

0. THE KNICKERBOCKER CLUB - Story Preface

1. THE EARLY DAYS

2. THE KNICKERBOCKER CLUB

3. BASEBALL and the CIVIL WAR

4. FOR LOVE of the GAME

5. WOMEN PLAYERS in the 19TH CENTURY

6. THE COLOR LINE

7. EARLY BASEBALL PRINTS

8. BIRTH of TRADE CARDS

9. BIRTH of BASEBALL CARDS

10. A VALUABLE HOBBY



The Knickerbocker Club played baseball at Hoboken's "Elysian Fields" on October 6, 1845. That game appears to be the first recorded by an American newspaper. This Currier & Ives lithograph, which is online via the Library of Congress, depicts the Elysian Fields.

As the nineteenth century moved into its fourth decade, [Alexander Cartwright](#) wrote rules for the Knickerbockers, an amateur New York City baseball club.

Those [early rules](#) (which were adopted on the 23rd of September, 1845) provide a bit of history (perhaps accurate, perhaps not) for the "Recently Invented Game of Base Ball."

For many years the games of [Townball](#), [Rounders](#) and [old Cat](#) have been the sport of young boys. Recently, they have, in one form or another, been much enjoyed by gentlemen seeking wholesome American exercise.

In 1845 Alexander Cartwright and other members of the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club of New York codified the unwritten rules of these boys games into one, and so made the game of Base Ball a sport worthy of attention by adults.

We have little doubt but that this gentlemanly pastime will capture the interest and imagination of sportsman and spectator alike throughout this country.

Within two weeks of adopting their rules, members of the Knickerbocker Club played an intra-squad game at the [Elysian Fields](#) (in [Hoboken](#), New Jersey). The October 6th game appears to be the first recorded by an

American newspaper.

Those early games (announced in local papers) were often high-scoring, as a Knickerbocker tally sheet (from a record book maintained at the New York Public Library) demonstrates. On this particular day, the Knickerbockers lost the 41-34 game.

Players whose conduct did not conform to the rules were fined - as evidenced by Article V of the Knickerbockers' 1848 Constitution - and they had to pay *before* they left the field. A few examples of non-tolerated infractions:

Swearing:	12½ cents for <i>each</i> offense
Arguing with the umpire:	12½ cents
Disobeying the team captain:	50 cents

One dollar, in 1848, was roughly equivalent to \$21 today.

Daniel “Doc” Adams, considered by some historians to be the true “Father of Baseball,” became president of the Knickerbocker Club in 1847. Balls, in those early days, were light-weight and dark-colored, so the game was not dominated by home-run hitters.

Under Adams’ leadership, the Knickerbockers became a preeminent baseball club, and their Hoboken playing field was - at least for a time - the most well-known baseball field in the country.

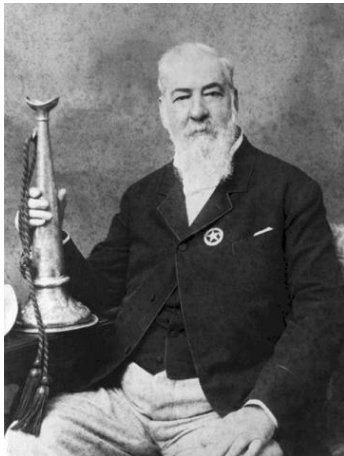
It is believed the first published picture of a baseball game was printed in a weekly newspaper called *Porter’s Spirit of the Times*. That September 12, 1857 woodcut depicts two New York clubs, the Eagles and the Gothams, playing at Elysian Fields. The following year, a scene in Mason Village, New Hampshire clearly depicts a baseball game in progress.

Even though teams were playing ball in the northern United States, there is no evidence it was popular throughout the south before the Civil War. That conflict, however, introduced the sport to *many* new players.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-KNICKERBOCKER-CLUB-Baseball-Cards>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-KNICKERBOCKER-CLUB-Baseball-Cards>

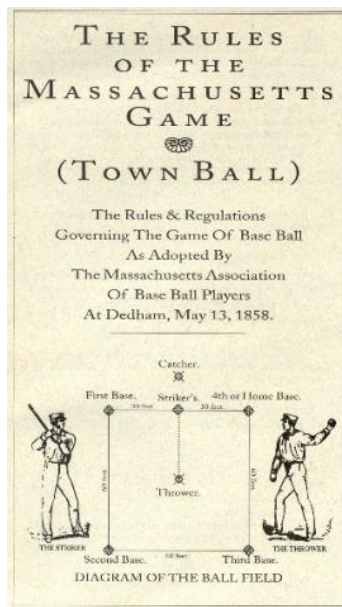
Media Stream



Alexander Cartwright
National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.
View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Alexander-Cartwright>



Early Rules of Baseball
Image online, courtesy the Base Ball Vault website.
View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Early-Rules-of-Baseball>



Town Ball: "The Massachusetts Game"

Image, courtesy Baseball Almanac.

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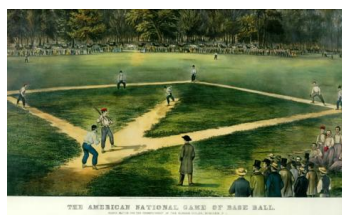
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Town-Ball-The-Massachusetts-Game->



"Three Old Cat" - A Baseball Game

Image, New York Public Library Digital Collection.

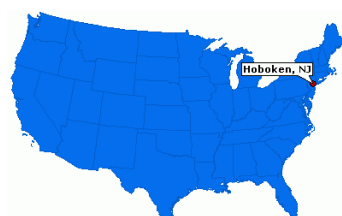
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Elysian Fields, Hoboken

Currier & Ives lithograph.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Elysian-Fields-Hoboken->



Hoboken, New Jersey

Image online, courtesy epodunk.com website.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Hoboken-New-Jersey>

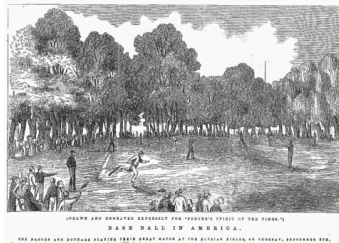
A GREAT MATCH AT BASE BALL.—This afternoon, at 2 o'clock, the New York Bass Ball Club play a match at ball with the Brooklyn Club at the Elysian Fields, Hoboken. The interest attached to this match will attract large numbers from this and the neighboring city.

Announcement of Early Baseball Game

Brooklyn Library.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Announcement-of-Early-Baseball-Game>



First Published Picture of an American Baseball Game

Image, from *Porter's Spirit of the Times* (September 12, 1857). Courtesy, Vintage Baseball Association.

Information and quote from American Studies web site, University of Virginia.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/First-Published-Picture-of-an-American-Baseball-Game>