

PREVIEW TIMELINE

The purpose of this work is to gather together old and new findings referring to stick and ball games before 1875 in order to facilitate future research.

This is more carefully discussed in the Preface – where we also give some of our own conclusions after doing this research.

We are grateful for all questions, comments, objections and new contributions.

The intention is to continuously update with new content and publish this in future versions of the Timeline – exclusively available for SIHR members.

So far we have included about 400 notes – but more are in the pipeline.

The following notes are some examples taken from the Timeline.

Carl Gidén
Patrick Houda

Stockholm, Sweden

February 22, 2010

TIMELINE -

STICK AND BALL GAMES

by

Carl Gidén
Patrick Houda

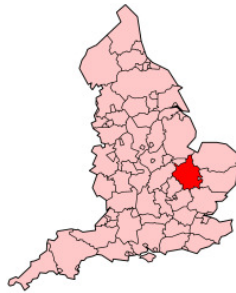
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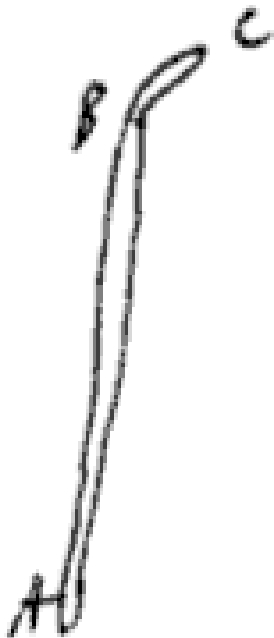
CAMBRIDGESHIRE, ENGLAND



1665 - **Book of Games**, by English (Middleton Hall) ornithologist and ichthyologist **Francis Willughby** [1635-1672], educated at Cambridge. This work was left unfinished when he died in 1672. Even in its unfinished state it provides an unrivalled inside into the sports and games of his period.

This is probably the first careful description of the game of Bandy - noteworthy is Willughby's own drawing of the stick used in the game.

"Bandie Ball - The Bandie Ball staves they strike the ball with are crooked at one end with Baseting sticks. They hold them by one end at (A) and strike the ball with the crooked end (B) (C). All the plaiers beeing equally divided they stand at two gaoles, as in Football, the ball lying just in the middle. At a signe given, they both run from the gaoles to get the first blow, & they can strike the ball thorough their adversaries gaole first win. The best place to hit the ball is just at the bending (B)."

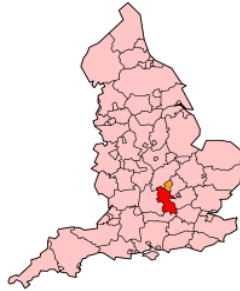


Willughby's drawing of a bandy stick



Francis Willughby

CHESHAM, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, ENGLAND



1799 - Letter from **William Pierre Le Cocq** [1785–1819], held at the **Priaulx Library, Island of Guernsey, Channel Islands, England.**

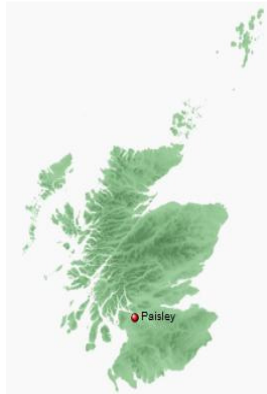
William Pierre Le Cocq, was the son of William Pierre Le Cocq Sr. and Rachel Reserson, who married in 1784. William was born the next year – at 13 years of age he left Guernsey for Mr. Simpson's school in Chesham – a market town in Buckinghamshire, located 25 miles (40km) North West of London. William was not particularly happy at the school – Chesham is extremely cold – He points out to his parents that he is considerably younger than the other boys, and so will not mention his age to them for fear of ridicule. He remained away from the island for at least two years, and the Priaulx Library has 45 letters from him to his parents that cover this period. William married his cousin Henrietta Wood Maingy in 1814, and had three children before his death at the age of 33, in 1819.

