A Dissertation

Entitled

Industrialization and Immigration:

Labor at the River's Bend

By

Stephen R. Miceli

Submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for

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An Abstract of

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The United States experienced considerable economic expansion and social

transformations between the Civil War and 1900. Industrialization and immigration were

important elements of the changes and contributed not only to the growing wealth of the

nation, but also to an increase in the industrial labor force. As the size of the industrial

workforce increased, so too did the number of workers who were dissatisfied with their

conditions and rebelled through a variety of ways. But the widespread upheaval by

workers never manifested itself into a unified labor organization or political party. This

paper addresses the causes of a weak labor movement in one Midwestern community, South Bend, Indiana.

South Bend's experiences mirrored developments in many other communities during the Gilded Age. Its economic growth and industrialization accelerated considerably after the Civil War, as did the number of foreign born who were employed in the growing factories. Deteriorating working conditions led to several attempts by South Bend's workers to alleviate their condition through strikes or union organization, but with only minimal success. Though the Knights of Labor had a short lived presence in South Bend in the mid-1880s, there was never a widespread, persistent labor unity in the city. After examining the industrial and immigration developments in the United States as a whole, and South Bend, specifically, this dissertation concludes that South Bend's labor movement was hampered by the presence of a labor force divided by ethnicity. There were divisions between the native population and immigrant population, but also divisions between the various ethnic groups. Most of the immigrant groups created ethnic communities at the expense of class cohesion. In addition, the management policies of several large employers exacerbated the barriers by favoring one group of workers over another, or manipulating the laborers to prevent unity in the shops. The result of the varied ethnic antagonisms and management tactics was a fractured workforce.

For Cecelia and Gabrielle

My Little Women

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The forty years after the American Civil War evoke a variety of popular images and historical analyses because the transformations that occurred during that time were wide-ranging and important to the development of a modern American society. For some people, it represents the continuation of American expansion and an exciting time when the American frontier was ultimately tamed, and Native Americans were forced to relinquish once and for all their claims on the interior section of North America.[1] The Native American perspective generally sees the conquest in less laudatory terms, of course. Others see this as a period when the United States progressed from a primarily rural to a primarily urban society and when the majority of Americans moved from depending directly on farming pursuits and living in rural communities, to a nation where a majority of its residents lived in urban communities with industrial jobs and relied on farming only indirectly.[2] Popular and academic writers have recently compared certain current developments to experiences in the United States during the late nineteenth century - specifically, the economic expansion in the 1990s-2000s,[3] and the increased immigration of foreign people into the United States.[4]

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[1] Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (New York: MacMillan, 1949).
[2] Robert Weibe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Wang and Hill, 1967); Alan Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York Wang and Hill, 1982).
[3] Doug Henwood, "Our Gilded Age," *The Nation* (June 28, 2008), http://www.thenation.com/doc/20080630/henwood; David Remnick, ed., *The New Gilded Age: The New Yorker Looks at the Culture of Affluence* (2000); Louis Uchitelle, "The Richest of the Rich, Proud of a New Gilded Age," *The New York Times* (July 15, 2007),

For many, this period reflects the description its oft-referenced contemporaries credited for naming the period – the *Gilded Age*. In 1873 Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner cynically described an America that was consumed by an obsessive drive for wealth through land speculation and railroad contracts. *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today,* was a fictional account of what the authors observed was the political and moral corruption taking place in the immediate aftermath of the American Civil War.[5] Ironically, as historian John Garraty pointed out, though this book eventually came to name the thirty year period before 1900, when it was published there existed only a harbinger of the corruption and excess of what was yet to come.[6] The fabulous economic kingdoms built by men like John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, Henry C. Frick, Jay Gould, JP Morgan, and Cornelius Vanderbilt that awed the public and enraged the critics were in their infancy while Twain and Warner were writing in 1872-73. The accumulation of wealth in the years that followed *The Gilded Age* witnessed larger concentrations of wealth, and greater economic disparity between the rich and the poor. And though coined by Twain and Warner in 1873, the three decades that followed it have

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http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/15/business/15gilded.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1; Paul Krugman, "Gilded Once More," *The New York Times* (April 27, 2007), http://select.nytimes.com/2007/04/27/opinion/27krugman.html?_r=1.

[4] Mark J. Stern Michael B. Katz, Jamie J. Fader, "The Mexican Immigration Debate: The View from History," *Social Science History* 31, no. 2 (2007); David M. Kennedy, "Can We Still Afford to Be a Nation of Immigrants?," *The Atlantic Online* (November 1996), http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/96nov/immigrat/kennedy.htm; Francis Fukuyama, "Identity Crisis: Why We Shouldn't Worry About Mexican Immigration," *Slate* (4 June 2004), http://www.slate.com/id/2101756/.

[5] Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, "The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today," Classic Literature Library, http://mark-twain.classic-literature.co.uk/the-gilded-age/.

[6] John Arthur Garraty, *The New Commonwealth, 1877-1890*, New American Nation Series (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 1. I use the period between the Civil War and 1900 as the time period of the "Gilded Age." The process of mechanization in the larger South Bend factories was largely achieved by 1900, and most of the founders of industrial giants in South Bend had handed over control of their companies over to younger family members and larger management bureaucracies by the late 1890s and early 1900s.

come to represent a society that was gilded in outward signs of success, but at its core was morally bankrupt.

The vision of the Gilded Age made famous by Twain and Warner, has re-appeared in popular culture, as the fortunes of a relatively small number of people have risen dramatically in a short period of time. But in those elite circles, the Gilded Age harkens back to an idealistic American past when government interference in business was appropriately small enough to encourage entrepreneurial growth. Without the shackles of government regulation or high taxes, business thrived and fortunes were collected by a few individuals who spent their money on lavish items and philanthropic investments of their own choosing. Current admirers of that time see it as a golden era, not gilded period, when great men created their fortunes and used them as they saw fit. The economic growth of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have led many to draw apt comparisons. The deregulation, lowered taxes, and interest rate cuts of the 1980s, and technological innovations in the 1990s helped fuel the late twentieth century economic boom that rivals the boom of 100 years previous.[7]

Though envious of their nineteenth century counterparts, the twenty-first century American billionaires do not command the type of relative wealth compared to American national income their Gilded Age predecessors enjoyed. In the original Gilded Age, the richest thirty men owned an equivalent of 5 percent of the United States national income.[8] The richest men in the United States today do not measure up to that type of standard. However, the current economic elite dwarf their predecessors when comparing their own income to the majority of Americas. Rockefeller, for example, the richest man

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[7] Uchitelle, "The Richest of the Rich, Proud of a New Gilded Age."; "The New (Improved) Gilded Age," *Economist*, 12 Dec 07.
[8] Uchitelle, "The Richest of the Rich, Proud of a New Gilded Age."

in America in 1894, earned 7,000 times the average American per capita income. Though staggering, it pales when compared with the recent earnings of James Simons, a hedge fund manager. In 2006, Simons earned 1.7 billion dollars; 38,000 times more than the average American income.[9] But like their counterparts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the new "captains of industry" are just as unapologetic about their wealth. For them, their fortunes were made by their personal prowess and ability, not as some argue, because the stock market and American economy was growing at breakneck speeds when their tenure as executives occurred. For the current business magnets, the Gilded Age and the men of fortune who blazed a path of economic concentration are worthy of emulating.[10]

There are critics who see the current economic developments as reminiscent of the Gilded Age with less admiration than the nouveau riche. The detractors deride the rise of billionaire status, and relatedly, the widening gap between upper and lower classes in America as problematic.[11] Economist, professor, Nobel Prize winner and *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman has drawn attention to what he calls "divergence" between the highest and lowest income earners for more than a decade. Krugman recognized the economic concentration that took place in the original Gilded Age was accompanied by unprecedented suffering and inequality for many Americans and considered the current economic development similar and forecasts similar social ills.[12]

Warnings of the growing problems of inequality in the Unites States are not just the concern from those on the left, or even from the twenty-first century. Writing in the

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[9] Paul Krugman, "Gilded Once More," *The New York Times* (27 April 2007), http://select.nytimes.com/2007/04/27/opinion/27krugman.html?_r=1; Paul Krugman, "Conscience of a Liberal," New York Times, http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/09/18/introducing-this-blog/.
[10] Uchitelle, "The Richest of the Rich, Proud of a New Gilded Age."
[11] Henwood, "Our Gilded Age."
[12] Krugman, "Gilded Once More."

