Alfred DeLuce Dickerman, the son of George Dickerman, a prominent minister in Lewiston and Amherst, Massachusetts.³¹ Of course, the best-represented family on the team at the time was the Stanwood clan. Frederic and William, both sons of Horace Calef Stanwood, settled in Wellesley, Massachusetts, after their father's death and were part of an original Squirrel Island family. By 1905, William was a settled banker, while Frederic was the Secretary and Treasurer of the Copper Range Company, a major mining operation in Michigan with financial headquarters in Boston. Meanwhile, cousin Ted, a Bowdoin graduate like Frederic, had also graduated from Harvard Law School in 1901 before entering the business world, too.³² As members of New England and America's elite, these players came to baseball as torchbearers of the earliest American players, members of middle and upper-

²⁹ "Alexander Doyle," *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* X (New York: James T. White, 1909), 371.

³⁰ *General Catalogue of Bowdoin College and the Medical School of Maine* (Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin, 1912), 293.

³¹ *Squirrel Island Families*, Ed. Clare Newbury (Unpublished, 2013), 26.

³² *The Wellesley, Mass. Directory, 1904-1905* (Boston: W.E. Shaw, 1904), 102; *General Catalogue of Bowdoin College and the Medical School of Maine* (Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin, 1950), 187.

middle-classes who participated for the healthful and manly characteristics of playing the game.

As we saw, organized baseball's origins in the United States derived from middle and upper-middle class "clubs," like the New York Knickerbockers who codified the rules of baseball in 1845. Such clubs established the traditions that later players would respect and adhere to. Historian Warren Goldstein refers to those who played in this environment as members of the "baseball fraternity." Such clubs required the payment of dues, had bylaws and constitutions for guiding the activities of the club, and sought the betterment of its members in all arenas, socially, physically, and morally. Goldstein reports that clubs often had more than one team, a best, "first" nine, and subsequent teams created in order of ability, down to the "muffin" team, including a club's very worst players. And indeed, such clubs existed not merely for the sake of competitive sport: "The earliest baseball organizations were genuine social clubs, in which baseball playing was an important but far from the only activity."³³ Games between clubs represented formal occasions, where dinner was often served to members following the game, and members of clubs gathered for all sorts of social occasions, as Goldstein writes: "The rites of play extended from the ballfield to the ballroom, structuring the life of the baseball club."³⁴ Given the social function that membership served for an individual in a baseball club, the game's origins were closely connected to class affiliation and identification. Clubs like the New York Knickerbockers served men "one station beneath the city's elite," according to Nathanson, and membership thus helped white-collar workers define themselves in a certain "gentlemanly" class.³⁵ Indeed, the vast majority of baseball's early urban participants were white-collar

³³ Warren Goldstein, "The Baseball Fraternity" in John E. Dreifort, *Baseball History from Outside the Lines* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska, 2001), 4.

³⁴ Ibid, 7.

³⁵ Nathanson, *People's History*, 7-8.

professionals. About two-thirds of those who played organized baseball were clerks, managers, artisans, and business proprietors. The remaining one-third came from skilled jobs, leaving unskilled laborers largely out of organized baseball's early history.³⁶ Rader writes that "The private clubs served as accurate barometers of different levels of nineteenth-century status communities."³⁷ Early baseball thus operated as an important marker of social class status for the game's participants.

But why baseball, specifically? What originally drew young, urban professionals to associate around this game? Historians have offered a number of worthy explanations for the cultural function of baseball in late nineteenth century America. Most importantly, baseball offered young men the opportunity for physical exertion when their day jobs were decreasingly physical. Historian Bruce Haley firmly demonstrated the shift in Victorian values toward the inclusion of athletic pursuits in *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*. Haley demonstrates how the Victorian, elite view of sport shifted dramatically in the mid-18th century. A culture that had previously scorned overexertion as unhealthy quickly shifted to embrace a wide multitude of athletic endeavors: "The time was soon to come when Englishmen would be converting their back lawns into tennis courts, making yearly assaults on the Alps, and packing the grandstands at rugby matches."³⁸ This same voracious approach to sporting activities arose in the industrial United States, one helpful explanation for the growth of baseball's popularity in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Crucial to this shift was the acknowledgement of physical activity's importance in maintaining overall health. But behind the widespread growth of competitive sport, asserts Haley, "was the Victorian spirit of self-improvement, expressing itself now in physical terms: the March of

³⁶ Steven M. Gelber, "'Their Hands Are All Out Playing': Business and Amateur Baseball, 1845-1917," *Journal of Sport History* 11 no. 1 (Spring 1984): 11; Goldstein, "Baseball Fraternity," 3-17.

³⁷ Rader, *American Sports*, 52.

³⁸ Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1978), 124.

Mind was giving way to the March of Body.”³⁹ American urban professionals the 1860s and beyond, under the influence of Victorian cultural norms, sought physical activity in a wide variety of forms, and the formation of baseball clubs was one result.

In addition, baseball offered young men the opportunity to exert especially manly qualities in a time when urban professional jobs offered decreasing opportunities for physical, masculine exertion. The end of the nineteenth century marked an important challenge to male vitality and strength in the United States. Especially following the Civil War, masculinity was increasingly defined in physical terms, as opposed to norms of Franklinitan enlightened self-interest or citizenship in a virtuous republic that had defined male ideals in previous generations. By the end of the nineteenth century, largely as a result of the massive economic shifts brought on by industrialization, many feared the loss of individual physical strength that had defined males of previous generations. As historian Colin D. Howell writes, “Late-nineteenth century reformers feared the decline of society into muscular flabbiness, nervous weakness, and ‘effeminacy,’ and worried that in seeking out the comforts of life American men had become increasingly unable to withstand pain or live a virile life.”⁴⁰ Baseball offered a distinct opportunity to rebuke such claims and assert one’s masculinity on an individual level. Early baseball was especially aggressive, and given the lack of strongly developed pitching or fielding techniques, high scoring games often resulted, with ample opportunity for powerful hitting and consistent running: “There were [...] endless bursts of action and limitless quick sprinting with very little dead time in between. And even though agility, speed, and reflexes mattered, so did muscle—the capacity

³⁹ Ibid, 136.

⁴⁰ Howell, *Maritime Baseball*, 99. See also T. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1983), 8.

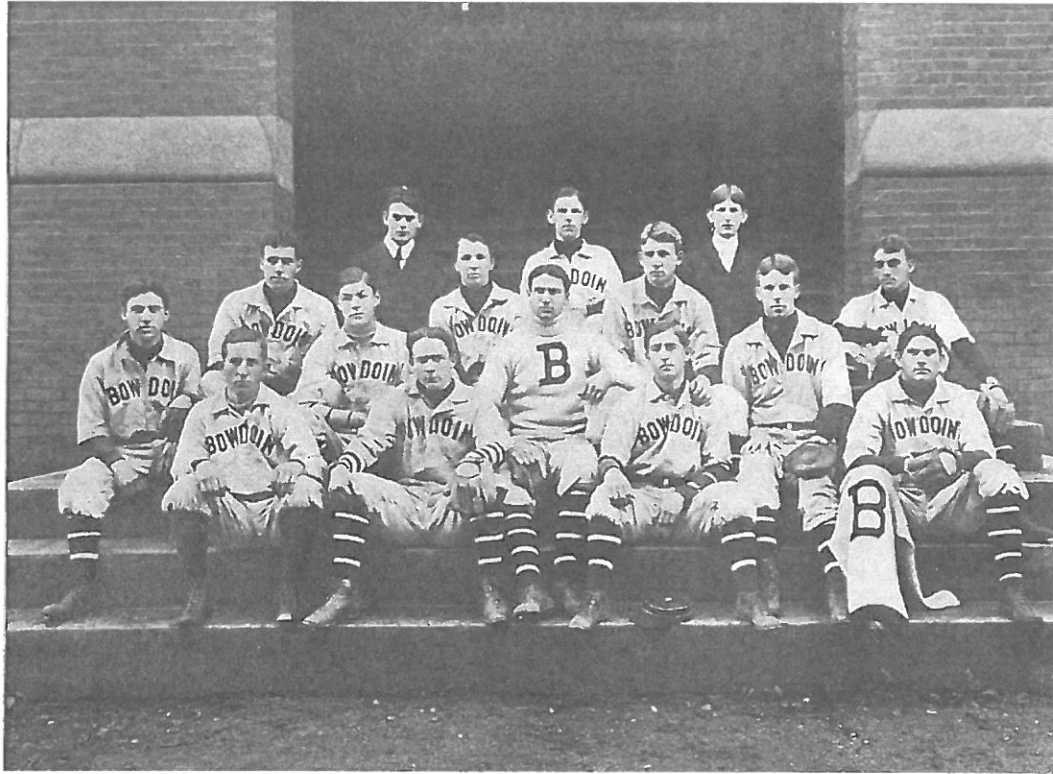
to throw swiftly and hit it powerfully.”⁴¹ Furthermore, baseball had symbolic sexual significance, too. As historian Ronald Story reports, this all-male sport was most commonly played by post-pubescent males with high levels of testosterone, while promoters consistently reminded audiences of the “manly” nature of the game, in contrast to the femininity displayed by women spectators.⁴² Baseball’s rise was complemented by the increase in popularity of college football, especially in university contexts, where the same gender significance extended to more violent levels. In this way, the physicality encouraged by late-nineteenth century Victorian values complimented the gender needs of young men in a society concerned about its masculinity.

It is no surprise that so many of Squirrel Island’s baseball nine, therefore, played in the summer after the conclusion of a collegiate baseball season. The elite values ascribed to athletic participation and performance, including Victorian health and the fortification of physical masculinity, encouraged the growth of athletics as a prominent aspect of the American collegiate experience. This was true even as early as the 1860s, a time when baseball was rivaled only by rowing and track and field as an intercollegiate event. The first recorded intercollegiate baseball game took place in 1859 between Williams and Amherst, both schools that Bowdoin would eventually compete against. By the time Fred Stanwood was in school there in the final years of the 1800s and beginning 1900s, not only did Bowdoin field a team for intercollegiate play, but each class year at the college also had its own baseball nine, as well. By the 1880s, an association of elite northeastern colleges had formed for regular baseball competitions, providing an opportunity for the “Sons of the Elite,” as Rader calls them, to compete with one another. And as the number of institutions

⁴¹ Ronald Story, “The Country of the Young,” in John E. Dreifort, *Baseball History from Outside the Lines* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska, 2001), 22.

⁴² Ibid, 23.; Michael S. Kimmel, “Baseball and the Reconstitution of American Masculinity, 1880-1920” in John E. Dreifort, *Baseball History from Outside the Lines* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska, 2001), 47-61.

of higher education rose rapidly in the 1800s, athletics became a prominent and public way for schools to gain recognition and achieve higher status in the public eye. While collegiate football would soon surpass baseball in prominence as the most prestigious and popular men's sport, baseball was the original elite university game.⁴³



The 1902 Bowdoin Varsity Baseball Team. Fred Stanwood sits to the far right at back.⁴⁴

Of course, a final significant reason that we see baseball on Squirrel Island, specifically, around the turn of the twentieth century is that it was an important leisure activity that fit with the experience expected of vacationers at the time. Chapter One detailed the variety of reasons that members of this class sought vacation experiences, as well as what they hoped to gain from them, including an escape from urban settings and the opportunity to relax. What could have been more fulfilling, in this regard, than a game of baseball? Games allowed players and spectators to be outdoors in the sea air, and were consistent with

⁴³ Rader, *American Sports*, 70-75.

⁴⁴ From the *Bowdoin Bangle* LVIII (Portland, ME: Lakeside, 1903), 142.

summer leisure demands. By far, Squirrel Island's most famous baseball player was Louis Sockalexis, a Penobscot Indian who would play collegiate baseball at Holy Cross and, from 1897 to 1899, for the major league Cleveland Spiders. But for Squirrel's wealthy summer visitors, Sockalexis' presence on the diamond was yet another way to escape from urban modernity and return to a simpler past. It's no surprise that Squirrel Island would play host to other outdoor leisure activities in later years, including official Maine and New England tennis championships. Baseball, for elite young men, epitomized the leisure experience.

