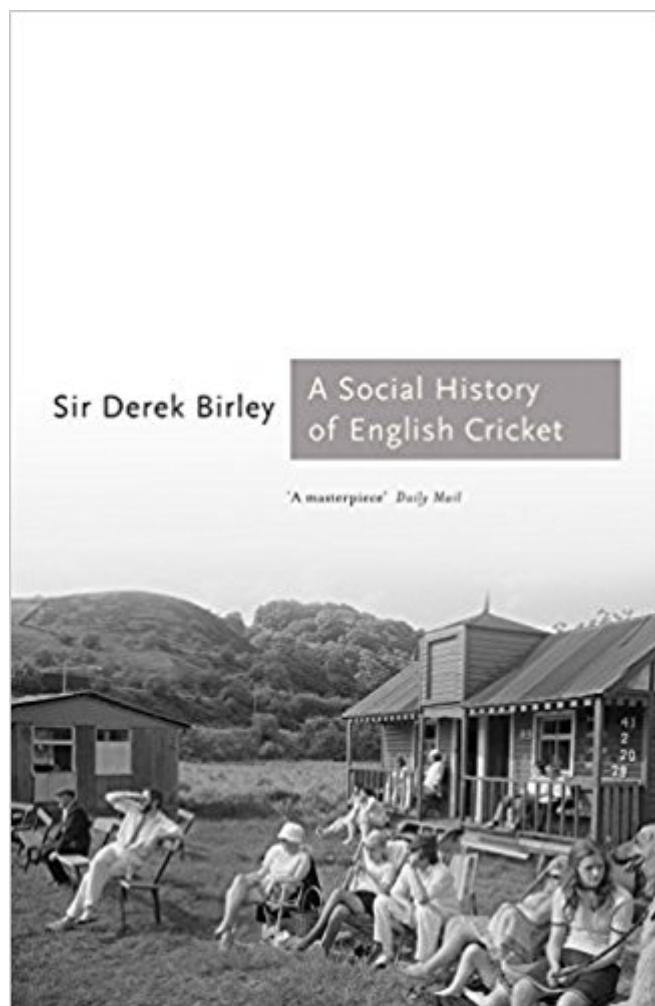


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A Social History Of English Cricket (Sports Classics)



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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'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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