1980s, one-time republican strategist Kevin Phillips saw the changes in the federal tax code and economic policy during the 1980s reorder American society in such a way that allowed those with the most economic weight to achieve even greater economic reward. In *The Politics of the Rich and the Poor,* Phillips compared the 1980s redistribution of wealth upward to earlier periods of history, including the Gilded Age that gave rise to popular protest movements against such wealth distribution.[13]

Twain and Warner were not alone in their harsh critique of the original Gilded Age America. The obsession for wealth rankled even the most ardent supporters of the American superiority. Writing just over a decade after Twain and Wagner, Josiah Strong, a popular evangelical preacher and proponent of American economic supremacy (and advocate of Anglo-Saxon supremacy), railed against the growing "mammonism" or the debasing influence of wealth, in the United States. Strong proudly proclaimed that the United States economic prowess was unmatched in the annals of world history.[14] Yet even this unabashed supporter of the United States economic and social systems observed problems, if not with the basic model of the United States economy, at least with the motives behind the successes. Strong was concerned that materialism was creating a culture absent of moral certainties; that those in pursuit of riches were susceptible to its corrupting influence. Strong was concerned in particular with the political arena where the money flowed to make the legislators millionaires. In addition, he considered the acquisition of wealth by individuals a threat to the republican foundations of the country

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[13] Kevin P. Phillips, *The Politics of the Rich and Poor: Wealth and the American Electorate in the Reagan Aftermath* (New York: Random House, 1990).
[14] Rev. Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York: American Missonary Society, 1885), 112-13.

as a "money King" who was responsible to no electorate, but had more power than the legitimate seats of government.[15]

Twain, Warner, and Strong were concerned primarily with wealth acquisition and its negative effects on those people and the ideology of the country as a whole. They were not as much disturbed with reality that others felt on a daily basis at the opposite end of the economic spectrum. Those observations would be left for others to illuminate. One such person was Terrence V. Powderly, president of the Knights of Labor from 1879 to 1893. An ardent supporter of workingmen and the eight -hour movement, Powderly expressed his outrage for the economic system that forced millions of people to live on meager earnings while allowing only a few to live in luxury.[16] His particular solution to the problems of industrial America was to spread the work to as many people as possible by establishing an eight-hour work day. Radicals like Albert Parsons went even further in their critique of the American economic system. For them, only a revolutionary change that eliminated the capitalist economic system could raise the majority of Americans into a respectable standard of living. Aiding the perception that American society needed mending were the pictorial displays by Jacob Riis, shining a light on the filth and poverty of a "modern America."[17]

The critics of Gilded Age economic disparity continued through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. The stereotype of the "money-kings," "robber-barons" and ruthless bankers who, through illegal business ventures and bribery of government officials hoarded millions of dollars at the expense of most Americans, became a popular

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[15] Ibid., 123.

[16] T. V. Powderly, "The Army of the Discontented," *The North American Review* 140, no. 341 (1885).

[17] Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York*, 1971 ed. (New York: Dover, 1890).

historical perception. In the 1930s, historian Matthew Josephson called them "Robber Barons;"[18] and Ray Ginger in 1965 labeled the period "The Age of Excess,"[19] while more recently Jack Beatty lamented over the "Age of Betrayal."[20] These historians from the progressive period, the New History of the 1960s and 1970s, and today all followed the lead of the contemporary critics of the Gilded Age who found problematic the unequal distribution of income.

In addition to the similarities in economic growth and the widening gap between the rich and poor, comparisons in the immigration rates of the original Gilded Age and the twenty first century have also been made. Some historians consider immigration to be the most important development of the nineteenth century. With a population that increased over 85 percent from almost 40 million in 1870 to 76 million in 1900, and the proportion of those born in foreign countries increasing to over 10 percent, the population of immigrants was growing both proportionally and numerically. That trend is being repeated today as the ratio of foreign born increases. According to a February 11, 2008 report from the Pew Research Center, the foreign born population in 2005 was 12 percent of the total population. The Center projects that percentage to surpass the high mark of nearly 15 percent by 2025 and to continue rising to 19 percent by 2050.[21] Part of the increase in foreign born *rates* occurs because native born families are only producing about half the number of children they had been at the turn of the twentieth century.

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[18]Matthew Josephson, *The Robber Barons: The Great American Capitalists, 1861-1901* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1934).

[19] Ray Ginger, *Age of Excess* (New York: Macmillan, 1965).

[20] Jack Beatty, *Age of Betrayal: The Triumph of Money in America, 1865-1900* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

[21] Jeffrey S. and D'Vera Cohn Passel, "U.S. Population Projections: 2005-2050," (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center 2008), 1, 9.

The recent debate concerning illegal Mexican immigration into the United States, including the related benefits and costs to the American economy and society, have revealed once again that immigrants and immigration remain important issues of study for historians. American intellectuals and laypersons alike entertain conflicting notions concerning the appropriate response to the illegal Mexican immigration. Opinions on one side show a fear that the millions of immigrants from Mexico contribute to the already existing problems in the United States. These critics of immigration see a woefully inadequate healthcare system straining to the breaking point as increasing numbers of poor illegal aliens crowd into already full emergency rooms. They see American students performing below their counterparts around the world, and again, blame immigrants for drawing precious educational resources away from legal students to assist the children of illegal immigrants. Increased crime and the costs associated with prevention and enforcement are blamed on the "inherently" criminal illegal Mexican migrant. Those concerned with the economic sector find that the illegal immigrants increase the labor supply and, by working for drastically lower wages than Americans tolerate, drive down the overall wages for all workers. Additionally, opponents claim billions of dollars are siphoned out of the United States economy by immigrants sending their earnings back to their families in Mexico. And still others argue the Mexican immigration threatens American culture itself, as the overwhelming numbers of Mexican immigrants dilute the fabric and values of American life. The evidence for their opinion can easily be found in the rise of Spanish language television, radio, and retail signs, and most galling to some, the national anthem.[22]

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[22] Christine Kim Robert E. Rector, "The Fiscal Cost of Low-Skill Immigrants to the U.S. Taxpayer," *Heritage Foundation* (22 May 2007), http://www.heritage.org/research/Immigration/sr14.cfm; Gig

On the opposing side of the debate lie the supporters of immigrants. They claim immigrants are not a drain on American society or the economy, but rather, are important contributors. Armed with their own statistics the immigrant advocates claim that immigrants pay taxes in larger numbers than they draw from the educational and healthcare systems. They admit that illegal immigrants do work, and work hard, because it is to earn money that they migrate.   But the employment comes in areas that their defenders argue many Americans consider below their status; working as domestic servants, migratory farm laborers, and low paid day laborers. Supporters of immigrants claim the Mexican migrants contribute to the American economic growth by performing these tasks, and as the economy grows, the "native" American workers are given more opportunities to move up the economic ladder. Furthermore, these supporters of illegal Mexican immigrants also note the hypocrisy of their opponents. In a nation of immigrants, the infusion of new immigrant groups has historically contributed to the wealth and health of the American society and economy. Supporters point to the Irish and Chinese immigrants that provided the manual labor necessary to build the canals and railroads in the early nineteenth century. And to the millions of European migrants in the later part of the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century who provided the cheap labor as fuel for the incredible industrial growth by working in the mines and factories.[23]

Conaughton, "Report Estimates County's Illegal Immigrant Costs a $256 Million in 2006," *North County Times* (7 Sept 2007), http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2007/09/08/news/top_stories/19_46_779_7_07.txt; Steven A. Camarota, "A Jobless Recovery? Immigrant Gains and Native Losses," *Center for Immigration Studies* (Oct 2004), http://www.cis.org/articles/2004/back1104.html; "Spanish 'Star-Spangled Banner' Draws Ire " *USA Today* (28 April 2007), http://www.usatoday.com/life/music/news/2006-04-27-spanish-spangled-banner_x.htm.
[23] Huei-Hsia Wu, "Silent Numbers: The Economic Benefits of Migrant Labor," Boise State University, http://www.boisestate.edu/history/issuesonline/fall2005_issues/5f_numbers_mex.html; Edwardo Porter, "Illegal Immigrants Are Bolstering Social Security with Billions," *New York Times* (5 April 2005),

The debate over illegal Mexican immigration reached the legislative stage as politicians debated bills to build walls between Mexico and the United States, create work visas, pass English only laws, and in general reform the American immigration policy.[24] In light of these attempts to address the problems associated with this immigration, and with passionate opinions displayed in academic and popular forums, it is apparent that studies examining the activities of immigrant populations in the American past remain timely and significant. Understanding the relationship between the labor market in the United States and immigrant communities in previous periods of high immigration rates to the United States can provide valuable information with which to formulate new ideas concerning this current wave of immigration.

