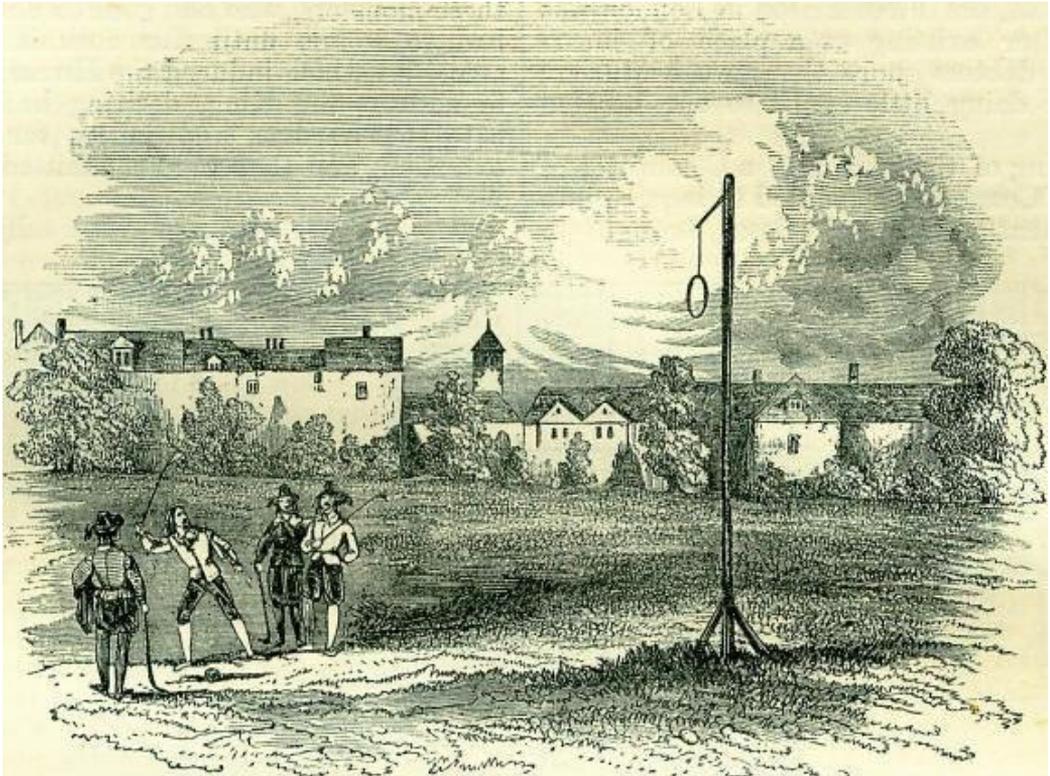
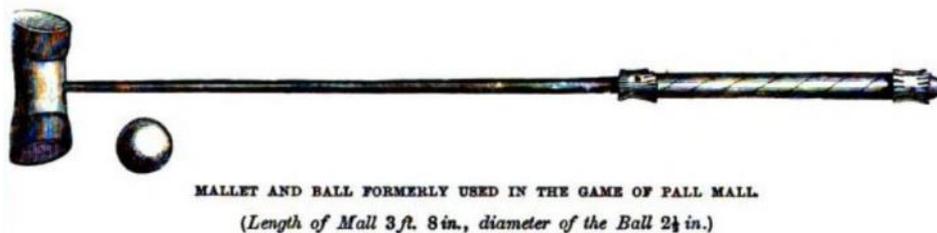


Pall mall in Great Britain?

In the 'Chambers Book of Days' under the heading 'The Game of Pall Mall', Chambers described the mail alley as "well-polished, hardened and strewn with pounded shells, so as to present a smooth surface. The sides of the alley appear to have been boarded, to prevent the ball from going off the straight line". On the same page, he published an engraving of an open field without borders.

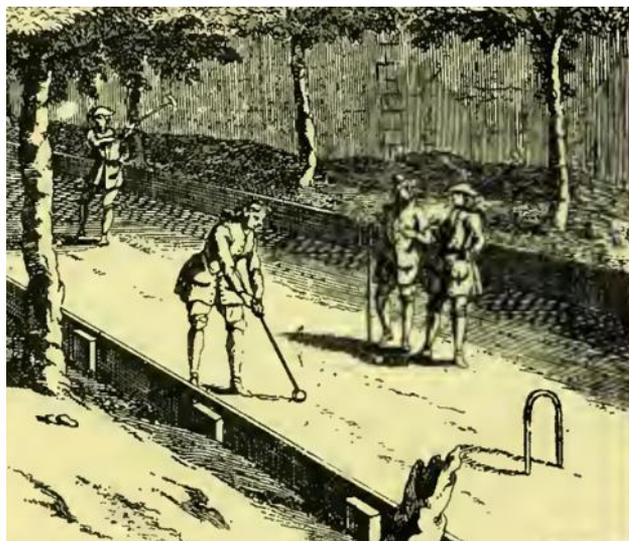


This picture is supposed to depict King Charles II, playing the game of pall mall. – Engraving from 'The Book of Days: A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities in Connection with the Calendar, Including Anecdote, Biography, & History, Curiosities of Literature and Oddities of Human Life and Character', page 465 in the 1888 Vol. I edition – Robert Chambers, 1864



On the same page as the previous picture, Robert Chambers showed this mail club and ball.

