

of considerable authority with a keen sense of public responsibility. From 1886 he began a life-long commitment to the Melbourne Hospital and was prominent in the Red Cross. In 1888 he was elected to the University of Melbourne Council and in 1918, he became vice-chancellor. One of his sons was killed in the Boer War and another in the First World War.³¹

At the time John Grice was writing his diary, he was corresponding with Richard Teece about arranging a boat race between the Melbourne and Sydney universities. Richard Teece was more entrepreneurial in his attitude to sport and it was he who took the initiative in arranging a contest. Richard had read of a meeting of the sporting interests of the university that had taken place in August 1869 and had voted to form a cricket club. At this meeting, Professor Strong in the chair referred to the popularity of sport when he commended the move to form a cricket club, for 'he believed many gentlemen would be induced to join the university who now felt that life there was dully and dreary'.³² Martin Irving was prominent and he was elected to the committee, along with Robert Denham Pinnock, a medical student, as honorary secretary.³³ Like John Grice, Robert Pinnock was the son of a successful early immigrant—a colonial public servant turned banker—and now lived comfortably in Wellington Parade, East Melbourne. Robert Pinnock had attended Scotch College and had passed the matriculation examination in 1865 with David Wilkie.³⁴

Early in September 1869, when Robert Pinnock opened his mail, he read with interest of a proposal from Richard Teece, the honorary secretary of the Sydney Cricket Club. The 22-year-old Richard Teece had enrolled at the University of Sydney when he left school but, when offered a position in the Australian Mutual Provident Society as a junior clerk, he had taken it and began there in July 1866.³⁵ This left him time to devote his considerable organisational talents to pursuing his sporting enthusiasms with like-minded gentlemen of means: 'Our members being exclusively members of the University, we neither employ nor play professionals, a practice which you will doubtless commend, since it appears desirable that a University Club should possess some distinctive feature apart from others'. At the same time, he proposed that 'the interest and excitement of a cricket match might be heightened too by a Boat Race'.³⁶ Robert Pinnock was more cautious than Richard Teece and was inclined to temporise: 'we are at present only known by name, and have yet to win our spurs in the cricket world'. But on gaining agreement from the cricket club the planning went ahead.

Something of the novelty of organising a sporting event can be gauged from the exchange of letters, which show that the two men were alert to the development of sport at the time and that this contest between the two universities was envisaged as an extension of the life of young gentlemen. As the correspondence extended over the months, Robert Pinnock and Richard Teece sketched in the routines of their lives. They both wrote of a leisurely academic year that meant students would be absent over the summer period: 'our fellows all leave town as soon as term is ended' for extended holidays. They exchanged news of visiting opera companies and what was on at the theatre. But it was playing sport that offered the main interest. There was the 'lost ball' at the match between Melbourne and East Melbourne in November 1871, which excited much controversy, dinners like the 'rare spree' to celebrate the end of the cricket season, and always gossip about contemporary players and their exploits.

In order to finance the enterprise, Robert Pinnock, recognising the growth of a spectating market, immediately proposed charging admission to the ground. Because the inter-colonial game was to be played in Melbourne and Melbourne was to host an 'eleven from England' in the coming summer, he suggested delaying the event. He concluded, 'I fancy that by the time our match took place the public would have had such a dose of cricket, that it would be extremely