The increased numbers of foreign born may be alarming to some, but for others, it looks strikingly familiar for a nation that has repeatedly experienced rising populations and who recognize migration as a human tradition. During the original Gilded Age, the rapid rise of immigration was praised and condemned, as it continues to be today. The concern about immigration led to a congressional investigation headed by Vermont's Senator William Dillingham.[25] A report based on the investigation was finished in 1911 and contributed to the anti-immigration laws passed during the 1920s that severely

http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/05/business/05immigration.html; Immigration Policy Center, "Undocumented Immigrants as Taxpayers," (Nov 2007), http://immigration.server263.com/index.php?content=fc071101; Giovanni Peri, "How Immigrants Affect California Employment and Wages," in *California Counts: Population Trends and Profiles*, ed. Hans P Johnson (Public Policy Institute of California, Feb 2007).

[24] MIchael A Fletcher and Jonathan Weisman, "Bush Signs Bill Authorizing 700-Mile Fence for Border," *Washington Post* (27 Oct 2006), http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/26/AR2006102600120.html; Kathy Kiely, "Senators Reach Deal on Immigration," *The USA Today* (18 May 2007), http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2007-05-17-immigration-congress_N.htm; John M. Broder, "Immigration Issue Plays out in Arizona Education Fight," *New York Times* (3 Feb 2006); Tom Brune, "Immigration Bill Debate Gearing Up," *Los Angeles Times* (23 August 2006), http://www.latimes.com/ny-usimmi234861746aug23,0,612367.story.

[25] William Paul Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911).

curtailed the number of foreigners allowed to legally enter into the United States. Currently, there is also a movement to limit the number of immigrants in the United States. The present conditions in the United States then, mirror closely several characteristics of the period following the Civil War. To study the past Gilded Age will give contemporaries greater insight into current issues.

This study examines the subjects of immigration and industrialization in the Gilded Age. The two were tied together and contributed to the growth of each other. Expanding industrialization required the cheap labor provided by newly arrived migrants while the immigrants were drawn to the industrialization with the prospect of greater economic returns and increased standards of living. The dissertation is divided into five chapters and a conclusion. The first two chapters deal broadly with the subjects of immigration and industrial growth.

In the first chapter, I examine various aspects of immigration, immigration historiography, and specific developments of immigration in the United States in the nineteenth century. Most of early American history is founded on migration into North America by Europeans, beginning with the earliest colonists looking for economic, religious or social changes. In the two decades before the American Civil War, immigrants from the German states in central Europe and Ireland came to dominate the migration patterns. Though these two groups had some common characteristics, there were striking differences in the socio-economic class of the two groups as well as their reasons for leaving. Additionally, though the immigrants experienced similar conditions when arriving in the United States, the native population in general considered the German immigrants as less objectionable than the Irish immigrants. After the Civil War,

the immigrant population shifted again. While Germans continued to come in large numbers, migrants from other European groups began to arrive in even larger numbers.

The second chapter examines broadly the effects the industrialization process had on the United States in the nineteenth century. This process helped transform virtually every aspect of the United States economy and society. Agricultural output increased due to advances in the mechanization and improved farming techniques so much that far fewer people were needed to produce an abundance of food for a growing population. Unfortunately for the farmers, the increase in output meant a decrease in profitable agricultural products. A byproduct of increased farm production allowed surplus farm labor to move into towns and look for new jobs in industry. The movement from farm to factory spurred the urbanization of America that created new problems and opportunities for its inhabitants as well as new social and political relationships. As a broad overview of immigration and industrialization, the first two chapters set the stage for the following three chapters which examine a specific city, how the industrialization process contributed to the development of immigrant communities and how the presence of an immigrant workforce impacted the position of labor.

Chapter three uses South Bend, Indiana as a specific example of a frontier town that experienced considerable growth in both immigration and industrialization. Located at the bend in the St. Joseph River that changed its course from westward through Indiana to northward, South Bend was well positioned for its original purpose of moving goods to and from Lake Michigan, 35 miles to the north. Power from the river was also tapped to draw in new settlers. The river's importance for transportation was diminished somewhat when railroads entered South Bend in the 1850s, though it was used as a power source

well after coal fired steam emerged as a more reliable and efficient source of power to South Bend in the late nineteenth century. The town grew sporadically in its first thirty years of existence and was incorporated 1865. In 1870 its population had increased to 7,200 and grew to 36,000 in 1900, a 450 percent increase in thirty years. South Bend exemplified mid-western communities in the Gilded Age that experienced sudden and dramatic increases in both industrialization and immigration.

The fourth chapter examines the development of various native and ethnic populations in South Bend. A majority of the town's earliest inhabitants came from the eastern states with a number of French, Canadian, English, and Scots. The general east-west pattern of immigration across the country followed in Indiana, which meant that the early settlers to the area migrated from the Northeastern states, through the Great Lakes areas of New York or possibly as far south as Pennsylvania, and then through Ohio or Michigan to Indiana. Most of northern Indiana's population was settled with people from these states, while the southern portion of the state was settled with stock from states below Virginia with many coming from Kentucky and southern Ohio.

In South Bend, German immigrants began arriving in larger numbers after 1840 and when the boom period of road and canal and railroad construction moved into Indiana, Irish immigrants began to settle in and around the town, being drawn away from their lives as laborers in favor of a more sedentary life working in the town's mills, or just to the north at the growing Catholic boys school, Notre Dame. After the Civil War a number of other ethnic groups settled in South Bend as part of the world wide migration pattern that witnessed a considerable exodus from Europe. For South Bend, the migrants from Poland became the most numerous and politically and socially powerful ethnic

group. But the Germans continued to play an important role in South Bend's development as did a number of other groups.

In Chapter five, I look more closely at the larger factories in South Bend that contributed to the successful economic growth of the town, and were the object of attraction for many immigrants. The Studebaker Manufacturing Company, Oliver Chilled Plow Works and Singer Sewing Manufacturer were the largest and most instrumental in the town's economic growth. Studebaker and Oliver both began as small shops that developed into large manufacturers employing thousands of men while the Singer factory was an extension of an already successful corporation. The successes and failures of these companies weighed most heavily on the economic condition of the larger social community and especially on the different ethnic groups, as many migrants found employment inside the factory walls. The individual and diverse industrial relations these companies followed contributed to a relatively peaceful industrial labor climate, save one exception in 1885, which appears exceptional in light of conflict taking place across the country between workers and management. There were attempts at labor organizing in South Bend and at one point in the mid-1880s, several Knights of Labor local groups had been established in the city. However, the organization did not last long and the industrialist were almost entirely successful at keeping their shops union free.

The final chapter includes my conclusion that the reasons behind the relatively weak labor movement in South Bend hinged on a variety of factors that centered on the diverse ethnic makeup of the labor force and the management techniques that prevented class unity. First, there was a significant presence of anti-foreign attitude among the native born in South Bend that made organization difficult between ethnic groups and

native workers. Second, each of the foreign born immigrant groups created communities for support and camaraderie, which was effective, but those communities curtailed organizing across ethnic lines. Third, there were also forces within the ethnic groups, particularly those whose faith was Catholicism, which worked to undermine labor protests. And finally, the management policies also took advantage of the immigrant discrimination by using one group against another. It was these factors that kept workers in South Bend from creating a unified labor movement for any sustainable period.