* * *

Clarke Rowe probably knew the young men playing for the Squirrel Island team by appearance, if not by name, when he faced them as a member of the 1902 Boothbay Harbor team. In fact, Rowe had probably played an important part in getting them to their destination. Born in 1883, the son of Captain Frank Rowe, Clarke was born into the family business of ferrying vacationers to Boothbay Harbor. The boat Frank, and later Clarke, was best known for was the *Winter Harbor*, which shuttled visitors from the train station in Wiscasset to the Boothbay region year round, while also carrying the mail at times, between 1908 and 1932. But Frank's work on other boats surely meant that he had met the Stanwoods or their teammates. We can imagine Frank, and Clarke, loading the luggage of and having a conversation with those coming to Squirrel Island, Ocean Point, or even day trippers to Boothbay Harbor. Clarke remained fascinated with boats all of his life—after the steamer business failed in 1932, and the *Winter Harbor* sank in Wiscasset Harbor, he began creating wooden models of the many boats he had come to know. He remained in Boothbay all of his life, playing in the community band in the 1940s and 1950s, and was buried in Boothbay after his death in 1960. In 1902, however, Clarke Rowe's nineteen-year old mind was probably occupied by baseball much of the time. He played shortstop and hit .305 for

the year, second best to Ralph Kendrick.⁴⁵



The 1902 Boothbay Harbor Baseball Team⁴⁶

Examining the 1902 Boothbay Harbor team, we see a far more varied picture than that of the “Squirrels.” Rowe, the son of a steamship captain, and Kendrick, the son of the newspaper editor, were joined by a host of other Boothbay Harbor young men, united by their interest in baseball. The roster includes the names of ten players and the coach: Jim Sullivan, Ralph Kendrick, Sherb Stevens, George McClintock, Leon Marson, Clarke Rowe, Owen Orne, Ralph Moore, Lou Yates, Pearl Benner, and Coach Henry Pinkham. Given scant newspaper evidence from that particular year, it’s challenging to find much about all of the players: Sullivan, Orne, Moore, and Benner have largely disappeared from the historical

⁴⁵ George Wharton Rice, *The Shipping Days of Old Boothbay* (Somersworth, NH: New England History Press, 1984): 369-370; “Steamboats on the Kennebec a Possibility,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*/LXXXI (29 Jan. 1942): 1; “Models Depict Maine Ships,” *Portland Press Herald* (15 May 1949): 77.

⁴⁶ “Baseball Team, 1902,” BHGI007, File 13, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

record, while sketchy evidence exists about other members. Kendrick was a painter for a time, but eventually took over his father's work at the *Boothbay Register*. Stevens played alongside Rowe in the community band in the '40s and '50s, and was also a rolling skating champion in 1909. McClintock was the son of famous merchant ship-owner Leonard McClintock and appears to have gone to Dartmouth. Marson also went to college, though he stayed in Maine at Bates, before going to Boston to work for Hoods Rubber Company in 1906. Yates apparently worked at a fish processing plant in Boothbay Harbor for most of his life. Finally, Coach Pinkham, a well-known character in town, appears to have done a number of odd jobs, including house painting.⁴⁷

One way to demonstrate the socio-economic diversity of the Boothbay Harbor team is to track the amount each player, and his family, paid in taxes. In looking at tax years in the late 1890s and early 1900s, most of the players paid the minimum three dollar head tax at the time, which is consistent with their age, given that they were each in their late teens or early twenties while playing for the team. But the amount paid by each of their fathers, in contrast, is telling. Certainly some players came from wealthier families based upon these figures: this is certainly true for Kendrick, Marson, and McClintock. Kendrick's father, Charles, paid at least fifty and in one year eighty dollars in tax between 1899 and 1909 as the editor and proprietor of the local newspaper. Woodbury Marson, a sailmaker, served as postmaster for the town in the 1890s and 1900s, paying between thirty-five and seventy dollars annually. Meanwhile, McClintock's father Leonard was an experienced sea merchant, who in one famous 1876 incident evaded Spanish authorities and a gunboat in Puerto Rico to avoid paying a fine for misdocumenting the goods he carried. Though he passed away in 1890, his estate continued to pay between sixty and ninety dollars in yearly tax. All three of these

⁴⁷ Many families appear in the family history section of Greene, *History of Boothbay*, 465-664.

families, given their well above average rates of taxation, must have come from a wealthy echelon of Boothbay Harbor society. But other players came from more modest means. Lou Yates' father Adelbart, an engineer for the Boothbay Harbor Cold Storage Company, paid the minimum three dollars between 1899 and 1906 before beginning to pay more, perhaps the result of a promotion at the company. The coach, Henry Pinkham, paid six to nine dollars per year in the 1900s. But half of the players appear to have come from families paying the minimum tax or slightly above, including Sherb Stevens and Clarke Rowe. Jim Sullivan and his family do not appear in the tax registry at all.⁴⁸ These facts suggest that many of the players on the Boothbay Harbor team came from poorer or average families in the region, and that as a unit, the Boothbay Harbor team was more socio-economically diverse than their opponents on Squirrel.

What drew this group of young men to the game of baseball? Certainly, we can envision that these Boothbay Harbor boys played baseball for many of the same reasons as wealthier, elite New Englanders. Though not an assertion of class status, like joining a baseball and social club in an urban setting, Boothbay's young men were likely drawn to baseball for the health benefits associated with physical activity, and even in a small town setting the baseball diamond probably served as an excellent opportunity for individual young men to demonstrate masculine prowess. But the diversity of the team's players, alongside their rural setting, complicates the story to some degree.

Recent scholarship has focused on the ways athletic competition, notably baseball, actually complemented the labor environments of working class individuals, specifically. Historian Steven M. Gelber offers one such example, stating that baseball was "an ally in

⁴⁸ Greene, *History of Boothbay*, 465-664; "Assessor's Report," *Tenth through Twenty-First Annual Report of the Town Offices of the Town of Boothbay Harbor, Maine* (Boothbay Harbor, Maine: Register Book and Job, 1899-1910), Boothbay Region Historical Society.

maintaining a productive workforce.”⁴⁹ To Gelber, the division of labor on the baseball diamond, with different defensive positions, was reminiscent of the Taylorist approach to industrial efficiency that many factories worked hard to maintain. In addition, orderly batting and the eventual maintenance of numeric statistics and game reports were similar to the way that businesses reported earnings. Employees who played baseball were therefore better ready to accept and understand the systems of a factory in a competitive economic environment, and might therefore be more efficient themselves. This is why, Gelber reports, many business owners who were reluctant to allow their employees to participate in baseball eventually understood the game as a complement, and encouraged such play.⁵⁰ Gelber’s study is helpful in understanding the appeal of the game to working classes and explaining the growth of baseball between factory teams in urban settings, in particular, and may apply to workers in highly organized fish processing plants. But it does not provide the full picture of baseball’s popularity in rural settings, like Boothbay Harbor, where the team drew from a rather diverse population.

Such is the problem identified by David Vaught in *The Farmers’ Game: Baseball in Rural America*. While romanticized and imagined accounts of baseball’s history often place the game’s origin in cornfields and dusty sites far away from the city, precious little scholarship has been undertaken to fully understand the specific rural roots of the game. “From the very beginning, whenever that was,” Vaught writes, “rural people embraced the game as passionately as city people—though not always for the same reasons.”⁵¹ It is the search for these reasons that makes the story of the 1902 Boothbay Harbor team so intriguing. Historian Ronald Story offers one useful explanation in “The Country of the

⁴⁹ Gelber, “Their Hands Are All Out Playing,” 27.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 6.

⁵¹ David Vaught, *The Farmers’ Game* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2013), 8.

Young: The Meaning of Baseball in Early American Culture.” Story’s essential argument is that baseball’s popularity grew so rapidly in the late nineteenth century because baseball had always been a child’s game, and when the children of the 1860s became the adults of the 1880s, they brought their interest in baseball with them. Story writes that “for every club or professional player from the late 1860s to the early 1880s, there were almost certainly a hundred nonprofessional players on organized teams and a thousand on unorganized ad hoc ones.”⁵² Within his argument, we can identify some of baseball’s rural origins. Story writes that “In summer, a house was ‘a place to get out of,’ as were most school buildings and places of work.”⁵³ Quite simply, baseball provided an opportunity for young boys to leave the home and enjoy warm weather. In Boothbay Harbor, these young boys carried on the tradition as they entered their late teens and early twenties. But Story points out further reasons for play that help us: boys and young men played baseball for “comradeship, recognition, and order.”⁵⁴ Each of these points will become important in the paragraphs to come. We’ll see that comradeship was especially important in creating a unified identity for Boothbay’s team. In Chapter Three, we’ll see how attainable newspaper recognition was through baseball performance, something increasingly desirable in a diversifying community like Boothbay. But order was an especially important reason given the tumultuous recent economic history of Boothbay Harbor.

To understand this, we might return to the story of the 1880s rivalry between Davisville and Dixon in farm-oriented, rural California. Scholar of American Studies Allen Guttman has argued that baseball’s shape, at four points, connects with natural biorhythms as linked to the four seasons and of the agricultural world; the orderly game of baseball thus

⁵² Story, “The Country of the Young,” 21.

⁵³ Ibid, 22.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 24.

complements the natural order of the world, an aspect of the game that farmers were drawn to. But beyond this, writes Story, baseball offered a level of physical control, and order, unmatched by other sports.⁵⁵ Players were drawn to this level of control in a society facing the social upheaval that Robert Wiebe explained in *The Search for Order*. This was especially true in communities like Boothbay Harbor that faced the unprecedented economic uncertainty brought by the unbridled capitalism of the turn of the twentieth century. David Vaught's retelling of the Dixon and Davisville rivalry is one of two teams of farmers facing a similar set of economic shifts that Boothbay was experiencing. These farming communities, both along the Putah Creek, had "continued to ignore the harsh realities of supply and demand—not only the simple economics of overproduction but also the fact that farmers elsewhere in the United States and thousands of miles away in Europe, Asia, South America, and Australia could beat them at their own game."⁵⁶ In short, the next generation of farmers in rural northern California were faced with increasing economic competition and uncertainty, just like the fishermen and shipbuilders of Boothbay Harbor. Vaught continues:

Searching for distraction from their arduous daily routines and the uncertainties of the times, these young men found baseball the perfect antidote. [...] For young men mystified by the operations of the grain market and wary of what the future held but who, like their fathers, could not admit failure or even the possibility of failure, baseball offered excitement, respite, stability, diversion, mutuality, and gratification—all in powerful, albeit short-term, doses.⁵⁷

Certainly, all of these factors mattered, but if we focus on "stability," Boothbay Harbor's boys and men were drawn to baseball because it provided structure and organization that the tumult of the ever-changing turn-of-the-twentieth century economy no longer offered.

Ralph Kendrick, Clarke Rowe, George McClintock, Lou Yates and all of their

⁵⁵ Ibid, 29-32.

⁵⁶ Vaught, *Farmers' Game*, 43.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 45.

teammates are perfect illustrations of this fact. Chapter One demonstrated the enormous changes that industrialization brought to tiny Boothbay Harbor. McClintock's father, the sea merchant, came from an older segment of Boothbay's economy: he sailed a ship built in the region and amassed wealth ferrying goods. Yates' father, however, was an essential piece of a more industrial economy, engineering the machines that allowed for production and long-term storage of fish products. Kendrick's father, meanwhile, relied heavily on local businesses and increases in tourism to drive the sales of his newspaper, the *Boothbay Register*. And finally, Rowe's father depended entirely on Boothbay's newfound tourist addiction for his work as a steamship captain. In this way, the Boothbay Harbor team represents the recent history of the region itself. And as ball players, these young men came to baseball for a distinctly rural set of reasons, far different from those that motivated the players for Squirrel Island's elite team.