The ball has to get airborne to play it through the suspended iron hoop or ring in pall mall, originally placed on the alley. It could be that all of them play with a kind of 'lève', a spoon-like iron club (lofter), but the clubs look more like golf cleeks.



Two illustrations showing mail players who 'tirent à la passe' (are holing out): in their hands the 'lève' (lofter), so different from the mallet, as well as the size of the ball. They play on a smooth surface, and their goal is not suspended but fixed onto the mail alley. –

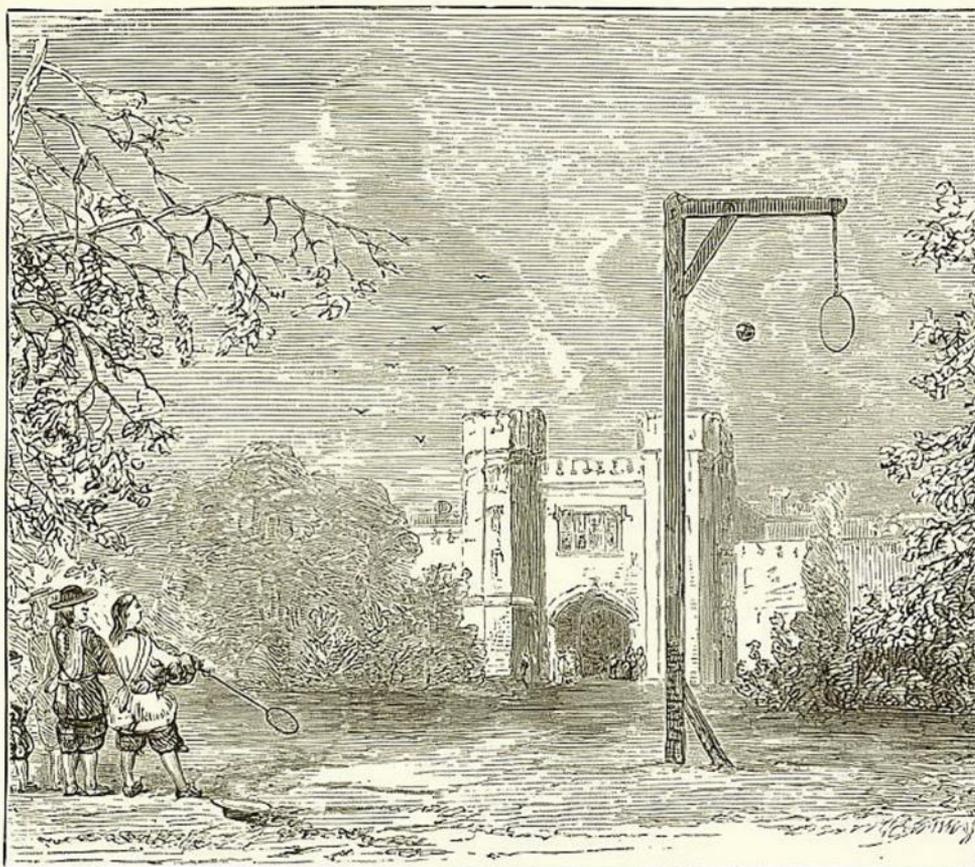
On the left: 'Le Mail' after Nicolas Guérard (Father or Son, 18th century) from 'Sports et jeux d'Adresse', page 200, Henri-René D'Allemagne – Paris, Hachette & Cie, 1903

On the right: 'Comme on doit estre quand on tire à la passe pour finir la partie' (How you have to stand when putting to finish the hole), 'Nouvelles règles pour le jeu de mail', page 7, Joseph Lauthier – Paris, Charles Huguier et André Cailleau, 1717

In 1878, another illustration showed a ring hanging on a pole and being the target in 'Playing at pall-mall'. This time, the clubs and the ball are like the ones that we know from pall mall. In Walford's chapter 'The Mall and Spring Gardens' in 'Old and New London', Volume 4, one can read the description of the Mall on the north side of St James's Park by John Noorthouck: "... a vista half a mile in length, at that time (Charles II) formed with a hollow, smooth walk skirted round with a wooden border, and with an iron hoop at the further end, for the purpose of playing a game with a ball called mall." Walford added himself: "The iron hoop was suspended from a bar of wood at the top of a pole, and the play consisted in striking a ball through this ring from a considerable distance." Perhaps he adapted his text to fit it to the illustration.



The illustration 'Playing at pall-mall (from a contemporary print)' from Edward Walford's 'Old and New London', Volume 4, pages 74-85. – London, Cassell, Petter & Galpin, 1878 – <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/old-new-london/vol4/pp74-85>



THE GAME OF PELL-MELL (FROM WHICH PALL-MALL DERIVED ITS NAME),
AS PLAYED IN THE DAYS OF CHARLES II.

Illustration from the 'Historical Scrap Book', Anonymous, page 101 – London, Paris, New York & Melbourne, Cassel & Company Limited, 1886

The 'Historical Scrap Book' does not give any written details. Again, the iron hoop is high in the air. On the ground, no wooden fences, and the player uses a kind of tennis racket and definitely not a mail club.

Conclusion?

One could conclude that the representation of the game refers to another, so far unknown game. Or the first illustrator imagined that the mail game was played in this way, and his colleague illustrators copied his picture.