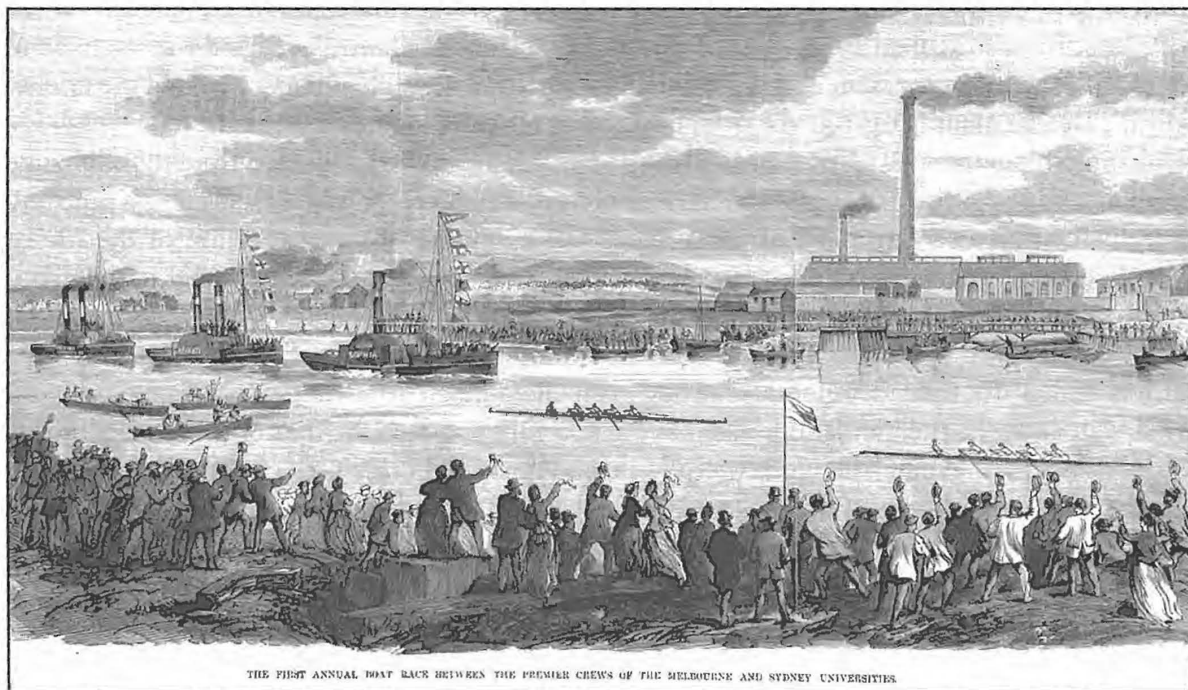
doubtful whether we should be much patronised'. As well as the boat race, Robert Pinnock proposed that, to entertain the spectators, they should 'add to the interest of the match ... a few contests in running, jumping, throwing the cricket ball etc ... after the match'. Richard agreed but continued to stress that the boat race and the athletic events 'must play second fiddle' and they must concentrate on 'the primary element of the cricket match'.

Apart from this shrewd reading of the commercial potential of the event, both young men were alert to the value of publicising the event. A public meeting was called to support the event early in October and the *Australasian* carried a report.³⁷ The young men used their influence to advance publicity:

By the bye, if you could manage by any means, to get inserted among the Sydney telegrams for the 'Argus' one to the effect that your team were in active practice and that the match was much talked of or created great interest in Sydney or something to that effect, it would be invaluable to the success of our project.

They were keen to exploit the accepted practice of wagering on sporting contests:

This (the Boat Race) is talked about a good deal here and has been the subject of bets for some time, your fellows being as far as I can make out rather the favourites owing I suppose to the prestige of Sydney rowing. Will you send me as soon as possible a list of your probable team remarking on those known to fame as bowlers or batsmen. I want to get the match onto our sporting papers as soon as possible and there is nothing like letting the public have both teams in print to compare and speculate upon according to their own enlightened understanding.