* * * *

There is, unfortunately, no extant newspaper report of the 1902 game between Squirrel Island and Boothbay Harbor. The only evidence that the game even took place is a list of scores from the 1902 season on the back of the Boothbay Harbor team photograph, on record at the Boothbay Region Historical Society.⁵⁸ According to the note, Boothbay Harbor won ten to two. We're left to our imaginations to envision what took place. We do know that the game pitted two good teams against one another; records suggest that it was one of only two Squirrel losses, while the win assured Boothbay Harbor would only have one loss on the year. Did Kendrick pound one of his two home runs during the game? Did Fred Stanwood make one of his signature defensive stops, perhaps off of a Clarke Rowe hit up the middle? The answers to such questions are lost to history. Certainly, however, the

⁵⁸ "Baseball Team, 1902," BHGI007, File 13, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

clash between these two teams was more than just a game. It was a competition between the town and the summer colony, and a showdown between the rural and elite baseball traditions. In writing of the origins of baseball, Warren Goldstein has referred to how the nineteenth century game “straddled a cultural boundary” between Victorian men and working class masses.⁵⁹ Such was the case in 1902 Boothbay Harbor - baseball straddled the fence between the rural town game, and the elite New England game. But baseball also served to create a fence anew: in the confusing hustle and bustle of industrializing Boothbay Harbor, baseball forged simple identities: “native” and “tourist.”

We need look no further than team pictures to begin to understand the ways in which baseball games between Boothbay Harbor and Squirrel Island helped to create these identities within the region. Specifically, the uniforms that the teams wear are particularly important in drawing such conclusions. In pictures of the teams, the Boothbay Harbor players wear a common B.H.A.A. uniform, consistent with the practice of most athletic squads today at all levels. Sociologists Nathan Joseph and Nicholas Alex have demonstrated the social importance of uniforms. Simply, they write, “The uniform designates a group. One does not simply wear blue, white, or khaki.”⁶⁰ Indeed, to put on a Boothbay Harbor Athletic Association uniform implies that you belong to Boothbay Harbor. Furthermore, write Joseph and Alex, by providing uniforms for certain players, “a group certifies an individual as its representative and assumes responsibility for his activities.”⁶¹ As the Boothbay Harbor team travelled to Wiscasset, Newcastle, Rockland, Brunswick, and other places throughout Mid-Coast Maine to play its games, wearing this uniform allowed the team to represent the entire town. The success of the team, in a way, reflected upon the town of Boothbay

⁵⁹ Goldstein, “Baseball Fraternity,” 17.

⁶⁰ Nathan Joseph and Nicholas Alex, “The Uniform: A Sociological Perspective” *American Journal of Sociology* 77, No. 4 (Jan., 1972): 720.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 723.

Harbor. More importantly, however, the uniform served to distinguish between members of the Boothbay Harbor team and its opponents. Baseball historian Warren Goldstein has extended these basic ideas to the early adoption of uniforms by professional clubs, too, in the late nineteenth century: “[...] uniforms served as expressions of club sentiment, of fraternal feeling and pride.”⁶² In this way, a player felt a certain individual pride, because the uniform distinguished him from spectators. In addition, the uniform made it easy for spectators to identify and support their “home” team. So, on the coast of Maine, by wearing the uniform, Kendrick, Rowe, McClintock and their teammates asserted, “We are Boothbay Harbor.”

What does it mean, then, that Squirrel Islanders did not have a common uniform, opting instead to wear the uniforms of the prep schools and colleges for which each individual played? Perhaps, as a summer colony, Squirrel players did this to acknowledge that play for the summer island team was secondary to their play for a college or prep school team. But more likely, it seems, the tradition of wearing other uniforms while playing for the Squirrel Island was an intentional choice in its own right. By fielding a team of players wearing “Bowdoin,” “Princeton,” “Harvard,” and the like, Squirrel Island players could identify themselves with the specific elite traditions of university and elite social baseball. Perhaps more importantly, supporters of the Squirrel Island team, other Squirrel Islanders, could recognize the elite institutions from which the colony’s players came and understand their place as members of the New England elite. Uniforms, in this way, allowed Squirrel Island’s team and supporters to understand their place in the social hierarchy of the Boothbay region.

The uniforms, however, are merely a representation of the dynamics of the game

⁶² Warren Goldstein, *Playing for Keeps: A History of Early Baseball* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell, 1989), 109.

itself. In very few arenas did summer vacationers and local residents so clearly come together in such stark opposition. The 1902 baseball game between Boothbay Harbor and Squirrel Island was therefore a unique opportunity, unlike any other, for group identities to form along the lines of “us” and “them.” The game allowed summer colonists to unify as a regional elite in opposition to local “hicks, yokels, or hayseeds,” to use the language of Warren Goldstein.⁶³ More likely, summer colonists could look upon them as salty sailors or grizzled shipbuilders and fishermen. Meanwhile, local residents looked upon their Squirrel Island opponents as “summer people.” Such invaders to local culture could never truly belong in Boothbay Harbor, and would always be “from away,” just as Roxinda Greenwood never truly belongs in Ruth Moore’s *Speak to the Winds*.⁶⁴ This baseball game was unique because it actually helped to create the imagined groups of “native” and “tourist.” It’s hard to imagine that Boothbay Harbor residents watching the game could have left after the 10-2 victory over Squirrel without feeling pride for having defeated their summer invaders.

Such an event could not stand alone for long; members of each community quickly understood and recognized the power of the symbolic showdown between the Squirrel Island and Boothbay Harbor baseball teams, between summer people and natives. In the years to come, the two teams would morph and change in a number of ways, including more games and different players. But the meaning of the game remained the same: a showdown between opposing forces, and identities, in a small coastal Maine town. Among those that recognized the significance of this game were business interests, for as we will see in Chapter Three, this was a rivalry to profit from. In Boothbay Harbor, a place defined by the dynamics of this native-tourist divide to this day, baseball became one more commodity in the summer vacation experience.

⁶³ Goldstein, *Playing for Keeps*, 111.

⁶⁴ Ruth Moore, *Speak to the Winds* (New York: Morrow, 1956).

THREE

The Business and Spectacle of Baseball: The 1906 Rivalry Games

“The game opened at 2:45 P.M. on the pretty little grounds of the Boothbay Harbor team. It was the first of a series of eight games between the ancient rivals. The day was perfect, a high blue sky, a spicy wind from off the seven seas and warmth enough to put pitchers into the best of trim.”¹ So begins the July 26th *Lewiston Evening Journal* account of the first game between the Boothbay Harbor and Squirrel Island baseball teams for the 1906 season, the first of eight such full articles that the newspaper would publish over the course of the summer, one for each classic game between the two teams. Lewiston, the hometown of most of the original settlers of Squirrel Island in the 1870s, had retained strong ties to the island community. Clearly, the region’s taste for baseball had developed in the four years since 1902, allowing for this now “ancient rivalry” to flourish. The sensational reports of the first two games of the 1906 season, offered by both the *Lewiston Evening Journal* and *Boothbay Register*, provide a flavor for the atmosphere and action of a region gripped by baseball fever.

“‘Play ball!’ says the fatter of the two umpires, the voice emanating from cavernous retreats of adipose and the game is on—Squirrel at the bat,” continues the paper. Six hundred fans tensely watched the first game on July 25th, cheering for their side in the showdown for Harbor supremacy, many Squirrel Islanders having made the trip to the mainland aboard the ferry, *Nellie G*, and on private craft. The game provided immediate excitement in the first inning, especially for Squirrel Island fans. Though Miller, the left fielder and member of the Harvard track team, struck out to begin the game, the familiar Squirrel star and Bowdoin graduate Ted Stanwood reached base next: “Mr. Stanwood had slapped it hard down the diamond, kicking up the dust as it ricocheted into the into the big gloves of McArdle, the

¹ “Squirrels and the Harborites,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 26 July 1906, 12. Subsequent quotations from the newspaper account of this game derive from this source.

Harbor third baseman. It was a fine clean stop and good for an out had McArdle's balloon clung closer to earth; for he threw it nearly over into Southport and if there hadn't been a ground rule making it one base, Stanwood could have been tagging bags now." Thanks to the overthrow, Stanwood found himself in scoring position. Batting third, Weinz hit a "screaming" double, scoring Stanwood and putting Squirrel up one. Stevenson, "captain of the Harvard Varsity team, a renowned hitter and one of the most beautiful throwers I have seen in many a day," according the *Lewiston Evening Journal* reporter, hit next. "A tall, handsome chap he was, too, togged in a Harvard uniform and playing the game for the pure fun of it. [...] Old Dan Brouthers never hit it harder."² Stevenson's hit "sailed away to the fence," scoring Weinz and giving Squirrel a two-run lead. It was all that Squirrel would score in the first inning, but was enough: though Boothbay Harbor successfully reached base in the bottom of the second inning, they could not score.

The game remained two to zero until the sixth inning, when Boothbay Harbor's H.C. McArdle "bent against the ball and sent it flying like a standard oil magnate chased by the courts." His hit allowed him to reach third base, whence he scored when the next batter, "Chick" Connelly, singled up the middle. With a man on first, no outs, and now only trailing by one, the Harbor team looked primed to take control of the game until some poor base running snuffed out the team's momentum: "It looked like trouble for Squirrel but here Connelly cut loose with a foolish trick that Boothby [sic] probably discusses even now. Mahoney popped up an infield fly and Connelly started to run like a jack rabbit chased by a bull terrier. Nothing could stop him. Maxcy took the fly and fielded it to first for a double play." The unfortunate base running blunder cost Boothbay from the opportunity to do more damage, and the score remained two to one heading into the seventh inning.

² Brouthers played professional baseball from 1879 to 1896 and is generally recognized as baseball's first slugger.

Unfortunately for the Boothbay Harbor team, they could not muster any significant offense in the final third of the game, while Squirrel Island managed to score twice and nearly more when Ted Stanwood, “the old warrior,” came within inches of a home run: “It was a beautiful drive, the ball needing only one 99th degree more gasoline to put it over.” The game ended in a four to one victory to the Squirrel Island team, “an anomalous team” of amateurs from Bowdoin, Harvard, Penn, and other elite institutions who had never “been gathered on any field but this.” The game’s conclusion brought a Squirrel celebration that broke “upon the summer silences. And the ‘Nellie G.’ came home to Squirrel full of happiness, girls in white roosting on the pilot house singing *Everybody wins but the Harbor, Poor old thing!*” Such celebrations evidently continued, as the Squirrel summer residents could relish in the success of their baseball nine: “Everywhere is the same refrain—4 to 1. The catgut twangs it; the stars sing it and waves echo it; for to-day, the Squirrels have been over to the ‘Harbor’ and walloped the Harborites’ pet team, 4 to 1, in a game that ‘passes the lemon’ to the big leagues and puts Yale and Harvard so far back into the dark ages that their brand of baseball sorts up as scrub and ‘rounders.’”³ The *Boothbay Register’s* report of the game was considerably less glowing, and much shorter, given the loss: “Perhaps our boys have been flushed a little by their phenomenal success in all the games before,” referring to the team’s perfect record coming into the game, “and were not as nervy as they can be. We shall expect to do things the next game.”⁴ The Squirrel team and its supporters could continue the party for only a few days, however, for though they had won the first battle, the war would continue on July 28th with the second game of the series.

The *Lewiston Journal* and *Boothbay Register* shared the same report for the Saturday game on Squirrel Island, one with a decidedly different result, despite the reporter’s consistency of

³ Prior quotations from: “Squirrels and the Harborites,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 26 July 1906, 12.