Chapter I: An Introduction to Immigration and its Historiography

The movement of people from place to place stretches as far back into history as humanity itself. The earliest hunting and gathering societies occupied much of their time searching out nutrients for survival. Bands of people following game eventually spread the human population across the world.[1] That earliest movement of people in search of sustenance for survival continues today, as it has for thousands of years. Other reasons exist for migration, such as religious and ethnic persecutions, but better opportunities to survive or to increase living standards remain the primary objectives of modern migrants. Additionally, as the human population expanded over time, there was a correlating increase in the number of people migrating. The exact number of people migrating today, or at any given time for that matter, fluctuates based on a number of variables. According to the United Nations Population Fund, approximately 3 percent or almost 200 million people worldwide, lived outside their country of birth in 2005.[2] As impressive as that number appears, it does not include the number of migrants residing outside their town, village or city, but still remaining inside their country of birth. This contemporary movement of people is a continuation of the migrations of other people in previous eras.

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[1] Jared M. Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 41-54.

[2] "Linking Population, Poverty and Development: Migration - a World on the Move," United Nations Population Fund, http://www.unfpa.org/pds/migration.html.

Peoples' movements have often been categorized as an exceptional phenomenon, or outside normal human behavior, but in fact only the volume and destinations change over time, while the activity of movement continues. The migration may look exceptional to a local or regional perspective when people from a locale leave or a large number arrive, but that indicates a change in a movement, not necessarily a new phenomenon. The rise of industrialization has been labeled by many scholars as one cause of migration, but recent studies have shown that migration was an integral part of life for many pre-industrial societies as well.[3] However, the volume and distance traveled increased significantly with technological advances and the emergence of industrial capitalism during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In his study of world migration between 1846 and 1940, Adam McKeown found that between 149-161 million people migrated to one of three frequent destination points: North and South America; Southeast Asia including the Indian Ocean Rim and the South Pacific; and the area encompassing Manchuria, Siberia, Central Asia, and Japan. Out of these millions, between 55-58 million left Europe for the Americas with about 65 percent, or between 35- 37 million, arriving in the United States. Therefore, while the United States was an important destination for many people, more than three-quarters of the world's migrants chose to move elsewhere during that period.[4]

Other historians and demographers supply a variety of slightly different statistics of migrations out of Europe and into the United States. For example, Frank Thistlethwaite found 55 million people leaving Europe between 1831 and 1924; of those,

[3] Leslie Page Moch, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe since 1650*, 2nd ed., Interdisciplinary Studies in History (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Dirk Hoerder, ed., *Labor Migration in the Atlantic Economies: The European and North American Working Classes During the Period of Industrialization*, Contributions in Labor History No. 16 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), 3-7.
[4] Adam McKeown, "Global Migration, 1846--1940," *Journal of World History* 15, no. 2 (2004): 2.

33 million entered the United States, with about one-third of them returning to their home country at some point.[5] Meanwhile, T. J. Hatton and Jeffery Williamson estimated the same number, 55 million, leaving Europe *but in thirty fewer years*, between 1850 and 1914.[6] Walter Nugent estimated 65 million people migrated during the long nineteenth century, 1800-1914, with approximately 15 million returning to their country of origin.[7] These varied estimates indicate the difficulty of arriving at an exact number of people leaving their homes. Nevertheless, historians, demographers and sociologists consider the size of the migration, whichever numbers are used, significant, even while acknowledging that the migration to the United States was a part of a larger movement of people throughout the world. How significant or important was the migration? Why did the migrations occur? What impact did the migrations have on the sending and receiving communities? These are questions that have led to a considerable amount of research regarding the impact of immigration on communities over time.

In the growing community of South Bend, Indiana - the case study of focus for this dissertation - the migrants from Europe contributed significantly to the economic, cultural and religious development of the town. This chapter provides an overview of European migration patterns, with a specific emphasis on the ethnic groups that eventually shaped the cultural context of South Bend during the Gilded Age. In the antebellum period, the Irish and German migrants were the most populous peoples moving into the United States. After the Civil War, Europeans from other areas migrated

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[5] Frank Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930*, ed. Rudolph J. Vecoli and Suzanne Sinke (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 21.
[6] T. J. Hatton and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *The Age of Mass Migration: Causes and Economic Impact* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3.
[7] Walter T. K. Nugent, *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870-1914* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 30.

in greater numbers. For South Bend, the most important groups were from the Polish area and to a lesser extent, from Sweden. After providing an overview of the causes and patterns of migration for these groups in this chapter, I will then return to the subject in more detail in chapter four with an in-depth analysis of the arrival and development of these groups in South Bend, specifically.

During the earliest years of the United States history, the foreign born were not as large a percentage of the population as they became in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But judging the size of the immigrant group relative to later numbers may be ahistorical, given that even while they were still under British rule, the American colonies were more ethnically diverse than any European country.[8] In reality, all residents of the European colonies, and later of the United States, were descendants of immigrants. Pioneer explorers and traders, religious reformers and separatists, slaves from African and Caribbean basin,[9] indentured servants who found themselves in the colonial American frontier, and the entire revolutionary generation - all were either immigrants or descendants of immigrants.

Coupled with the early diversity of the United States was the relatively small overall population of the country, which may have made the foreign born more easily identifiable than those having been born in the country. However, the size of both native born and foreign born populations rose quickly. When Thomas Jefferson assumed the presidency in 1801, there were just five million people in the United States. When Jefferson agreed to the purchase of Louisiana from Napoleon in 1803, he believed that

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[8] David Eltis, *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives*, The Making of Modern Freedom (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002).
[9] Because Africans were *forced* to migrate to the United States and only a small number resided in South Bend during the Gilded Age, their experience will not be examined in depth in this paper.

the additional land provided ample space for future generations of Americans to expand westward. In fact, though the Louisiana Purchase doubled the land holdings of the United States, Americans' appetite for expansion was not satisfied. In less than fifty years and as a part of what many Americans considered their "Manifest Destiny," the residents of the United States demanded and acquired even more land beyond the Louisiana Purchase - 150 percent more."[10] And as the United States expanded westward the population increased as well. From 5 million people in 1800, the population rose almost five times to 23 million in 1850. In fifty more years the population increased another three times to about 76 million and by 1920, the population reached 105 million.[11] Natural population growth was high in the United States, but the number of migrants entering the United States also contributed to the population growth.

Between 1820 and 1840, the total population in the United States grew from 9.6 to 17 million, and there were 743,000 migrants who entered the country or just 4 percent of the total population growth.[12] But following 1840, the rate of immigration climbed higher, as seen table 1.1. In that decade the number of migrants increased both in number and as a proportion of the total population. Between 1840 and 1850, 1.7 million migrants entered the United States, so that according to the 1850 census the foreign born population reached 2.4 million, or 9.7 percent of a total population of 23 million.[13] The decade following 1850 experienced even greater increases in population and migration, as the total population grew to 31 million on the eve of the Civil War. The number of

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[10] United States Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1960), 239.

[11] Ibid., 8.

[12] Leonard Dinnerstein and David M. Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*, 4th ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 19.

[13] The foreign born population would make up more than 10 percent of the population for one hundred years. The number did not drop below 10 percent until the 1940 census when the effects of the immigration regulations passed after the First World War were felt.

migrants who entered that decade reached almost 2.6 million which pushed the total

number of foreign born to 4.1 million or 13 percent of the total population in 1860.