Part of a letter from William to his parents at Guernsey, written on Thursday, December 17, 1799:

"I must now describe to you the game of Hockey; we have each a stick turning up at the end. We get a bung. There are two sides one of them knocks one way and the other side the other way. If any one of the sides makes the bung reach that end of the churchyard it is victorious."

This is so far the first known contemporary use of the word hockey, referring to a stick and ball game.

PAISLEY, SCOTLAND



1803 – On February 9, **The Aberdeen Journal** wrote:

FEBRUARY 5:

"On Saturday, a most melancholy accident happened in the neighbourhood of Paisley –

Two boys of about 14 years of age, the one named Ritchie, and the other Macallum playing at shinty on the ice, at that part of the cart called the High Lin, when the ice gave way with them, and they fell in, to the depth of 10 or 12 feet.

A labourer in an adjoining field, who had been alarmed with the cries of the unfortunate youths, ran immediately to the spot, but could give no assistance, as the bodies had dropped under the ice.

The neighbourhood then collected, and, in about twenty minutes after they had fallen in, the bodies were taken out of the water. The means for recovery were immediately tried and persevered in for some time by the surgeons, but without effect."



Paisley in the 1820s by John Clark

PICTOU, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA



1811 – **East River sketches, historical and biographical: with reminiscences of Scottish life**, by Rev. Robert Grant [ca1824–1900], published by S.M. MacKenzie, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, 1895.

Special thanks to Mr. David Hart, of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Family History Society, Mr. T.J. MacKay, Phoenix, Arizona, and William Alex Mackay of The Clan Mackay Society, Scotland, for the genealogical facts of this note.

The author, Rev. Robert Grant was a well known Pictou historian, but also a Presbyterian minister known to have been "more given in writing than preaching". His grandfather, Robert Grant, came to Pictou County, Nova Scotia, on the ship "Hector", in 1773.

This quote from Grant's book is about Hugh (the Big Deacon) McKay (1789–1869), who together with his elder brother Alexander (1769–1866), was known to be the strongest man in the County of Pictou. Both had their roots in Beaulieu, Inverness, Scotland – their father, Alexander McKay Sr., (1728–1825), came to Pictou in 1784, after serving in the Fraser Highlanders at the capture of Louisburg and Quebec.

"When the Deacon was 22, there came to Pictou town a professed wrestler from the United States. His name was William Allan. He put up at Lorraine's hotel, and sent forth his challenge to any bluenose within 20 miles, for a trial of strength and skill. In the prosecution of his calling, the best wrestlers about town and the West River lay prostrate on the floor. In these extremities, after consultation held, the future Deacon is waited on by a delegation, at his house at Riverton.

Everyone knew his matchless strength. But would he try the Yankee? All they wanted of him was to go down to Pictou, and see the champion and form his own opinion. If he thought he wouldn't be able for him, they wished him not to try. He consented to go, and on an appointed day he went, and all the East River with him.

He found Allan in his room, sitting in front of a blazing fire. Having taken a good look at him there, he went out and told his friends he had his mind made up to try him. It was midwinter. The "sublime was to be got at" in a large building at the rear of the hotel, Mason hall. All around the hall was a row of benches and on these stood the spectators of the scene.

The highlander gained an easy victory, and the assembled bluenoses, elate with joy, and proud of their youthful hero, for farther recreation repaired to the ice on the harbor to skate and play ball. While thus enjoying themselves to their heart's content, a messenger appears in their midst, with a fresh challenge from the hotel – the Yankee wished to wrestle again.

Nothing loath, skates and hurlies laid aside, there is another rush for' the hall. The combatants assume their former position and attitude. The benches are more crowded than before. But the Deacon told me that, this time, Allan was a totally different man from what he was in the forenoon – acting entirely on the defensive.

After being thus locked in a loving embrace for ever so long and the one making nothing of the other, Allan proposed to drop it. No, replied the Deacon, I have strength enough yet, to break every bone in your body. You are the challenger, and I will keep you there till midnight, if you don't acknowledge that I am a better man than you. Allan made the required acknowledgement, and the affair ended in peace and mutual good will.