⁴ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 28 July 1906, 3.

flare for the dramatic: “There are times when words are inadequate to express the seething sentiments of the human soul—and this’s one of them.”⁵ Such a declaration gives a sense, at least, of how important the newspaper had deemed the result of the contest. Yet once again, the operative account begins with the simple beauty of a summer’s day along the coast of Maine: “The day was fair and soft and sweet. A gray morning burned off into a sparkling noon and at 1 P.M., the sea began to be dotted with crafts bound for Squirrel. Nothing prettier can be fancied as a prelude to the game—the puffing motor boats; the white winged sail boats; the big launches covered from stern to stern with girls and boys in white against the background of the sparkling sea.” The reporter’s description suggests that this baseball game was an important part of the 1906 vacation experience in this developed tourist town, just like going for a sail. Nonetheless, the drama of the athletic competition dominates this front-page story of the *Boothbay Register*.

Boothbay Harbor began in the same fashion as Squirrel had in the first contest, scoring two runs in the top half of the first inning. Leadoff man Daniel Mahoney stretched a single into a double on a ball-handling mistake by the Squirrel left fielder, Grant. After an out and another error, Boothbay Harbor had runners on the corners when W. Sherry “pounded” out a hit, scoring Mahoney, at which the Boothbay cheers began: “They certainly are good rooters. Voices that have hailed the Ships that Pass in the Night boomed out their hoorays.” Boothbay managed another base hit that scored Sherry, and the half-inning ended with the Harbor ahead two to zero. The cheers continued for the visiting spectators, as “a patent fog horn wailed and roared and wailed and persisted in wailing until it made your nerves protest in torment.” The success of the first inning proved to foreshadow the game’s final result.

After Squirrel’s opening hitters went down in order in the bottom half of the first

⁵ “Boothbay Harbor Sweeps Them, 5 To 0,” *Boothbay Register*, 4 Aug. 1906, 1.

inning, Boothbay returned to the plate for more. Unhappy with Maxcy's pitching in the first inning, Squirrel replaced him with Pratt, though he experienced no greater success: "McLaughlin rammed one into Judd, too hot for him to hold. Sherry flied out to Weinz and then an error by Pratt and two singles completed the slaughter of the innocents." The Boothbay manager, John McCarty, ridiculed the Squirrel pitcher by suggesting his status as a Yale graduate would not cut it in the Harbor. In the end, Boothbay managed two more runs in the second inning, increasing their lead to four-zero: "When this inning was over the fog-horn blew so loud and long that the musical temperament of Squirrel was shattered and the umpire had to go over and request that the Boothbay band of music cease." Boothbay would continue to celebrate all day.

Squirrel Island struggled at the plate, and their frustrations boiled over at the inability to safely reach base. Ted Stanwood struck out in the sixth inning during his second at-bat and "slammed the bat so that it had to be dug out of the ground." Boothbay Harbor owed much of its success to the superior "twirling" of Arthur Bean, the team's pitcher who credited his success to his lucky trousers, nicknamed "Kismet," a superstition supported by the newspaper reporter: "Roosevelt couldn't carry a town meeting against those pants. Napoleon Lajoie⁶ couldn't make a base hit against 'em." In the end, the Islanders managed only one hit against Bean, resulting in considerable ridicule from their home fans: "Squirrel hit like a team of the oldest residents of the home for Aged Females." Boothbay Harbor added another run in the ninth inning and emerged victorious, five to zero.

The *Lewiston Evening Journal* reporter noted the embarrassment of the Squirrel Island squad: "Boothbay Harbor has been over here and, in the presence of the populace, has taken the Squirrel nose and rubbed it in the dust. To-night, the legend '5 to 0' is chalked in huge

⁶ Lajoie was a leading Major League player from 1896 to 1916.

letters on the sidewalks from South shore to Squirrel Inn—in defiant challenge to the enormous 4 to 1 that for three days has adorned the roof of the Squirrel Island Post Office.” Bean’s magical pitching and his resultant one-hitter had made him the hero of the game and the idol of the Harbor fans, but the entire team would benefit from their rousing victory: “the Harborites gathered about the team and amid an excess of generosity swore by all the gods of the Harbor that any player on the team could have anything he wanted in Boothbay for nothing. And so I suppose it was a night of joy and feasting at the Harbor, Saturday in all the restaurants and owl wagons.” The victory, of course, had tied the series at one game apiece with six games to play in this rivalry that had come to define the socio-economic and class divides of the region. The newspaper reporter’s words demonstrate the significance of the outcome of these games to the region’s people: “All this may seem trivial to you—but if you were here you would know that nothing since Columbus landed compares in importance to who wins this series of eight games. [...] The two teams meet again Wednesday. It will be a battle for blood.”⁷

In considering the 1906 edition of the baseball rivalry between Boothbay Harbor and Squirrel Island, we see an important cultural institution that helped define and retain the community’s division between natives and tourists. The coverage provided of the games by the local and state newspapers demonstrates a number of significant developments in the place of baseball within the region, however. Whereas the two teams had met only once in 1902, their full eight game series in 1906 shows that baseball had become an important part of life for residents, year-round and summer, in Boothbay Harbor and on Squirrel Island. Baseball had become more than just a game, and its organizers recognized this. Like so much of the summer vacation experience along the Maine coast, baseball became a marketable

⁷ “Boothbay Rubs It In,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 30 July 1906, 7.

commodity to sell and a spectacular attraction to help draw more people to Boothbay Harbor. And with the game's rise as a commercial spectacle, the behavior of spectators at local contests challenged progressive era assumptions about its capacity for maintaining social order.

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In Boothbay Harbor, baseball had changed between 1902 and 1906. In the previous chapter, we witnessed the rise of a rivalry between the local team and its primary summer colony opponent, and saw how this game could shape the identities of people in the region. In 1902, baseball had offered a unique opportunity for year-round residents and summer colonists to see themselves in these terms and help define what it meant to be a local and a tourist. Then, locals and tourists actually faced off against one another on the diamond. But in the years that followed, the business of baseball spread to the Boothbay region. By 1906, the game was no longer merely an athletic contest, but an opportunity for local businessmen to increase their profits. Regional baseball became a commodity, and the most valuable games of all featured the imaginary showdown between natives and tourists, Boothbay Harbor versus Squirrel Island. This change had enormous implications for baseball in Boothbay: the players and schedule changed, all shifting baseball to a more spectator-driven game which fit the needs of local business leaders who could profit from the game.

Baseball had been a business in the United States long before 1906, when it had clearly emerged as such in Boothbay Harbor. In U.S. urban centers, notably New York, it had become common to invite the general public to games as early as 1860. All were welcome, so long as they could pay the admission price. In 1876, the foundation of the National League, designed with rules that restricted competition between clubs for certain players and clauses to prevent multiple teams within the same market area, ushered in an era of professional

baseball designed to maximize the profitability of teams. Though it took decades for the National League to reach a point of stable player-club relations, its initial founding principles served as a model for professional, profitable athletics well into the twentieth century. Of course, the National League and its followers, including the American League and failed Federal League, quickly turned into fully professional organizations where players relied upon their salaries for livelihood. Given an increasing leisure class with time and money to spend on entertainment, the business of athletics became an American institution just as other leisure opportunities, including the vacation, grew in profitability.⁸

But while national level baseball organizations grew in popularity and profitability, semi-professional baseball teams, where players often earned small amounts of money for playing baseball to supplement their primary economic activities, were equally if not more prevalent. It was also common for university baseball players to earn money as athletes during the summer, as would become the standard for the Boothbay Harbor team. One study of semi-professional baseball on the scale similar to that in Boothbay Harbor is provided by historian Jessie L. Embry and is focused thousands of miles away in Provo, Utah. In Provo, a city with fewer than ten thousand inhabitants, baseball offered the chance for citizens to unite: “Provo businessmen and the city government [...] used baseball to encourage sports and to provide a sense of community, a ‘shop at home’ attitude.”⁹ Provo’s chamber of commerce, along with a number of its member businessmen, organized the team in the first decade of the 1900s to compete against other teams in the Utah County Baseball League. Provo businessmen believed that the team delivered “recreation” that “helped their employees work harder and encouraged residents to shop at their stores when they were

⁸ Benjamin Rader, *American Sports: From the Age of Folk Games to the Age of Spectators* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 111-119.

⁹ Jessie L. Embry, “‘The Biggest Advertisement for a Town’: Provo Baseball and the Provo Times, 1913-1958,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 71 No. 3 (Summer 2003): 198.

open.”¹⁰ Thus, in Provo, baseball came to exist on a semi-professional level to offer local businesses a boost by building a sense of community in the city, while also allowing spectators to see the support local businesses gave to their newfound favorite game and entertainment. For Provo, baseball was the “biggest advertisement for a town.”

The development of baseball in Boothbay Harbor from a local team sport to a commercial spectacle began with a similar set of actions. In 1904, local businessmen and other “prominent citizens,” according to the *Boothbay Register*, formed the Boothbay Harbor Baseball Association, promising to create a “gentlemanly and orderly” semi-professional team that would offer the “best baseball this part of the state.”¹¹ These businessmen surely saw their support of the local team as an opportunity to garner additional profits in the same way that Provo’s leaders had. The difference between Boothbay Harbor, Maine, and Provo, Utah in the early twentieth century, of course, is that while Provo’s economy was driven largely by industrial production, Boothbay Harbor had blossomed as a tourist destination in addition to its more traditional economic connections to the sea. For Boothbay Harbor’s businessmen, baseball could serve as an important means for bringing greater attention, and ultimately tourists, to the region.

One such promoter was local businessman Charles Jones “C. J.” Marr, the baseball association’s treasurer and the son of Thomas Marr, Jr., who had moved from Bath to Southport in 1841 to become the manager of a general trade and bank fishing company. C.J. Marr, born in 1857, continued his father’s legacy as a general tradesman in Boothbay Harbor, witnessing firsthand the massive shifts in the local economy of the region articulated in Chapter One. Marr first opened a clothing company in Boothbay Harbor in 1884 and held several primary business partners in the years to follow. By 1900, Marr’s business offered

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 25 June 1904, 3; “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 2 July 1904, 3.

boots and shoes, as well as the latest fashions in shirts, hats, ties, and the like. Marr's business had surely benefited from economic growth that Boothbay Harbor had experienced, as well as from the influx of tourists during the summer months. His stature as a leading businessman had also granted Marr political power in the town, and he served as town selectman from 1891 to 1898, and then as a customs inspector from 1898 to 1925. But Marr's interest in baseball—he would serve as the club's lead organizer—was at least partly to increase his profits.¹²

Marr's promise to "bring the best baseball this part of the state" meant making several significant changes to the way baseball was organized and played in the town. This began with the formal creation of the baseball association in 1904, an organization that had become profitable enough to pay taxes to the town beginning in 1906.¹³ But offering a marketable spectacle included improvements to the stadium, as well, and in 1904 the *Boothbay Register* reported that the "South End grounds are to be newly laid out and put in first class condition."¹⁴ The *Lewiston Evening Journal's* description of the Boothbay Harbor "pretty little ball-grounds" also suggest that Marr and his business partners had been dedicated to physical improvements that would make visitors remember the class and professionalism of baseball in Boothbay Harbor, perhaps ensuring a return visit or word-of-mouth advertisement:

Everything is done au fait in Boothbay Harbor. They have two umpires—both fat—a big display score-board presided over by an artist in Zeros, a centre field fence just close enough to be allowing just distance enough to be alluring, [...] a grandstand under a spreading oak and an accommodating granite cliff inside the grounds back of first base on which you may lie at ease and overlook the Olympian games. And