Though the Civil War slowed immigration at first, it continued heartily through the rest

of the 1860s. Two million and three-hundred-thousand migrants entered the country in

the decade following 1860, bringing the total foreign born population up to 14.4 percent

of the total United States population of 38.5 million in 1870.[14]

Table 1.1: Total Population and Foreign Born Population
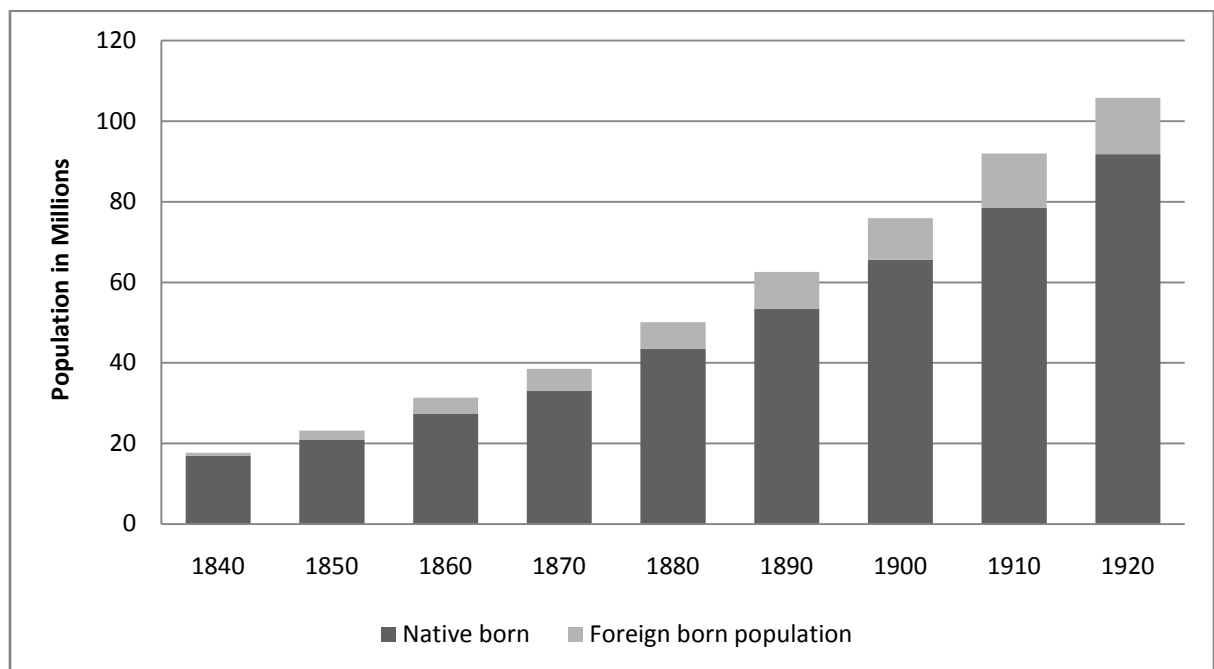
Source: Campbell J. Gibson and Emily Lennon. "Nativity of the Population and Place of Birth of the
Native Population: 1850 to 1990." U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division,
http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab01.html

People continued to migrate into the United States in the three decades after the

Civil War in larger numbers: 2.8 million in the 1870s, 5.2 million in the 1880s, almost

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[14] Campbell J. Gibson and Emily Lennon, "Nativity of the Population and Place of Birth of the Native
Population: 1850 to 1990," U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division,
http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab01.html; Dinnerstein and Reimers,
Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration, 19.

3.9 million in the 1890s. The lower number in the final decade reflected the effects of the most severe economic depression in American history to that point, which deterred migration for several years. The number of migrants continued to be high in the first two decades of the twentieth century with 8.8 million arriving between 1900 and 1910 and an additional 5.7 million arriving in the ten years before the 1920 census. Immigration was curtailed in the latter decade due to the advent of WWI. While the number of migrants generally increased, they came to represent a relatively constant percentage of the total population. The highest foreign born populations reported by the Census Bureau occurred in 1890 and in 1910 with 14.8 percent and 14.7 percent of the total population, respectively. The percentage of immigrants in 1870 was the next highest at 14.4 percent while the rates in 1860, 1880, and 1900 all fell between 13.2 percent and 13.6 percent of the total population.[15]

As the economic, social and political environment revealed in the first decade of the twenty-first century, when immigrants in the Unites States become more populous, a concern arises about what the increased immigrant population means for American society. Throughout the history of the United States, there exists a paradoxical perception that sees the United States as an open accepting country, sometimes even recruiting immigrants, and at the same time exhibiting antagonistic behavior toward the foreign born and desiring to limit or even forbid immigration. In the ethnically diverse colonial Pennsylvania for example, Benjamin Franklin voiced concern in the 1750s that the large number of German immigrants could adversely affect the colony's

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[15] Gibson and Lennon, "Nativity of the Population and Place of Birth of the Native Population: 1850 to 1990."

development.[16] This strain of anti-immigrant reaction continued through the nineteenth

and twentieth centuries and is one of the many facets on which historians of immigrants

focus.[17] As will be discussed more in chapter four, the native born in South Bend were

not impervious to the anti-immigrant tendencies. For example, the major Republican

newspaper in the town commonly used the derogatory term "Polander," in print to

describe the Polish population.[18]

One reaction to the increase in the immigrant population before the Civil War was

the development of social and political organizations that attempted to limit the number

of immigrants allowed into the country, and to curtail their liberties in the United States

once they settled. The Alien and Sedition Acts were passed in 1789 based, in part, on the

anti-immigration sentimentalities. The Nativist Party, and the Order of the Star Spangled

Banner were among the groups representing nativist ideas in the early 1800s. Support of

anti-immigrant opinions, especially against Catholicism, is evidenced by the popularity of

the book, *The Awful Disclosure of Maria Monk*, published in 1836, that claimed to reveal

the true story of a woman who experienced terrible sexual abuse by priests at a nunnery

in Montreal.[19] With 300,000 copies sold, it was the largest selling book until Harriet

Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) replaced it. The Know Nothings, the largest

antebellum nativist movement, emerged as the American Party in the 1850s and garnered

more than 20 percent of the popular vote in the 1856 presidential election.

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[16] Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 53-55; Dinnerstein and Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*, 19.

[17] John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1955).

[18] Leo Vincent Krzywkowski, "The Origin of the Polish National Catholic Church of St. Joseph County, Indiana" (Ph.D dissertation, Ball State University, 1972), 56.

[19] James Stuart Olson, *The Ethnic Dimension in American History*, 3rd ed. (St. James, NY: Brandywine Press, 1999), 168-67.

After the Civil War, nativist organizations continued to attempt to limit immigration while other groups attempted to "Americanize" the foreign born. Federally, the movement to exclude immigrants coalesced around the small number of Chinese who were easily identifiable and possessed little economic or political clout. The result was the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which, according to Roger Daniels, was the first of many federal laws that limited immigration.[20] Many employers, like Henry Ford for example, arranged classes for their employees to learn English and American values. State governments and benevolent organizations also provided lessons for the newly arrived to facilitate assimilation. In the aftermath of the First World War, the anti-immigrant sentiment was so strong that vigilante groups like the Ku Klux Klan operated against immigrants in many areas with little regard to secrecy. The Klan was more politically powerful in Indiana than any other state where many state office holders, including the governor, were either members of the organization or beholden to it for their election.[21]

Because immigration and the reaction to it played important roles in the economic and social development of the United States, many scholars have examined the issues. But while migration and the search to satisfy basic human needs reaches back to the beginning of human existence, the inquiry into migration to the United States as a historical field has a much shorter past, but one that is just as intriguing. American historians during the early and middle parts of the twentieth century rarely focused their attention on migration or the participants. Historians typically used the presence of the

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[20] Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Perennial, 2002), 271.
[21] Leonard Joseph Moore, *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921-1928* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

foreign born in the United States to support the paradigm of American history that portrayed accommodating and merit-based social and economic systems that provided opportunity for millions of poor Europeans to raise themselves up through economic and political freedom. Aside from a few well researched studies produced before the Second World War,[22] most of the early twentieth century and later consensus historians of the post-WWII period were more interested in creating an American narrative that emphasized cohesiveness and progress. But by the mid-twentieth century, there were several historians who were looking more closely at the migration experience in the United States and embarked on historical investigations about the characteristics of the immigrants, their experiences in the United States, their reasons for leaving their homes, and the reaction from those born in the United States.