There have been various versions of this wrestling match. But the above is the true one. I had it from the Deacon and I have used his very words."



Reverend Robert Grant

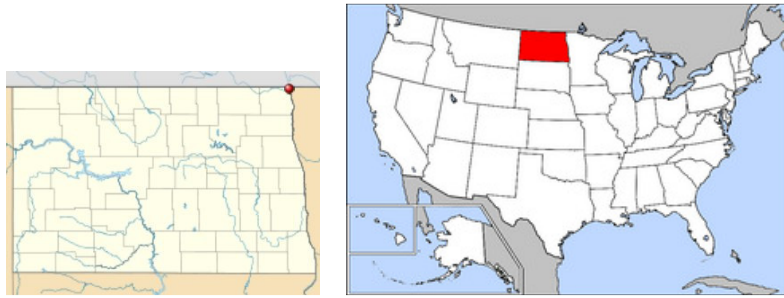


Pictou Harbour from MacKenzie Point, 1872



Pictou 1817 - by John Elliott Woolford

FORT DAER, NORTH DAKOTA, USA



1812 - A history of the Canadian West to 1870-71; being a history of Rupert's land (The Hudson's bay company's territory) and of the North-west territory (including the Pacific slope), by Arthur Silver Morton [1870-1945], published by Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd, London, New York, 1939.

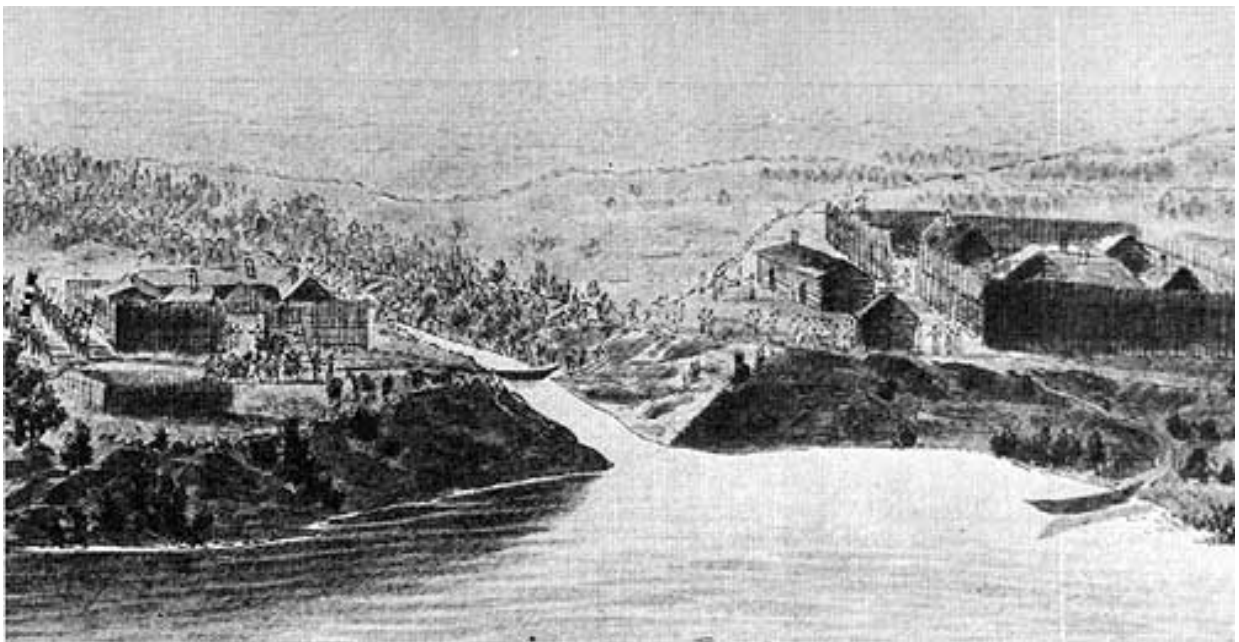
Morton, regarded as one of the most influential Canadian historians went through old letters and documents from the early years of the Hudson Bay Company.