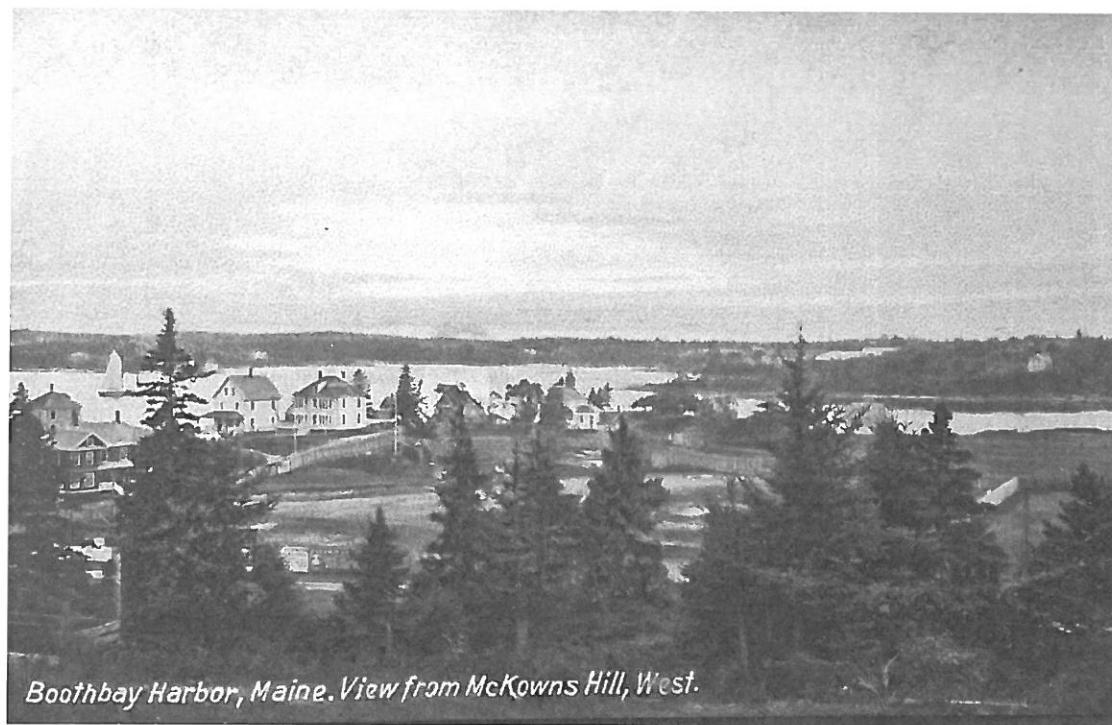
¹² "Home Happening," *Boothbay Register*, 2 July 1904, 3; Francis B. Greene, *History of Boothbay, Southport, and Boothbay Harbor, Maine: 1623-1905* (Portland, ME: Loring, Short, and Harmon, 1906), 584; Barbara Rumsey, "The History of Janson's Clothing," *Janson's Clothing*, <http://www.jansonsclothing.net/About-Us.html>.

¹³ Assessor's Report," *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Town Offices of the Town of Boothbay Harbor, Maine* (Boothbay Harbor, Maine: Register Book and Job, 1907), Boothbay Region Historical Society.

¹⁴ "Home Happenings," *Boothbay Register*, 25 June 1904, 3.

you get all of this for a quarter—sea, sky, sunshine, victory—all for a mere pittance.¹⁵

The beauty with which the newspaper describes the grounds suggests that the baseball club ownership had gone to considerable trouble to ensure a pleasant, “au fait” experience. Investments to the grounds, however, were only the beginning of the changes to baseball in the region.



Boothbay Harbor, Maine. View from McKowns Hill, West.
*Postcard View of Boothbay Harbor Baseball Field; West Harbor Behind*¹⁶

The organization of the Boothbay Harbor Baseball Association also meant ensuring that the players who took the field would offer memorable and, if possible, spectacular performances. Offering the best baseball in Maine would mean no longer relying upon local players, as the team had in 1902. Slowly, starting in 1904, the Boothbay Harbor team combined local talent with semi-professional players farmed out from elsewhere. In the end, the 1906 Boothbay Harbor team would not field a single player who actually hailed from the

¹⁵ “Squirrels and the Harborites,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 26 July 1906, 12.

¹⁶ “Boothbay Harbor, Maine. View from McKowns Hill, West” Photograph, BHP117, File 9, Boothbay Region Historical Society.

town. Despite donning the town uniform, and continuing to earn the title of “our boys” in the local paper, the team was a semi-professional organization that employed the best talent it could find for the summer. Of the team’s regular starting nine, only three came from Maine: J.D. McCarthy and Dannie Mahoney from Lewiston, and Arthur Bean, the pitcher with magic pants, from Wiscasset. The remaining six came from Massachusetts, all from towns in the immediate vicinity of Boston, including Cambridge, Winthrop, Somerville, and Lynn. The change in who played for the Boothbay Harbor team also meant a drastic shift in the dynamic of the game. While Squirrel’s team remained largely the same, representing the wealthy island population and their guests, Boothbay Harbor’s team shifted from a 1902 gang of locals to a 1906 team that, demographically, more closely resembled their Squirrel opponents. The organization of the Baseball Association in 1904 included bringing in Bowdoin graduate Weston Hilton to serve as the team’s manager. Hilton was gone by 1906, but many of the team’s players were, in fact, college students. W. Sherry of Somerville and C.B. McLaughlin of Roxbury both planned to enter Dartmouth that fall, A.M. Sweeney planned to enter Harvard, and H.C. McArdle and W.C. “Chick” Connelly were both headed to Tufts. When the team arrived in early July, 1906, the *Boothbay Register* reported that the team’s players had moved into the Merry block on the east side of the harbor and were “enjoying life in a bachelor way.”¹⁷ The Boothbay Harbor team was now stacked with college-bound, upper-middle class players.¹⁸

The end of the “native versus tourist” dynamic that had defined earlier contests between Boothbay Harbor and Squirrel Island might seem to signal the end of local support for the local team. It’s impossible to know, based upon the available evidence, who actually attended the local team’s games and the extent to which these spectators were “natives.” The

¹⁷ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 14 July 1906, 3.

¹⁸ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 1 Sept. 1906, 3.

Boothbay Register, at least, continued to refer to the team as “Our Boys” throughout its reports in the summer of 1906, and its reports suggest that the local population had, indeed, embraced the team as its own. Near the conclusion of the summer, the team performed a minstrel show and dance at the Opera House in town, an event that “was a very successful affair and greeted by a large audience.” The paper reported that many local young people enjoyed the dance in support of the team. In the same issue, the *Boothbay Register* reported the thanks of the team for the support they received from the town: “As the ball boys say, ‘the town is small, but the people very loyal.’”¹⁹ This available evidence suggests that, though the players were no longer locals themselves, they still held the mandate of the town when they took the field twice per week, and in this way, games retained the symbolic conflict of “native versus tourist.”

Such a dynamic must have been especially popular for spectators, for in addition to the physical improvements made to the ballpark and the inclusion of semi-professional players, the Boothbay Harbor team’s 1906 schedule was drastically different than it had been in 1902. As we saw in Chapter Two, the team’s opponents were generally other town teams in Maine, including Wiscasset, Bath, Brunswick, and Rockland, in addition to the lone game against Squirrel Island. In 1906, the team’s management capitalized on the popularity of the rivalry with Squirrel. Of the nineteen games the team played, nine of them, nearly half, were against Squirrel Island (eight were a part of the official series between the teams). The most Boothbay Harbor played any other team was twice (against Auburn and Lewiston, both).²⁰ Such scheduling choices demonstrate that in the drive to offer the most intriguing entertainment to spectators, and thereby reap the economic side effects, the added weight of the “native versus tourist” rivalry reigned supreme. In short, baseball had become a

¹⁹ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 25 Aug. 1906, 3.

²⁰ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 1 Sept. 1906, 3.

commodity in Boothbay Harbor. The Boothbay Harbor-Squirrel Island game was the most valuable commodity of all.

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With the series tied at one game apiece, baseball lovers in the region waited with bated breath for games three and four. Both the *Boothbay Register* and *Lewiston Evening Journal* had reported that game three, to be played on Wednesday, August 1st, would be a “battle for blood.” The newspaper reporting continued to give readers the sense that the games were somehow bigger than baseball; it was obvious to the papers that these games were representative of the larger social divisions of the Boothbay region.

Played on Squirrel Island on August 1st, game three was perhaps the most competitive and exciting game of the entire series. The *Lewiston Evening Journal* called it “the hottest reproduction of the Boer War, that has occurred since the Indians were driven off Linnekin’s Neck.” It’s tempting to think that the writer may have been referring to a battle between summer colonists and native Mainers. The game began again to perfect weather, just what tourists and leisure seekers had come to hope for from summer along the Maine coast, and the crowd was the largest the rivalry had seen yet that summer: “It was a perfect picture along the slopes of the campus with the gay gowns of the ladies contrasting with the vivid green of the smooth-cut lawn.”²¹ Squirrel Island sent a Harvard pitcher, Stevenson, to face the Boothbay battery, while Boothbay sent Arthur Bean to the mound, or box as it’s frequently called in period reports, hoping he could repeat his success from game two. It was uncommon for teams to carry more than one pitcher in the early twentieth century, and Boothbay Harbor’s man was Bean. Both pitchers performed in the first inning, and the score remained zero-zero.

²¹ “Harborites vs. The Squirrels,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 2 Aug. 1906, 10.

The second inning provided the Harbor team with three runs, the result of hitting and defensive mistakes by the Squirrels. Bean, Warner, and McArdle all scored in the inning, the best hit coming from the Harbor's pitcher, a ground-rule double that got lost in the bushes. Two men scored on an overthrow to first base off of a Mahoney grounder, and a Boothbay fan blared a foghorn loudly in celebration, causing a controversial disturbance around Squirrel Island. The athletic highlight of the second inning may have come in the bottom half, however, when the Squirrel team attempted to climb out of the three run lead they had allowed. Squirrel's Maxcy hit a long double that "ran like a candidate for Congress." The islanders hoped for a two-out rally as Judd came to bat, and it seemed that they had it when he hit a screaming line drive to center field: "A hit! A hit!" shouted the crowd." But the Harbor center fielder A.M. Sweeney had other ideas: "Running like a deer, he sped for the ball, taking it less than three inches from the ground on the dead run and falling prone on his face clinging to the sphere." Sweeney's brilliant athleticism ended the inning and prevented a run from scoring. Squirrel did manage a single run in the third inning, making the score three-one in favor of the Harbor, where it remained until the final innings of the game.²²

Boothbay Harbor managed one run each in the eighth and ninth innings, both a result of careful Boothbay base running by manager McCarty and Squirrel throwing errors. Headed into the bottom of the ninth, Squirrel trailed five to one and "little counted how much those two runs by McCarty were to cost her." After a leadoff double and a bunt single followed by a throwing error led to a Squirrel run, their fans came to life, chanting, "What's the matter! You just bet, Squirrel! Squirrel will get there yet!" More throwing errors plagued the Harbor's defense, which, combined with a couple of Squirrel hits, led to a five-four

²² Ibid.

game. After a strikeout and grounder that led to a tag play at the plate, Squirrel was left down by one with two outs and a man on third base. It was the type of situation that children dream of while taking batting practice or playing whiffle ball today.

Squirrel's batter was George McClintock, the very same man who had played for the Boothbay Harbor team in 1902. Playing baseball for Squirrel was a symbolically meaningful act for McClintock. He came from one of the wealthiest families in town, as I discussed in Chapter Two, and had gone on to college. During the summer of 1906, McClintock worked as a clerk on Squirrel Island, clearly having established connections with the island's wealthy summer residents. McClintock's participation on his new team could have demonstrated his identification with the leisure class residents of the island more than the diverse, primarily working class population of Boothbay Harbor. For the fans in attendance who knew his story, McClintock's climactic ninth inning at bat was all the more dramatic. Squirrel was confident in him at that moment, given he was two-for-three on the day so far. "One strike! one ball! a foul! two strikes" wrote the *Lewiston Evening Journal* reporter. "Two balls! And then McClintock waved at the third strike and the ball nestled in McCarty's glove." Boothbay Harbor had won, five to four. The foghorn blared loudly. The Harborites now led the summer series two games to one.²³

Game four, played on Saturday, August 4th, was Squirrel's opportunity to even the series. Unlike the previous three games, this one was to be played in a relatively dense fog on the Boothbay Harbor's Southend grounds. The *Boothbay Register* called it a "snappy game" in which "every man on both teams played ball," though it proved to be somewhat less exciting than those that preceded it, as what unfolded was a true pitchers' duel unlike most baseball

²³ Ibid.

games of the time.²⁴ The combined batteries of both teams only managed a total of seven hits, two for Boothbay Harbor and five for Squirrel. If hits were all that mattered, Squirrel would have won and even the series. But a combination of timely hitting and an interesting home field rule kept the Harbor in the game.