One of the leading post-WWII historians on immigration was Oscar Handlin. In his widely acclaimed study, *Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People,* Handlin's immigrants experienced a traumatic transformation from old world peasants to new world proletarians.[23] Accordingly, his book was "not how immigrants altered America, but what happened to the immigrants. It [was] a story of broken homes, disjointed lives, and separation from culture. It [was] a history of alienation and its consequences."[24] *The Uprooted* ushered in a period of greater historical studies on immigration, and Handlin's efforts were instrumental in creating an intellectual environment that made possible the notion that immigrant history was the history of the United States. Though later criticized for his emphasis on the mass of

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[22] For example, William Isaac Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America; Monograph of an Immigrant Group* (Boston: R.G. Badger, 1918); Walter Francis Wilcox et al., *International Migrations* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929).

[23] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1951).

[24] Ibid., 4.

disenchanted migrants and the reliance on the Irish experience, his insight is still

noteworthy, and his importance in drawing attention to the immigrant in America may be

even more significant.[25] Many historians now agree with his recognition when he started

his research on immigrants: "Once I thought to write the history of immigrants in

America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American History."[26]

At the same time Handlin was illuminating the difficult conditions immigrants

faced in the United States, John Higham was investigating the antagonistic reception

extended by the American born toward the foreign born.[27] Writing in the 1950s, Handlin

and Higham helped end the idea that immigrants found a land of milk and honey in the

United States, and sparked a new concentration in American History that was centered on

the immigrant.

In the 1960s and 1970s the spotlight on immigrant studies turned toward

immigrants' assimilation into American society and to what extent immigrants fell into

the overarching paradigm of upward mobility. Did these newcomers experience the

same, higher, or lower rates of upward mobility compared to those born in the United

States? For most of these researchers, upward economic mobility measured the extent to

which the foreign born had assimilated, or melted into the larger American society.[28]

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[25] Rudolph J. Vecoli, ""Contadini" In Chicago: A Critique Of "The Uprooted."" *Journal of American History* 51, no. 3 (1964).

[26] Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People*.

[27] Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*.

[28] Seymour Martin Lipset, Reinhard Bendix, and University of California Berkeley. Institute of Industrial Relations., *Social Mobility in Industrial Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959); Stephan Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress; Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge,: Harvard University Press, 1964); Stephan Thernstrom, *The Other Bostonians: Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970*, Harvard Studies in Urban History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); Humbert S. Nelli, *Italians in Chicago, 1880-1930; a Study in Ethnic Mobility* (New York,: Oxford University Press, 1970); Dean R. Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1975); James A. Henretta, "The Study of Social Mobility," *Labor History* 18, no. 2 (1977); Thomas Kessner, *The Golden*

In 1985, when John Bodnar penned his critically acclaimed *Transplanted*: *A History of Immigrants in Urban America*, he had decades of research to review and summarize. Bodnar found that immigrant studies in the preceding years could be classified into three categories that created three stereotypical immigrants types: 1) The poor isolated migrant individual who escaped the "poverty and disorder only to be further weakened by back-breaking labor and inhospitable cities in America." 2) Praise worthy and capable people who represented "long-established traditions which helped to organize their lives amidst the vagaries of the industrial city and served as a context in which they organized their transition, rather successfully, to a new land." 3) The immigrants who "were aspiring individuals whose ties to tradition were loosened in their homelands and who moved to America eager for opportunity, advancement and all the rewards of capitalism."[29]

In *The Transplanted*, Bodnar recognized that all three of the "types" of immigrants may have been present, but there were differences in European culture and in the American social and economic conditions that made each migrant act and react differently depending on a variety of factors and values. The immigrants were a diverse group that required a more nuanced examination. For Bodnar: "What they actually shared in common was a need to confront a new economic order and provide for their own welfare and that of their kin or household group. They did this but they did so in different ways with divergent results."[30] Bodnar's *Transplanted* made the immigrant

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Door: Italian and Jewish Immigrant Mobility in New York City, 1880-1915, Urban Life in America Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).
[29] John E. Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America*, Interdisciplinary Studies in History (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), xvi.
[30] Ibid.

experience more complicated through closer examination of a greater variety of immigrant experiences.

The most recent movement in the study of migrants mirrors the current economic paradigm of globalization.[31] In the past two decades sociologists, demographers and historians have embraced the term transnationalism to define the contemporary recognition that the world is now, and was in the past, interconnected. For migration studies, this recognition makes migration even more complex. The migration studies of today have taken Bodnar's example and delved even more deeply into the individual experience, while at the same time connecting the individuals to a more complicated network of stimuli. Experts still recognize that individuals were responsible for the decision to migrate. But that person was tied to a network of family and a community which were all part of the decision making process. Furthermore, the individual and community were aware of the economic conditions in the community to which the migrant might move. They were aware of the capitalist economic realities before the decision to migrate was made. And once migration occurred, the communication most likely continued. This communication not only helped establish a chain migration from Europe to the United States but also offered a continuous stream of information that flowed between the two communities. A proponent of transnationalism, David Gerber, urged those who study immigrants, "to remember that European immigrants remained conscious of their homelands and their individual and family pasts, and that this

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[31] Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999). *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (1999) devoted the entire issue to the topic of transnationalism.

consciousness remained a vital feature of immigrant life."[32] This newfound perspective

has led to a greater understanding of the influence of European communities in the

development of American ethnic communities. No longer is the immigrant picked up

from a stereotypical peasant village and deposited in the rough and tumble world of the

United States with little or no connection to home.

Many contemporary scholars who study migration recognize Frank Thistlethwaite

as the pioneer of the current migration studies movement.[33] In his 1960 essay,

"Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,"

Thistlethwaite urged his fellow historians to throw off what he called the "American

Fever" in immigration studies that concentrated so heavily on the immigrants in the

United States that the communities in Europe from which they emigrated were neglected.

Thistlethwaite commended Handlin for illuminating the life of the immigrant in the

United States, but he noted that even Handlin reflected the general "American

centeredness" of immigrant studies. Thistlethwaite argued that the European

communities, as well as the causes and consequences of emigration, lacked investigation

and he agreed with Handlin who saw the history of the United States as the story of

immigrants.[34] Thistlethwaite believed that emigration could be the central theme for the

history of the United States, a narrative, wrote Thistlethwaite, that was even more

profound than Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis because "settlers were emigrants

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[32] David A. Gerber, "Forming a Transnational Narrative: New Perspectives on European Migrations to the United States," *The History Teacher* 35, no. 1 (2001).

[33] For Thistlethwaite's leadership see Virginia Yans-McLaughlin et al., *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Gerber, "Forming a Transnational Narrative: New Perspectives on European Migrations to the United States."; Nugent, *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870-1914*; Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen, *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, International and Comparative Social History, 4 (New York: Peter Lang, 1997).

[34] Thistlethwaite, "Migration from Europe Overseas in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," 19.

before they settled and migration has more than the wilderness to do with American character and institutions."[35] So at the same time that Thistlethwaite cautioned against American centeredness in immigration studies, he also wanted to emphasize how important immigrants were to the development of the United States. And somewhat ironically, though he exhorted his colleagues in 1960 to expand their research, Thistlethwaite too, restricted his lament on the subject by disregarding the rest of the world and only pleaded for greater research on the European communities.[36]

Thistlethwaite's call for greater understanding about the European communities has been addressed in recent years, as has his omission of other migrations outside of the European – United States model. McKeown, as an example of the globalization of the field, argued that Asian and African migration patterns can be compared to European migrations in size and timing and that the "frontiers in Manchuria and rice fields and rubber plantations of SE Asia were as much a part to the industrial processes transforming the world as the factories of Manchester and the wheat fields of North America."[37] Furthermore, those interested in European and American migration had limited the focus on immigration to the years before the First World War, when in fact, though migration slowed in the Atlantic sphere after the war, it actually increased in the Asian sphere.[38]

Migrations researchers have always at least tacitly recognized that economics played a role in the process of migration. But in recent years, the connection has become more apparent as studies showed that labor as a commodity behaves similarly to other

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[35] Ibid., 20.
[36] See Ioanna Laliotou, *Transatlantic Subjects: Acts of Migration and Cultures of Transnationalism between Greece and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), as an example of more equal treatment between European and US communities affected by migration.
[37] McKeown, "Global Migration, 1846--1940." 55-56.
[38] Ibid., 172-77.

goods, and more historians consider the movement of peoples a part of world-wide economic developments. Dirk Heorder has been a leader tying the migrants and their communities to economic developments.[39] While Bodnar recognized that the migrant was affected by the development of industrial capitalism and individual migrants made their decision about how to deal with their challenges based on a plethora of variables, Heorder focuses even more intently on migrants as a labor supply and how they moved through the market.