In the book he quotes one of the diaries or letters written either by Scottish born (Inverness) **Miles MacDonell** [1767-1828], or **William Hillier**, the second-in-command at Fort Daer after MacDonell.

The fur trade companies each had a fort at the junction of the Red and Pembina rivers, Hudson's Bay's was located on the east bank of the Red, and the Northwesters on the north bank of the Pembina.

On Christmas day 1812 the following entry was in the diary - Interesting is the note of three forts:

"Play at hurl on the ice with the people of the 3 forts"



Sketch, after Peter Rindisbacher 1822, of the Northwesters' Pembina Post (right) and the Hudson's Bay's Fort Daer (left)

FORT FRANKLIN [DELINE], NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, CANADA



1825 - **Narrative of a Second Expedition to the Shores of the Polar Sea, in the Years 1825, 1826, and 1827**, by **John Franklin**, Captain R.N., F.R.S., &c. and Commander of the Expedition, published by John Murray, London, 1828, and,

The Life of Sir John Franklin, R.N., by **Henry Duff Traill**, published by John Murray, London, 1896.

Sir John Franklin [1786–1847], was born in Spilsby, Lincolnshire. At age of ten he was sent to a preparatory school in St Ives, Huntingdonshire, and two years later to King Edward VI Grammar School, at Louth, Lincolnshire. He joined the Royal Navy at the age of 14 – and later became present at a number of historic voyages and naval battles.

Franklin is best remembered for his surveys of the Arctic. Altogether he made four journeys to the region and mapped over 3000 miles of the coast line of north Canada. Franklin died in 1847, on his last Arctic expedition to find the North–West Passage.

The North–West Passage is the sea route linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. It lies above the Arctic Circle between Canada and Greenland and the Arctic itself. For over 300 years explorers had searched for a route through these icy waters. A lot of money could be saved if a shorter way could be found and thousands of pounds were offered as a prize for finding this passage.



Red lines are possible routes for traversing the Northwest Passage

In 1825, Franklin set off for his third expedition to the Arctic – A trip down the Mackenzie River to explore the shores of the Beaufort Sea. The main lessons that he had learned from his earlier attempts were, first, to complete his preparations well in advance and, secondly, to strive for self-sufficiency. He chose to diminish his dependence on the unpredictable reliability of fur traders, voyageurs, and Indians, and to assert his greater trust in British seamen and naval equipment and, above all, to take enough of his own supplies.

The first load of provisions, together with three specially constructed boats and a party of seamen were sent ahead through York Factory in 1824 to ensure their safe arrival in the north.

Franklin set out for New York on 16 February, 1825, and soon after his arrival in the United States, headed north with his party.

They travelled along fur-trading routes, catching up with the seamen and boats near Methye Portage (Portage La Loche, Saskatchewan). Early in August they reached Fort Norman (N.W.T.).

From here Franklin made a preliminary reconnaissance of the Mackenzie River down to the sea. The rest of the party went on to Great Bear Lake, where the construction of their winter quarters, near the head of Bear (Great Bear) River, was under way.

On 5 September 1825, Franklin rejoined the party at this base, named Fort Franklin (now Deline). After a comfortable winter the Expedition left for the coast and exploring a little more than half the distance to Icy Cape (Alaska).

After a second winter at Fort Franklin, the expedition set off home in 1827, reaching Liverpool on 26 September. The second of his published narratives came out the following year. Franklin again received formal honors and was knighted by George IV.



Winter view of Fort Franklin 1825–1826, from a watercolour by Sir George Back

The following notes describes the expeditions first winter at Fort Franklin

The first is from Franklins own publication 1828:

Thursday, October 20, 1825 –

"We were visited on the 20th by a storm of snow, which continued, without intermission, for thirty-six hours. Although it put an end to the skating, and the games on the ice, which had been our evenings' amusement for the preceding week..."

The second note is from a letter by Franklin to the Scottish Geologist, Sir Roderick Impey Murchison [1792–1871], published by Henry Duff Traill in The Life of Sir John Franklin, 1896:

November 6, 1825 –

"The game of hockey played on the ice was the morning sport"

Those notes confirm that the expedition had skates available – but if they were used by the party playing hockey on the ice is not absolutely proven.