With two outs in the first inning, the visiting Squirrels seemed to have struck first. After Weinz reached first on an infield hit, De Wolfe swung hard at the second pitch he saw from Arthur Bean. ““Cr-r-rack! Smash!” The ball was met fair in the middle and away it sailed for Pemaquid Point,” reported the *Lewiston Evening Journal* reporter. “Such a hit has rarely been seen on the grounds. It cleared the fence by fifty feet.” Today, such a hit would have been celebrated as a home run, an automatic four-bagger that would have given Squirrel a two-run lead, given the runner on first. But as the Squirrel runners were digging as fast as they could around the bases, the Boothbay captain, Jack McCarty, stepped onto the field proclaiming the hit a double, citing a new ground rule. With the umpire’s agreement, Weinz held at third and De Wolfe at second. The *Lewiston Evening Journal’s* bias on the matter was clear in his report, proclaiming that “the longest hit of the season, good for a home run on any grounds in the United States, went for nothing.”²⁵ Squirrel’s next batter struck out, and the score remained zero-zero until the bottom half of the third inning.

Again, Squirrel’s fielding proved its demise. A routine fly ball hit by Daniel Mahoney led to trouble for Squirrel’s Miller, who ran for the fly ball “like a motor boat with an overdose of gasoline - only he runs the wrong way!” After the ball fell for a hit allowing Mahoney to reach base and a base on balls put a second Boothbay man on, the team’s substitute right fielder, Jacobs, hit a deep fly ball that cleared the bases and gave Boothbay a two-run lead. The jubilation of the home Boothbay crowd suggests their devotion to the

²⁴ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 11 Aug. 1906, 3.

²⁵ “Harborites 2, Squirrels 0,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 6 Aug. 1906, 7.

team:

You ought to have been there. Talk about symphonic poems in G flat. Talk about fog-horn choruses in the key of Salt C. Talk about sounds that could sour milk in East Boothbay! Why, the noise that went up shook the surrounding country until the eleven people left at home on Squirrel ran to the doors thinking it an earthquake. The horn-chorus ripped out such a discord that even Boothbay Harbor plugged its ears with sea weed. For two minutes the four hundred were eleven thousand, all singing the Hallelujah chorus. They roared and thundered so that there was a tidal wave at Bayville that swept Ab Lewis's motor boat into the kelp and made cute little Nellie G. stand on her hind legs and whistle "Life on the Ocean Wave."

The melodrama of the newspaper's report seems all too obvious, yet Boothbay's fans clearly cared deeply about the success of the team.²⁶

It was all the celebrating the Boothbay fans would do, for their team did not earn another hit for the rest of the contest. Instead, they were left anxious as Squirrel reached base in several later innings, only to cheer as Arthur Bean pitched his way out of the jams he put himself in. In the seventh inning, thick fog rolled in and by the eighth, rain had followed, at which time the umpire called the game, sending Squirrel and their fans to their boats for a the soggy trip home, the Squirrel team "dripping in their fur, their tails way, way down." They now trailed the series three games to one.²⁷

* * *

The "epic" reports of the 1906 games between Boothbay Harbor and Squirrel Island teams, meant to entertain readers at home, are an important illustration of baseball's shift from a pure athletic contest to an entertainment business, a transition long since underway on the national level, but one that found its way to small Boothbay Harbor in the first decade of the 1900s. Baseball was no longer merely a game; it was an important commodity in the Boothbay region and around the country. The changes to baseball noted above

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

demonstrate this commercialization of the game, a shift only possible with widespread fan support. The dedication to the experience of fans at home and in the stands, driven by the desire for profits, shows that the spectator, as well as the player, had become central to the game.

The commodification of the athletic contest of baseball began in the nineteenth century, as noted above. Historian Benjamin Rader argues that baseball games became a commercial spectacle the moment that teams from competing social clubs challenged one another. That is, as soon as opponents from different clubs, as opposed to within the same club, faced off, the opportunity for spectator involvement presented itself. Indeed, baseball had developed as a business as early as the late 1860s, though at the time individuals in the stands were solidly members of the middle and upper middle classes, the elites discussed in Chapter Two. But while the National League formed and grew in the final decades of the nineteenth century, baseball spectatorship was inconsistent before 1900 and only rose significantly across the United States in the first decade of the twentieth century. Whereas professional National League teams could expect at most a few thousand fans in the 1890s (the New York Giants led the NL with an average of 2,500 fans per game in 1894), these numbers more than doubled in many American cities during the 1900s. Total spectatorship of the National League rose from 3.6 million in 1901 to 7 million in 1908. Minor league attendance increased at an even greater rate.²⁸ Thus the commercialization of baseball in Boothbay Harbor coincided with the rise in spectatorship at the national level, one that also signified a broadening of the fan base to include both the middle and working classes.

Baseball performed a specific social function for those who came as spectators,

²⁸ Benjamin G. Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 2002), 20-30; Steven A. Riess, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1980), 14-15.

which helps explain why so many filled the stands. Promoters of the game regularly focused on the distinct American-ness of baseball, an intentional attempt to woo middle class spectators and working classes alike through community-based values. Rader writes: “One of the sport’s most potent myths was the notion that the game was solely of American origins. Such a myth appealed strongly to nationalistic sentiments.”²⁹ This phenomenon, discussed in Chapter Two as it related to players of the game, was surely also a part of the lure for spectators, and fans flocked to games across the country as an expression of national pride.

National baseball greats like A.G. Spalding, discussed in Chapter Two as an important founder of the National League and one of the game’s early stars, propagated this nationalist myth, most directly in his 1911 book *America’s National Game*. But he also noted that baseball spectators enjoyed participating for reasons closer to home. Spalding argued that spectators had become no less a part of a baseball game than the players themselves: “In every town, village, and city is the local wag. He is a Base Ball fan from infancy. He knows every player in the league by sight and by name.”³⁰ His claim that baseball was a truly democratic sport, in line with American values, rested on the ability of all to participate - if not players, individuals could follow the game as fans and spectators, tracking individual and team statistics and cheering against opposing teams. The role of the “The Rooter,” as Spalding referred to spectators, was clearly defined by the early 1900s: “He is ever present in large numbers. He is there to see the ‘boys’ win. Nothing else will satisfy him. [...] His sole object in life for two mortal hours is to gain victory for the home team, and that he is not overscrupulous as to the amount of racket emanating from his immediate vicinity need not

²⁹ Rader, *American Sports*, 127.

³⁰ Albert Goodwill Spalding, *America’s National Game* (New York: American Sports Publishing Company, 1911), 11.

be emphasized here.”³¹ By 1906 in Boothbay Harbor, such diehard fans, as we might call them today, had come to be just as important an aspect of the experience of baseball in the region as the game itself. Spalding concluded that the fans present at any one baseball contest could hope to be “a factor nearly as potent as are the efforts of the contesting players.”³² Baseball thus served spectators both through nationalist myth and desire to identify with the local community.

Supporting the local team, regardless of whether the players were locals themselves, contributed to an individual’s own identity: pride in the local squad translated to pride in the place itself. Fans could therefore be expected to develop a certain emotional attachment to their home team. This pathos is embodied in the words of the famous baseball poem, “Casey at the Bat,” penned in 1888 by Ernest L. Thayer, sportswriter for the San Francisco *Examiner*. Losing four-to-two with two outs in the game’s final inning, the fans of Mudville’s baseball nine invest their hopes in Casey, who must get a hit in order to extend the game. A home run would win it. “From five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell,” as Casey approaches the batter’s box. Casey lets two strikes cross the plate as the angry fans bemoan what they perceive as a the umpire’s terrible eye: “Kill him! Kill the umpire!” shouted someone on the stand.” The crowd’s emotions and pride in Mudville rest on Casey’s shoulders as the third pitch crosses the plate:

Oh somewhere in this favoured land the sun is shining bright,
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light;
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout,
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty Casey has struck out.³³

Mudville, like Provo, Utah, or Boothbay Harbor, Maine, put its local pride in the fate of its

³¹ Ibid, 13.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ernest Lawrence Thayer, “Casey at the Bat,” *American Academy of Poets*, accessed 12 Oct. 2014, <http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/casey-bat>.

baseball team. And when its star player strikes out, there can be “no joy.” Observing the spectacular reports of the games, we can imagine fans quite similar to those in Mudville. We can picture George McClintock batting with two outs in the ninth inning of game three, and all his Squirrel Island supporters tensely on their seats. And having lost game four, returning home to Squirrel Island with “wet tails,” we can imagine that the entire island may have felt at least a little glum. This emotional attachment to the game, something spectators and teams experienced across the country, helps explain the growth of the baseball business noted above.

In American communities from Maine to California, cheering on the local team allowed the individual to identify with a certain community or segment of the community. Riess writes that baseball offered spectators an opportunity for “community integration because it instilled civic pride in the hearts of fans.”³⁴ Such community-driven support for teams was a part of the reason for the rise of baseball in Provo, Utah, discussed above: it unified community members by providing something concrete, a baseball team, for all to stand behind in opposition to other places. For cities and towns, the success of the baseball team “was regarded by people as a reliable index to a town’s status.”³⁵ In this way, spectators cheered for their local team because it helped develop their own local pride and contributed to their own sense of identity. This was especially true for fans of the game in Boothbay Harbor: baseball served an important function in helping create simplified identities of natives and tourists, us and them, for all people in Boothbay Harbor during the summer months.³⁶ As games rose in prominence and attendance rose, these competing identities became ever more important: where one stood and the team one supported served to define

³⁴ Riess, *Touching Base*, 18.

³⁵ Ibid, 19.

³⁶ See Chapter Two.

each individual.



*Spectators enjoy a game of baseball on Squirrel Island, circa 1900*³⁷

It makes sense that the Boothbay Harbor-Squirrel Island baseball games became the center of the schedule for both teams in the summer of 1906. Essentially, the battle between these two teams was at the center of the local promoters' business plan. Organizers knew that pitting these teams against one another and promoting the game through a symbolic "natives versus tourists" narrative would engage the identities and pride of each group of fans. This would ensure lively, well-attended, profitable games, while reaping additional economic benefits for the community. The flair with which supporters of both games cheered on their teams is one of the centerpieces of the newspaper reports. At the taste of victory in game one, the Squirrel fans erupted, a yell that disturbed "the summer silences."³⁸ In the following three games, it was the Harbor's turn to celebrate through blaring foghorns and chants. Remember that the game two *Lewiston Evening Journal* report had included the following note: "They certainly are good rooters. Voices that have hailed the Ships that Pass

³⁷ "Spectators, Squirrel Island, Circa 1900," Photograph, Squirrel Island Historical Society.

³⁸ "Squirrels and the Harborites," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 26 July 1906, 12.

in the Night boomed out their hoorays.”³⁹ Mentions of the devotion that fans showed their teams continued in the reports of games five and six.

* * * *

Trailing three games to one, Squirrel Island knew that they needed to put together a run of successive wins to have a chance at winning the 8-game contest, and losing game five could well mean the end of the series for the team. Perhaps realizing how effective Boothbay Harbor’s season-long employment of semi-professional players had become, Squirrel sought some help from off of the island as well, bringing in a pitcher, Merrill, from Portland. His efforts proved to be important to the outcome of the game. “The day was perfect for baseball,” reported the *Lewiston Evening Journal* on its front page, “and the crowd was the biggest of the season. Everybody was there from all over the surrounding county.”⁴⁰ If true, on Tuesday, August 7th close to one thousand fans saw Squirrel come one game closer to bringing the series even on their home island field.

