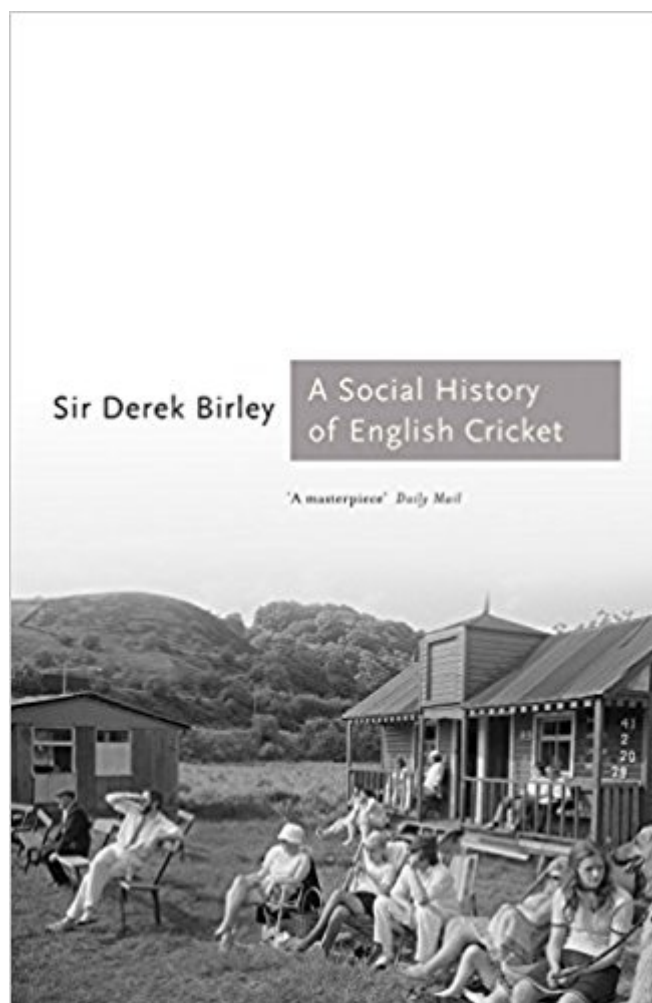


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# A Social History Of English Cricket (Sports Classics)



## Synopsis

Acclaimed as a magisterial, classic work, *A Social History of English Cricket* is an encyclopedic survey of the game, from its humble origins all the way to modern floodlit finishes. But it is also the story of English culture, mirrored in a sport that has always been a complex repository of manners, hierarchies and politics. In just under 400 pages Sir Derek Birley takes us through a rich historical tapestry: how the game was snatched from rustic obscurity by gentlemanly gamblers; became the height of late eighteenth century metropolitan fashion; was turned into both symbol and synonym for British imperialism; and its more recent struggle to dislodge the discomforting social values preserved in the game from its imperial heyday. Superbly witty and humorous, peopled by larger-than-life characters from Denis Compton to Ian Botham, and wholly forswearing nostalgia, *A Social History of English Cricket* is a tour-de-force by one of the great writers on cricket.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

'A masterpiece' 'A masterpiece' 'An exceptional example of profound research and wisdom, yet told with elegance, humour and warmth.' 'A profoundly researched, easily and stylishly written book, put together with a view to a shelf-life of a good half-century, and as a work of reference a fair way beyond that.' 'A wonderful book, written with great self-deprecating humour. A hugely rewarding read.' 'An exceptional example of profound research and wisdom, yet told with elegance, humour and warmth.' 'A wonderful book, written with great self-deprecating humour. A hugely rewarding read.'

Sir Derek Birley is the author of several books for Aurum, including *The Willow Wand*, *A Social History of English Cricket* and the trilogy *Sport and the Making of Britain*, which won the British Society of Sports History's Aberdare Literary Award in 1995. He retired as vice-chancellor of the University of Ulster in 1991 after a distinguished career as an educational administrator. He died in 2002.

While perhaps a little dry in stretches, it did give me a new, clearer picture of the game in the land of its birth. (International cricket is really only covered when it had an impact on the English game, i.e. the Jardine 'body-line' mess.) American readers (like me) will probably have to google many of the references, what as the author assumes the reader already knows most of the big stories. I didn't mind, though. This book is not at all the same story told in Major's *More Than A Game: The Story of Cricket's Early Years* [Paperback] [2008] (Author) John Major. They do complement each other nicely though.

Very interesting, learning something new everyday!

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