One must have in mind that Franklin uses his British references when terming the game "hockey" – and further that most members of the expedition were also British – using the same appellation.

Franklin had a long connection with the Royal Navy – the major part stationed at Southampton south of London.

This region of England was the first to more commonly use the term "hockey" for a stick and ball game – mostly played at schools and at the military academies – but not differing much from shinty, bandy, hurling etc., played in other parts of Great Britain.

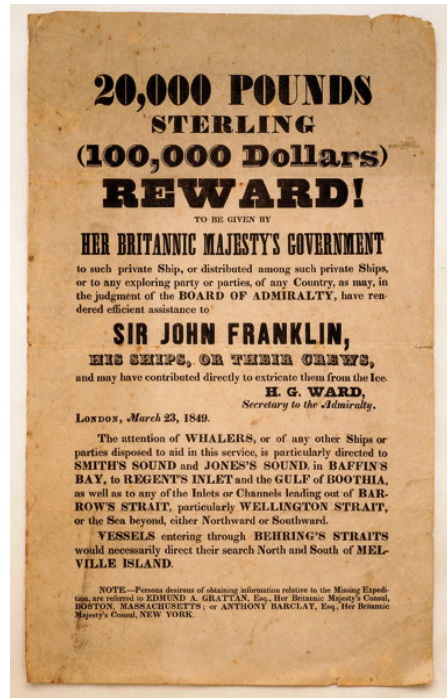
However, we know that those games could be played on ice using skates – if such were available.



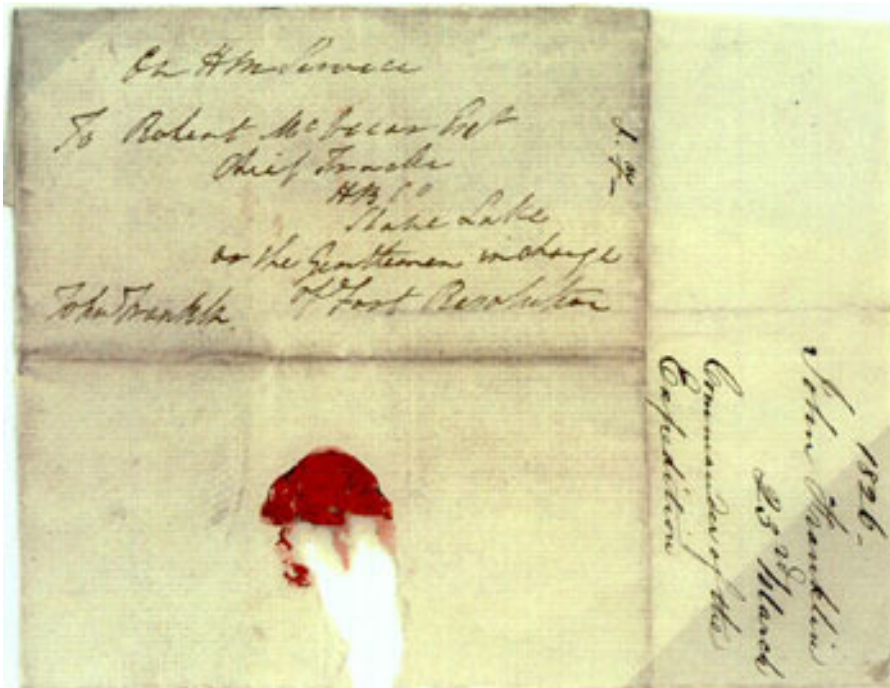
**Great Bear Lake in the autumn, with Fort Franklin at the horizon –
illustration from Narrative of a Second Expedition, 1828**



Sir John Franklin, daguerrotype by Baird, 1845



1849 Reward for helping to extricate Sir John Franklin, his ships, or their crews from the ice



A 1826 letter from Franklin to Robert McVicar [ca 1799–1864], Chief Trader of Fort Resolution at Great Slave Lake