Both teams competed well, according to the reporter, Boothbay playing its standard semi-professional ball, “snappy, lively, and full of ginger.” Squirrel, however, played “hot stuff from soup to nut” and proved the better team. Merrill’s pitching proved important, for he allowed only two hits in the nine-inning contest, while Squirrel racked up nine hits against Boothbay’s substitute pitcher, Kenniston of Augusta. Squirrel had been beaten despite being outhit before, but made sure not to allow it in game five. Both teams managed one run in the first inning, which engaged “tremendous cheering” from the crowds. When Boothbay scored again in the fourth inning to take a two-one lead, “most vocal elements of the harbor”⁴¹ erupted in support of the team, thinking perhaps it would be enough.

³⁹ “Boothbay Rubs It In,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 30 July 1906, 7.

⁴⁰ “Squirrel Victory Over the Harbor,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 8 Aug. 1906, 1.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Unfortunately for the Harbor visitors, it would be the last run they would score, and would be forced to see many Squirrels cross the plate.

Boothbay Harbor's undoing came in the bottom half of the fourth inning, when a series of throwing errors cost the team the lead. With the bases loaded, Squirrel's Warner hit a ground ball to the first baseman and Boothbay Harbor captain Jack McCarthy who "instead of tagging his man, as he should have done," tried to prevent a run from scoring by throwing home. His throw was low, allowing one run to score and no outs to be recorded. On the very next play, another groundball in the infield led to a "fatal throw" to first that sailed over McCarthy's glove so that "while the enthusiastic Harborite rooters were eating their hearts out in despair, the Squirrel's were climbing for home."⁴² By the end of the fourth inning, Squirrel had scored three runs and led four-to-two.

Squirrel added two more runs in the fifth inning and another run late in the game, winning by a final score of seven-to-two. The dedicated home fans wasted no time in celebrating; their support of the team had helped achieve the victory: "The chapel bell rang forth its merriest notes here Tuesday afternoon, for the second victory of Squirrel over its redoubtable foes upon the baseball field." Even Boothbay Harbor's captain Jack McCarthy enjoyed the celebration, saying, "It's almost worth the licking to see how happy these Squirrels can be." It was Boothbay Harbor's turn to be Mudville while Squirrel celebrated and prepared for the next game. "As a result of the victory the Squirrel management say that they propose to have a stronger and stronger team and to fight out the series to a finish and that if a professional team is required to turn the trick they propose to stand behind it," reported the *Lewiston Evening Journal*. "Squirrel Island means to have a ball team if it has to

⁴² Ibid.

bust the athletic association's bank."⁴³ Evidently, the taste of a second victory and the joy it brought to the local fans had led the Squirrels to consider bringing in more paid professionals.

Game six was played on August 11th, a Saturday and the day when all the Boothbay Harbor home games were played; this was also likely a calculated decision to draw the widest audience of spectators to the games. Having won the previous game, "Squirrel went into it with the chests sticking out like the back of a touring car."⁴⁴ It was not the beautiful summer's day that previous games had featured: "You never saw such a day as this was—for the fog hung over the grounds so thickly that you could hardly see the Stanwood family in the field." But despite the weather, the home team's supporters were present in full force, a full illustration of the growth of baseball's popularity as a spectator sport:

the crowd was immense—for Boothbay Harbor—a crowd of summer gowns, tiered up on the little side hill like a section of the Cambridge stadium or sprawling out over the grass like a summer picnic. And it was a vehement crowd as well—especially the Boothbay Harbor section; for when it comes to yelling, some of those B.H. rooters have got the hyena's cage of the Barnum show trimmed to a standstill and can make the riveting-room a boiler-factory seem like a Sabbath morning in the village church-yard of the peaceful little hamlet of Jay.⁴⁵

Such a crowd would be pleased with the result, for by the end of the day, the Squirrel supporters would go home a "mournful party" and its players "came out of it with a depression where their chestiness had existed big enough to hold a five master."

Boothbay Harbor won the game six-to-zero, a direct response to the loss earlier in the week and a victory that ensured they would at least tie the summer series, now leading four games-to-two. Squirrel lost the game in the third inning. With the bases loaded, Boothbay Harbor's W. Sherry hit a screaming line drive over Fred Stanwood's head in center

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ "The Harbor Wins the Sixth Game," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 13 Aug. 1906, 7.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

field, “a line drive to the fence that leaped and chased itself all over the backfield until three runs had covered the rubber and the game was practically won.”⁴⁶ Boothbay Harbor scored two more runs in the third and one in the fourth, resulting in the six-zero score that would hold.

With a four games to two lead in the series, the *Lewiston Evening Journal* called the Boothbay Harbor team the “most admired thing on the coast.”⁴⁷ In a region renowned for its natural beauty and touristic appeal for vacationers, the success of its baseball team, the result of widespread support and calculated business decisions, might just have become the biggest draw to the town in 1906.

* * * * *

Baseball’s rise as a business and spectacle in Boothbay Harbor posed unique challenges in a region divided by competing identities grounded in socio-economic and class differences. As we saw in Chapter Two, baseball’s roots were originally in the middle and upper-middle classes; playing ball was an assertion of leisure class status. As the nineteenth century waned, of course, organized baseball opened participation to individuals from wider backgrounds. By the early 1900s, the organized games in Boothbay Harbor represented these different approaches to the game. But as baseball in the region became just as much spectacle as sport, involving the participation of hundreds of “rooters,” the different approaches to the game became confrontations about its nature and purpose. Progressive Era reformers, generally members of the middle and upper-middle classes themselves, continued to believe that baseball could be used to maintain order and instill gentlemanly values in players and spectators alike. As mass spectacles sprouted around the country for working class audiences with newfound leisure time of their own, including baseball, the

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

progressive ideal seemed to crumble. What was baseball in Boothbay Harbor to be: progressive gentlemanly sport, or riotous debauchery? The debate of this question was firmly on display in the region.

As historian Steven A. Riess reminds us, “Baseball was primarily a middle-class sport from its earliest days.”⁴⁸ Though one of the mythical notions of the game was that it could attract all audiences and allow for diverse members of American society to mingle, the reality was that spectators of baseball games were primarily agents of the middle class. By members of this class, Riess writes, “Professional baseball was welcomed as a moral, healthful recreation which promoted order and civic pride and provided wholesome relaxation for hard-working men.”⁴⁹ Young men and teens were meant to become better people themselves by observing the hard work, ordered conduct, and teamwork of baseball players and professionals. A number of steps were taken to ensure that baseball retained this reputation, including inviting clergymen to games and ensuring the presence of women in stadiums. Riess reports that “Clergymen were given season passes in nearly every town” in an effort to lend respectability to the game. Meanwhile, women in the stands “were expected to enhance business by improving crowd behavior and by inducing their gentleman friends to take them to ball games.”⁵⁰ The result was a series of strategic moves, including ladies’ days, to increase female participation. In addition, baseball’s start times, usually in the afternoons, were tailored to white-collar workers. For the most part in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, spectatorship in baseball did serve to uphold certain middle class ideals, even if it did so by limiting the crowds to the middle class itself.

But as the twentieth century began, more and more working class fans began to

⁴⁸ Riess, *Touching Base*, 27.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 26.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 27.

attend games, which led to great concern about the potential for rowdyism and a reduction in order that spectatorship was meant to provide. Declining hourly work weeks and relatively affordable ticket prices, especially for minor league and semi-professional teams, opened the doors of spectatorship to the lower classes.⁵¹ This signaled a challenge to the middle class order.

The rise of baseball as a commercial spectacle for diverse audiences coincided with the growth of other entertainment businesses across the country. Historian John F. Kasson's chronicle of the growth of amusement parks, specifically Coney Island, in *Amusing the Million*, provides a useful view into the rise of entertainment and commodified recreation in the United States around 1900. Kasson recounts how "swelling urban populations and an increase in leisure time and spending power [...] allowed inexpensive excursions from the city" resulting in a rapid increase in amusement parks as entertainment.⁵² Coney Island represented a new, working class system of entertainment that had not existed before. Kasson demonstrates how, prior to the final decades of the nineteenth century, only more "genteel" forms of recreation existed, represented by the more rigid institutions like New York's Central Park and Chicago's 1893 Columbian Exhibition. White-collar baseball associations certainly fit into this class of recreation, as well. Coney Island's great amusement parks represented a true mass cultural movement, a spectacle accessible to the entire American population. In their orientation toward working classes, specifically, these new forms of entertainment challenged older middle class values. Kasson recalls that entertainers "sensed new markets" in the "largely untapped working class, all eager to respond to amusement in a less earnest cultural mood: more vigorous, exuberant, daring, sensual,

⁵¹ Ibid, 30-38.

⁵² John F. Kasson, *Amusing the Million* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1978), 7.

uninhibited, and irreverent.”⁵³ Amusement rides, freak shows, and exotic representations of peoples from far and wide topped the list of attractions available at Coney Island and amusement parks across the country. Such forms of entertainment did not offer the edification that progressive reformers hoped cultural institutions would. It was in this context that baseball’s popularity as spectator sport rose.

For the working classes, early twentieth century baseball was entertainment in competition with these new forms of amusements. Riess notes that “cheaper and more accessible entertainment such as saloons and vaudeville or resorts like Coney Island had baseball at a competitive disadvantage at the turn of the century.”⁵⁴ This does not mean that baseball organizers did not attempt to court working class fans. For example, the American Association, a professional league that merged with the National League in 1891, took a number of steps to open the gates to working class fans, most notably reducing the minimum ticket prices, offering games on Sundays (the day laborers would least likely be at work and therefore the best day for them to attend a game), and including alcoholic beverage sales, “all very popular [changes] with working-class fans.”⁵⁵ In addition, gambling became a regular aspect of the game not just for fans, but even for players and managers. All of these changes had dangerous effects in the eyes of middle-class progressives. One of the central challenges to the National League in the 1890s was how an increase in working class participation at games might cost the game its middle-class ideals, resulting in a dip in attendance from the 1880s. Historian Benjamin Rader notes that “Fan uprisings erupted with startling frequency, especially when the fans, usually inebriated, were denied access to the field because of their overflowing numbers, when they concluded that the umpire had

⁵³ Ibid, 6.

⁵⁴ Riess *Touching Base*, 32.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

rendered unfair decisions against the home team, or when they had lost best or feared that their bets were in jeopardy.”⁵⁶ Such a picture is clearly not the ordered experience that progressives had in mind when considering the value of baseball to American society.

This class divide was certainly ingrained in the nature of baseball in Boothbay Harbor. Tourism and baseball, in fact, came to the region in the late 19th century because they were both effects of the larger socio-economic and cultural trends of the time. Both tourism and baseball came out of the rise of a national and global system of trade, coupled with changes in work that offered more leisure time for Americans of, eventually, all classes. Especially entering the twentieth century, these trends are what created the *mélange* of farmers, fishermen, and shipbuilders, along with day trippers, vacationers, and summer colonists.⁵⁷ All of these groups may have been interested in baseball, and the Boothbay Harbor-Squirrel Island rivalry had served all groups to create the broader identities of native and tourist. But given such a diverse population of people interested in baseball in Boothbay Harbor, a related but different divide also formed: what was baseball in Boothbay to be? Ordered and gentlemanly athletics? Or rowdy, purely competitive sport?

The original organization of the Boothbay Harbor Baseball Association suggests that, indeed, baseball as spectator sport was to continue to uphold middle-class ideals. As previously mentioned, the organizers of the original Boothbay Harbor Baseball Association had advertised a “gentlemanly” and “orderly” team playing high-class baseball. Such a statement is in line with the game as Squirrel Island’s elite players had envisioned and played it for their university teams all along, and indeed how Boothbay Harbor’s out-of-town recruits had also experienced it. It also suggests that local organizers hoped to attract

⁵⁶ Rader, *Baseball*, 82.

⁵⁷ For a full discussion of the effects of these larger socio-economic and cultural forces in Boothbay Harbor, see Chapter One.

audiences of middle class tourists to the local contests more than the local farmers and fisherman, for whom the twenty-five cent admission ticket was a more significant barrier. But this does not mean that middle class games are always what took place.