THE FIRST ANNUAL BOAT RACE BETWEEN THE PREMIER CREWS OF THE MELBOURNE AND SYDNEY UNIVERSITIES

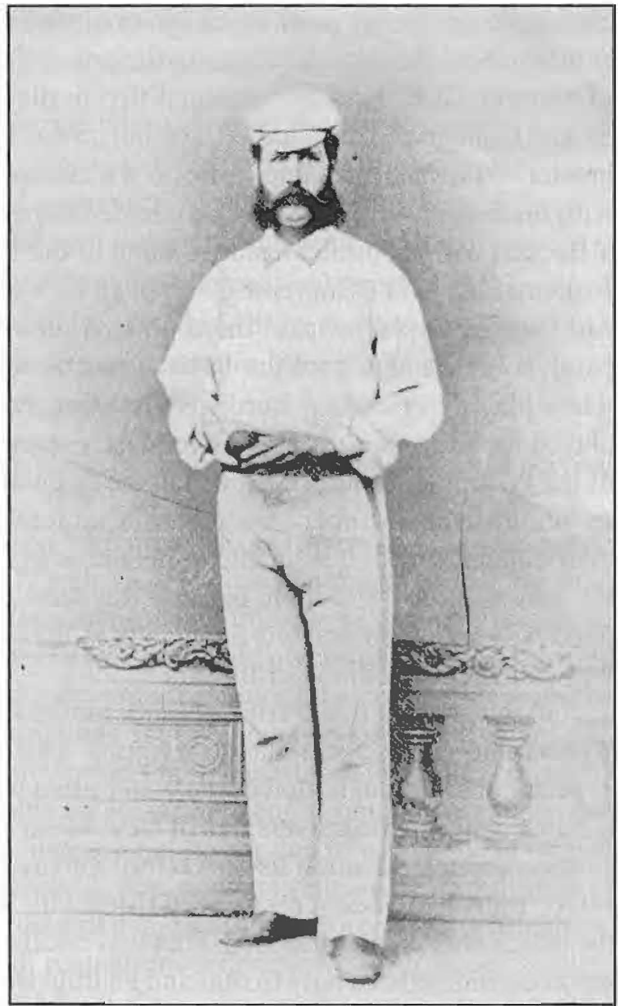
First inter-varsity boat race, Illustrated Australian News, 30 January 1871. (La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria)

After settling major issues like uniform—‘the Victorian men will turn out in white, with light blue caps and sashes’—the Sydney team arrived by boat in the last days of 1870.³⁸

In the view of those present, the contests would be of national interest. As ‘*bona fide* matriculated members of their respective universities’, the ‘professional element’ was excluded from the teams, and it would be a contest between ‘natives of the colonies’. It was boasted that as each university numbered ‘some of the best players of its colony’ in its team, then the game would appeal to the ‘cricket-loving public of the colony’.³⁹ Put this way, the proposed intervarsity contest was a call to those who desired to see how the game of cricket, as played by young gentlemen, had been transferred to the Australian colonies. It was also sociable. The managers of the theatres were approached and eagerly welcomed the patronage of the young gentlemen; as Richard Teece wrote approvingly, ‘I have received an invitation for you to the Victoria Theatre, so that you will have *carte blanche* to all amusements’.

The boat race was contested first. The race, for four-oar, fixed-seat, string-test gigs (not outriggers), was rowed on the Humbug course over three and a half miles on the Yarra and the Melbourne crew won in 23 minutes 4 seconds. There was John Grice, of course; one of the Wilkie brothers who had been to Scotch College; Thomas Culbertson Hope (stroke), the son of a successful pastoralist who had been to Geelong College and was now doing law; and T.

Colles. Traffic on the river was stopped for the duration and 300 spectators crammed the steamers, the *Sophia* and the *Resolute*, engaged by the university rowing club committee to follow the race, and about 1200 people lined the banks. It was indeed a display after the model of ‘the wholesome rivalry that exists between the sister Universities of Oxford and Cambridge’.⁴⁰ The cricket game was played on the ground of the Melbourne Cricket Club. The *Australasian* commented that of the team ‘nearly half of its number are too well known in



Dan Wilkie. The Australasian made brief comments on each player: A'Beckett, E.—Good bat, and change bowler; Campbell, Don—First-rate bat and field, and good fast round-arm bowler [in the end he did not play]; Eggleston, J.—Capital bat, good fast round-arm bowler, and good field; Goldsmith—Very good bat, and fine field; Hepburn, T.—Fair bat and field; Johnston—named as emergency but took the field; Jennings, H.—Capital field; good change bowler; middling bat; McPherson, J.—Good round-arm bowler and fair bat. Thomas, H.J.—Very good longstop and fair bat; Towers—Good change bowler and fair bat; Wilkie, Dan—Good slow bowler and good bat; Wilkie, Dav—Good fast round-arm bowler and good bat. (Courtesy Sir Thomas Ramsay Collection, Scotch College)