Despite the turn toward world migration models, the relationship between Europe and the United States cannot be denied. As discussed earlier, some 35 million people arrived in the United States from Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For these people and their families, the decision to move away was not taken lightly, even if the decision was initially considered a temporary solution to an economic crisis. There were a number of interconnected developments in Europe and the United States that contributed to this migration.

One of those developments was an increase of the population in Europe. Prior to the mid eighteenth century, the population had been fairly stable for centuries, rising and falling mostly in response to plagues and wars and their cessations. But after the mid 1700s, the population increased dramatically. In the fifty years after 1750, the population grew from an estimated 140 million to 188 million, or almost 35 percent. In the five decades after 1800, the increase was more than 40 percent when the number of people

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[39] Hoerder, ed., *Labor Migration in the Atlantic Economies: The European and North American Working Classes During the Period of Industrialization*; Dirk Hoerder, *"Struggle a Hard Battle": Essays on Working-Class Immigrants* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986); Dirk Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium*, Comparative and International Working-Class History (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Dirk Hoerder, *American Labor and Immigration History, 1877-1920s: Recent European Research*, The Working Class in American History (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); Dirk Hoerder and Leslie Page Moch, *European Migrants: Global and Local Perspectives* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996).

reached 266 million in 1850. And between the years 1850 and 1900 the population

increase was more than 50 percent as the population topped 400 million in 1900. (table

1.2)[40]

Table 1.2:
World Population Growth, 1750-1900
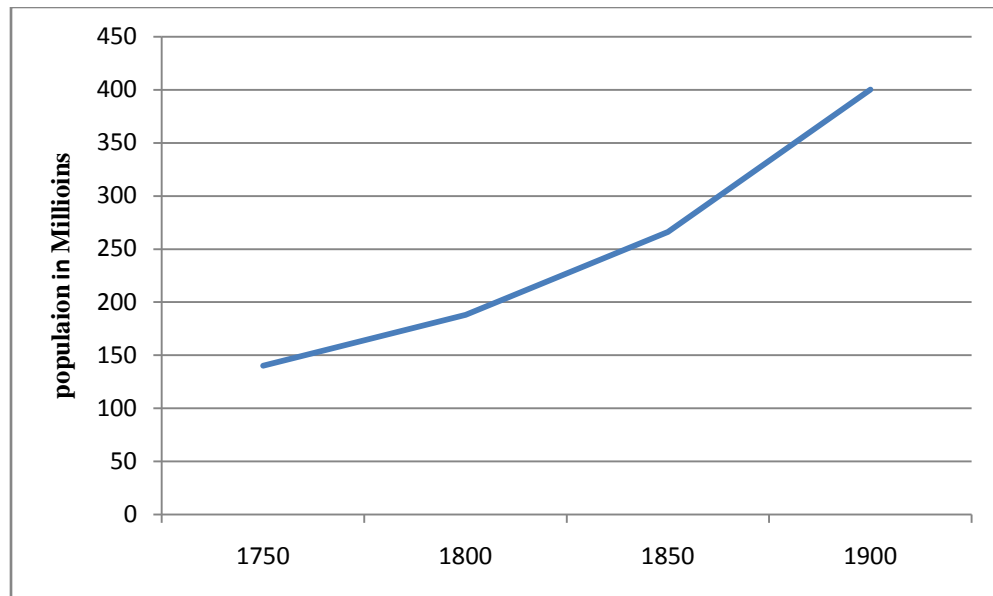
Source: William L. Langer, "Europe's Initial Population Explosion," *The American Historical Review* 69, no 1, (1963), 1.

Several factors contributed to the increase in population including a rise in the

fertility rate, a decline in the death rate and a general revolution in food production. The

latter development itself benefited from several innovations including adaption of animal

drawn plows, crop rotation, and fertilization. But possibly the most important

development of the period was the introduction and ultimate acceptance of the potato.

The potato's adaptability allowed its cultivation to spread throughout Europe, and its high

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[40] William L. Langer, "Europe's Initial Population Explosion," *The American Historical Review* 69, no. 1 (1963): 1.

nutritional value permitted peasants to thrive on ever shrinking plots of land.[41] The

ultimate effect of these combined developments was that the population rose

considerably.

The population increase occurred simultaneously with another economic and

political development: the enclosure movement. Fencing public land for private use was

a part of the European movement from a feudal economic and political system to a liberal

capitalist system. Europe in the nineteenth century experienced the liberalization of

feudal ties as peasants were released from their land, and common lands were acquired

by private interests. Larger land owners enclosed private and public lands, and adopted

more modern farming methods and machinery to increase the supply of agricultural

goods, or to turn the land into pasture and raise livestock. Meanwhile many peasants

were forced onto smaller farms, left to work as wage laborers on the larger farms, or

compelled to move to larger towns and eventually to cities as wage laborers.[42] Farmers

not evicted from the land were forced to compete against the larger farms that produced

products at lower prices. And ultimately as sons grew, the land was subdivided into even

smaller plots. The potato allowed the peasants to survive on the smaller plot for a

considerable time, but the growing population was in effect moving away from self-

sufficiency. Therefore as the population increased, the amount of land available for small

farmers decreased. The rising food production coupled with decreasing land availability

combined to create an unprecedented level of labor which in turn was a prerequisite for

industrialization.[43]

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[41] Ibid., 11-17.

[42] Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America*, 23-30.

[43] Alan M. Kraut, *The Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880-1921* (Arlington Heights, Ill.: Harlan Davidson, 1982), 28.

Industrialization will be considered in more detail in a following chapter, but here it must be mentioned that it played a pivotal role in altering the social and economic life of Europeans and Americans and provided the stimulus and opportunity for greater migration. The improvements in agricultural implements led to increased production and with it an increase in the size of landholdings for those who could most readily take advantage of the improvements. Those who could not compete in agriculture were forced to become wage laborers. Though industrialization was a widespread development, its effects were not evenly felt; some communities were affected by it significantly while others remained relatively isolated. As a part of the technological developments of the time, the railroad and steamship played an important role in migrations, providing an opportunity for greater numbers of people to move longer distances at decreasing prices. As Alan Kraut noted, people in precarious economic conditions, or who were subjected to political or religious persecution had been moving for centuries, but the technological advances of the time allowed the volume to increase significantly.[44]

In the same way that farmers faced competition with more mechanized farm procedures; European craftsmen found competing with a more industrialized manufacturing process untenable. As a result, many craftsmen joined their rural brethren as unemployed laborers looking for jobs in other European and American locations. American farmers and craftsmen experienced these same pressures and reacted similarly. Though industrialization forced many changes to the European and American farming communities and small trades, Leslie Page Moch points out that an over-emphasis has been placed on industrialization as the key to mass migrations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries at the expense of earlier migrations. She identified significant

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[44] Ibid., 28-30.

migratory movement before 1750 and the industrial revolution and concluded that although industrialization contributed to the increased size of the migration, it is important to remember the migratory tradition existed before the industrial revolution.[45]

It is within this general European context: a tradition of migration, increased population pressures, changes in economic and political system, and advanced technology in agriculture and industry, that the migration wave in the nineteenth century occurred. And more specifically, it was in this context that a large number of migrants looked to the United States as a destination. The migration experience was as complex as the millions of people who made the trip. For some, circumstance and opportunity led them to agricultural pursuits. But especially after 1880, when the size of the migration grew larger, migrants finding themselves in urban environs and industrial jobs were more prevalent.[46] South Bend, Indiana played a role in the world-wide industrialization process and was also the destination of several different immigrant groups. As such, South Bend offers an interesting example of urbanization and immigration as it grew from a small antebellum frontier town into an industrial city after the Civil War.