Several incidents suggest the clash of these opposing class expectations for how fans should behave at games. In 1902, Squirrel Island played a game against a team from Bath Iron Works, the well-known industrial shipbuilding company. The *Lewiston Evening Journal* report of the game demonstrates the class conflict that such a game allowed for. “I hate to say it,” the reporter begins, “but you must understand that when an outsider ventures on the sacred soil and begins to use the high-priced air of this popular resort, than that of praising the island, he is superogatory [sic] of human functions and is apt to be invited to get off the earth.”⁵⁸ The reporter goes on to tell the story of a “rooter” that the Bath team had brought with them, a man with a voice so loud it suggested a “twenty room cottage with fifteen-foot veranda,” who was asked to leave the game due to his loud and inflammatory comments. Such a fan might have been allowed at other contests that the Bath team played in, but not, it seemed, on the “sacred soil” of Squirrel Island.

Another incident in game three of the 1906 Squirrel Island-Boothbay Harbor series suggests a similar class divide. A Boothbay Harbor supporter had apparently brought a loud automatic foghorn to the game, and played it with vigor in celebration of Boothbay Harbor successes during the second and third innings. The horn,

coughed and sneezed and stood up on its hind legs and chortled. It split the air seven ways at once and was just in the middle of the sixteenth position when President Doyle of the Squirrel Island Association went up to the young man and asked him to desist. [...] Boothbay Harbor stood by the fog horn; Squirrel Island stood by musical culture. Boothbay Harbor swore that they’d be dinged if he shouldn’t play it and Squirrel protested that it would be adjudged a nuisance and

⁵⁸ “A Lively Scrap,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 23 Aug. 1902, 12.

prosecuted under the law.⁵⁹

After a prolonged meeting between the managers of both teams, the horn was allowed to stay, so long as it kept its blasts short. But the showdown demonstrated a clear division about appropriate behavior in rooting for a team. Though the incident did not result in physical violence, it did raise the disgust of the Squirrel supporters and caused a brief verbal argument between fans and players alike. When viewed from a distance, the altercation seems to suggest that different fans viewed baseball through the lenses of different class approaches to the game.

By 1906, baseball in Boothbay Harbor had become an important commercial spectacle and a part of the tourism experience in the region. As a business, the game offered spectators the opportunity to help place themselves in the divided Boothbay Harbor region by deciding upon the team that they would support. Organizers understood the profitability of a game that simplified and divided the complexities of an industrial, tourist town on the coast of Maine, and therefore scheduled eight symbolic contests of this divide in the form of the Squirrel Island-Boothbay Harbor rivalry. And, of course, as the rivalry grew with the support of diehard rooters, baseball raised additional questions about class and the place of sport in shaping cultural values. The region had baseball fever in 1906, as it would for years to come.

* * * * *

Given the competitiveness of previous games in the 1906 season, the final two official games of the Squirrel Island-Boothbay Harbor series might have seemed only a

⁵⁹ "Harborites vs. The Squirrels," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 2 Aug. 1906, 10.

formality for those who had followed all summer.⁶⁰ Leading the series four games to two, the Harbor nine knew they needed just one more game to officially win the series. The best that Squirrel could do would be to win both games and tie the series, four-to-four. Of game seven, the *Boothbay Register* simply reported “Our boys went to Squirrel Thursday afternoon and played with the Squirrels quite a little as the score well showed 14 to 12 in our favor.”⁶¹ The victory sealed the series for Boothbay Harbor.

The *Lewiston Evening Journal* report is considerably longer, again perhaps a better indication of the flowery journalism used in an attempt to sell newspapers and lure fans to games than of accurate reporting. But it seems to have been an exciting game, with Boothbay Harbor scoring at least once in all but two of its offensive innings, and Squirrel scoring in all but three of the same. The *Journal* writes “Both teams larruped the ball until it cried for mercy. [...] Yes, it was a great game to see—full of long hits, wild base throwing, daring base running and glorious colossal muffs that stirred the erstwhile state of affairs on this island to its very center.” The paper reported that 1500 fans were present to see the game, about as many as some National League teams in smaller markets might have expected a decade earlier. The game featured the usual cast of characters: solid play from Ted and Fred Stanwood, and the special treat of a home run for Squirrel by Stevenson. For Boothbay Harbor, McArdle, Connelly, and Warner all had two hits. Despite outhitting the Harbor team nineteen to fourteen, the Squirrels were again beaten by Boothbay’s superior defense. As if to remind readers of the emotional investment of the Squirrel supporters, the report states that it was “No wonder the Squirrels crawled into their holes Thursday evening and were contented with fireworks and other gewgaws.”⁶² The Boothbay team left the

⁶⁰ The teams played a scrimmage between games six and seven, Boothbay Harbor winning 1-0.

⁶¹ “Home Happenings,” *Boothbay Register*, 18 Aug. 1906, 3.

⁶² “Boothbay 14, Squirrels 12,” *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 17 Aug. 1906, 4.

grounds happy, having officially won the series and their final home game against the Squirrels.

Game eight was merely the icing on the cake, a final statement of how successful Boothbay Harbor's use of semi-professional players had been. Played on Squirrel Island as a part of the island's annual "Fete Week" celebration, the home team could not overcome the Boothbay Harbor nine: "The baseball season at Squirrel died a lingering and painful death on Saturday in the final game for 1906 with the Boothbay Harbor team on a score of 18 to 8." On a beautiful summer's day, by now an expected aspect of the newspaper reporting, 1200 fans watched the game, including "summer girls and handsome matrons in all their spotless finery." The result secured the series for Boothbay Harbor by a final count of six games to two. As if to make excuses for the Squirrel team, the reporter noted that the Squirrels again put forth a new team with a slightly different roster, and that no two rosters for the team had been the same all season, given that they had used the available summer colonists at any one time: "It has been thoroughly hap-hazard and that, too, against a professional team that has been coming every game." But for supporters of the Boothbay Harbor team, be they day trippers, local businessmen, or foghorn blowing fishermen, the victory was surely sweet. It meant they could return to the Harbor from Squirrel with heads held high, rejoicing that their team of outside semi-professionals turned hometown heroes, their "boys," had snubbed the Squirrel Islanders, the summer colonists from "away." The game was the "End of the Struggle for Supremacy of the Coast," read the *Lewiston Evening Journal* subheading, and the Harbor team was king, and their fans could exult. Until 1907, concludes the reporter, "au revoir but not goodbye [...] As it is, there is a current belief that the South American earthquake is due to the recent Harbor celebrations."⁶³

⁶³ "The Final Game; Boothbay Wins," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 20 Aug. 1906, 5.

EPILOGUE

On a crisp August morning in 2009, George Yerrall and his two four-year old sons, Jonathan and Luke, crest the top of Park Street and approach the Ocean Point Casino and ball field. Busy loosening the rocks at third base, I only notice as Jonathan runs toward me, kid's size ball glove covering his right hand. He knows that his father won't let him play on the left field side of the diamond during today's game, so he heads there now to get a good look at the field from this forbidden angle. I head inside the casino kitchen to make lemonade for the game, George positions himself in front of the pitcher's mound to give his children some pre-game batting practice, and the dust settles between the pebbles at third base. It will not be still for long: most of the Ocean Point summer community will be here within the next twenty minutes, in time for the 11:00 game. Ocean Point's softball game is a staple of life at this small summer community southeast of Boothbay Harbor. Every Sunday between the 4th of July and Labor Day, "OP's" men and boys take to the diamond to exert themselves in this community tradition. It is one that, as George told me, has been around as long as anyone can remember.

The ball field and casino building buzz to life for the next couple of hours. Will Bertrand and George, the longest-standing able-bodied community members, draft teams from this week's available crop of players, which includes families who've owned summer homes at OP since the nineteenth century alongside those who've recently bought here and even some who are just renting a home for the week. Those who are too old to play and others, including many wives of those on the field, sit on the rusting bleachers and discuss this week's weather, upcoming "porch parties" and other social events, and, of course, past softball games and their players. For the next two hours, the Ocean Point summer

community is united in softball — it's the only event that brings the entire place together each week. "The whole community," George told me, "is about trying to trick yourself that there is a part of life that has not changed."¹

When I asked George about the game, he remembered playing in it since he was a little kid with some of Ocean Point's most famous names, and that his own father had pitched to him in the same way he now pitches to his boys. He does remember a time when his father played hardball against the town kids, and also an OP All-Star team that played in a softball tournament against other teams at some point in the 1980s. But for the most part, softball has always been an event within the community, not a competition against others, at least for the past several decades. Martha Mayo, a summer resident of Squirrel Island, remembers her father organizing ball games there during the summer months decades ago when she was a kid, too.² But today there's little evidence at Squirrel Island's ball field that baseball or softball is ever played there — tired wooden benches line the first and third base lines, but the grass is mostly neat and absent of the wear and tear of regular gameplay. The softball game at Ocean Point, one that I enjoyed playing in for three years, is the only remnant of summer baseball or softball that I could find in the entire region.

*

The Boothbay Harbor-Squirrel Island rivalry continued for years to come. After the success of the 1906 team, the Boothbay Harbor association continued to field semi-professional players from outside of the immediate region in 1907, mostly from towns surrounding Boston and several of whom had started on the 1906 squad. The six-to-two series rout that Boothbay Harbor had handed the Squirrel Island association, however, had forced them to consider bolstering their roster with hired bats and gloves. Such pressure

¹ George Yerrall, Personal Interview, 14 Sept. 2013.

² Martha Mayo, Personal Interview, 21 Sept. 2013.

forced the Squirrel team's manager to defend "the traditions of the island," who, according to the *Lewiston Evening Journal*, wanted "it especially understood that under his management, no player [would] be paid for his services."³ Each player would receive a Squirrel sweater, however. The decision guaranteed that the island would continue to offer membership on its baseball squad exclusively to members of Squirrel's elite summer colony, though the consequence could be continued losses for the island. Before the season began, the *Journal* proclaimed, "Squirrel will have no business playing them [Boothbay Harbor] this year."⁴ And indeed, Squirrel lost the first game of the summer of 1907, six-to-three.⁵

It is beyond the scope of this investigation to detail the entire history of the Squirrel Island-Boothbay Harbor rivalry, of course. It certainly continued, however, well into the 1910s, but eventually waned. Why exactly the hundreds of fans who attended each game stopped going, causing the end to its play, is a question for additional research. One clue comes from Alexander Doyle, the famous sculptor and player for the Squirrel nine during the 1902 season. According to Doyle, Squirrel, too, began hiring outside players to help the island's team defeat the Harbor squad. Doyle claims that Squirrel had always had the best team around, and the damage done to local pride by losing to the Harbor squad may have eventually become too much. On Squirrel, the employment of professionals when island amateurs were not available resulted in "killing the baseball interest for many years."⁶ Victory may have been most important for the promoters of the Boothbay Harbor team; for Squirrel, grassroots community baseball might have mattered more. If this were the case, it would help explain the persistence of weekly community softball games at Ocean Point

³ "Squirrel is Hot for Base Ball," *Lewiston Saturday Journal*, 13 July 1907, 11.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Harbor Wins First," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, 29 July 1907, 4.

⁶ Alex Doyle, "The Squirrel Island Athletic Association," *Lewiston Journal Illustrated Magazine Section*, 20 Aug. 1921, 11.

today, games that only members of the community ever play in. For summer colonies, perhaps game play has always been about forging identity by presenting unified communities.

The brief and storied rise of baseball in the first decades of the twentieth century in Boothbay Harbor is a story of the region's development as a tourist destination. By 1929, when Ted Smiley spent his summer on Squirrel Island and learned to hit a curve ball from his brother, there was a reason that Boothbay Harbor's fans relished in beating their summer opponents by more than twenty runs. By the late 1920s, the division between the identities of "local" and "tourist" were stark and clearly defined. Predecessor contests, played in the first decades of the twentieth century, helped to create such a divide.

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