The French were the earliest Europeans to arrive into what would later be called Indiana. Through their early presence as pioneer traders, homesteaders and merchants in the territory, they maintained a presence after South Bend was founded in 1830. For many years, people of French origin made up a significant portion of St. Joseph's Church in South Bend, for example.[47] But their uniqueness as an ethnic group passed after

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[45] Moch, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe since 1650*, 22-59.
[46] Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America*, xvi; Hans Norman, and Harold Runblom, "Migration Patterns in the Nordic Countries," in *Labor Migration in the Atlantic Economies: The European and North American Working Classes During the Period of Industrialization*, ed. Dirk Hoerder (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1985), 52-53.
[47] Edmund V. Campers, *History of St. Joseph's Parish: South Bend, Indiana, 1853-1953, on the Occasion of the Centenary Celebration, October 25, 1953* (n.p.: s.n., 1953), 45, 52, 55.

several generations, and there was little evidence of significant French immigration after American independence.

The next migrants that moved into the area were native born Americans. This group acted as much as a migratory population as any other because they moved from one location to another in search of better economic opportunities, as they left from their homes in the eastern and southern United States and travelled into the mid-west. The settlement patterns of the native born across Indiana in the nineteenth century reveal a general east-west design. Most settlers in the southern two-thirds of Indiana relocated from southern states and southern Ohio, while, the settlers in northern Indiana came primarily from the New England States, New York, Pennsylvania and northern Ohio.[48] These American migrants, however, encountered different experiences than those who travelled across the ocean after them, based on their ethnicity and previous conditions. Their early experience was largely based on a relationship with the land and Native Americans, who were ultimately forced out of the St. Joseph River Valley. When later European migrants settled in the area, the American migrants were considered "native" and exhibited the dominant culture the immigrants needed to reconcile themselves.

The Irish and the Germans were the largest transatlantic groups to move to the United States before the Civil War, and both made their way into the interior of the country, including Indiana. The Irish contributed the largest percentage of migrants in the decades of the 1830s through the 1850s. In those thirty years, almost 2 million Irish braved the journey to the United States, and they made up 35 percent of the immigrants

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[48] Richard L. Kilmer, "South Bend, 1820-1851: The Founding of the Early Community" (Master's Thesis, University of Notre Dame, 1947), 35-40.

in the 1830s and 1850s, and 45 percent in the 1840s.[49] The next largest European

migrant group, with 1.5 million in those years, was the Germans. Both of these groups

continued to arrive in large numbers throughout the nineteenth century, and in fact the

Germans became the largest migratory group that entered the United States before 1930

with almost 6 million people. However, in the late nineteenth century peoples from other

countries in Europe began sending large numbers as well. For example, migrants from

the Scandinavian countries numbered 2.3 million and Italian migrants numbered 4.5

million before 1930.[50] In South Bend, the 7,000 Polish immigrants constituted the largest

Eastern European migrant group through the late nineteenth century.[51]

 Several factors contributed to the large migration of Irish and German peoples.

The potato blight and subsequent famine in Ireland was the most obvious reason for high

migration rates after the mid 1840s from Ireland. There were other reasons as well.

Ireland's relationship with England had been one of violence, war and oppression for

centuries. In the eighteenth century, a Protestant minority had established control of the

island economy and government while the British Army enforced the legislation that

effectively disenfranchised the Catholics and limited their land ownership. The

government in Dublin did little to advance the economic wellbeing of the majority of

poor Catholic farmers. In 1800, Ireland joined the British Commonwealth: it traded its

home parliament in Dublin in exchange for representation in the British government and

free trade. It was therefore the policies passed by the British parliament that failed to

adequately address the famine when it struck.

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[49] Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 129.
[50] Leonard Dinnerstein, David M. Reimers, and Roger L. Nichols, *Natives and Strangers: A Multicultural History of Americans*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 19.
[51] Joseph V. Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914" (Master's thesis, University of Notre Dame, 1941), 6.

The industrial revolution was also altering the Irish economy. Although two-thirds of the population was supported directly by agricultural pursuits, by 1840 there was a class of small business and craftsmen who were subject to the competitive and exploitative nature of the system emerging from Great Britain. As a leader in the industrial revolution, Great Britain's economy was in the middle of a transformation from agrarian to urban economy in the early nineteenth century. Part of this revolution entailed the expansion of machine production. The production by machines was infinitely more efficient and inexpensive than hand crafted goods and this hurt the Irish economy by forcing small artisans, manufacturers and merchants out of business. These political and economic changes in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century pushed a trickle of immigrants out of the country.[52]

But as previously stated, the most obvious reason for migration from Ireland was the famine in the middle of the 1840s. The reasons for the famine were varied but the most recognizable cause was the potato blight that struck Europe in the mid nineteenth century. Ireland became vulnerable to the potato blight because of its heavy reliance on the vegetable for survival. This dependence on the potato was in large part due to British policies that forced the Irish onto smaller areas of land. Ironically, the high nutritional value of the potato contributed to the population increase in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries from four to eight million people, even as the average size of land holdings for small farmers shrank. However, this tenuous reliance of the population on one crop led to disastrous results once the blight entered the island. The resulting famine from 1845-1852 increased the exodus of many Irish to foreign lands. The catastrophe

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[52] E. R. R. Green, "The Great Famine: 1845-1850," in *The Course of Irish History*, ed. T. W. Moody and F. X. Martin (Cork: Published in association with Radio TelefÃs Eireann by Mercier Press, 1984), 266.

totaled a net loss in population of three million people: one million from death and two million more through migration, the vast majority moving to the United States.[53]

The German people experienced similar threats to livelihood or survival in the nineteenth century. In Central Europe,[54] like Ireland, the farmers experienced a significant population increase in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a result of the potato and other agricultural advances.[55] Central Europe experienced crop failures as well, though they were not as acute as those that brought on the Irish famine. Some on the mainland were forced off their land in search of wage labor on other farms or in the developing industrial sector. The industrial revolution wreaked havoc on German craft industry, leading many artisans to become mobile in search of better opportunities. Added to the century long population increase, these agricultural and industrial developments increased unemployment and poverty rose considerably. There was some similarity in the political realm as well, at least superficially, between Ireland and Germany.

As in Ireland, political repression contributed to a hostile environment, though in different ways. By the mid-nineteenth century in Prussia, there was a growing class of political liberals who chaffed against increasingly conservative leaders. The conflict came to a head in 1848 when attempts at revolution by the liberals failed, forcing many to flee their homeland in the wake of the following repression. Austria joined Prussian leaders in establishing military conscription forcing many others to migrate on pacifist

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[53] Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 133-34; Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 284-91.
[54] Germany was not unified as a state until 1871.
[55] Moch, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe since 1650*, 108-09.

religious grounds.[56] These pre-Civil War German immigrants were generally better-off

economically and tended to make their livings as craftsmen, farmers or businessmen.

They were also socially and politically more active. After the Civil War, the migrants

were more likely to be responding to economic rather than political influences and as

such found employment as laborers in greater numbers than the pre-Civil War

Germans.[57] Though comparisons can be made between these two groups, there are

contrasts as well.

In Ireland, the vast majority of people to migrate were poor and from an

agricultural background. Additionally they were quite insular and devoted to their

Catholic faith: a faith which caused them persecution by the British, but also gave them

strength. In this sense an Irish person who migrated to the United States was very similar

to many of his/her compatriots, both with respect to their economic condition and their

religion. This led native born Americans to identify the Irish as clannish. As noted by

Leonard Dinnerstein et al, the American born perception of the Irish as "other" was due

to the homogeneous nature of the Irish immigrant: poor, Catholic, and uneducated.[58]

This was not the case with the German migrants.

The German immigrants were a varied population which embraced different

religions and represented all economic classes. Aside from the differences in political

and economic motivation listed above, the German population included a range of

different religions including Catholics, Jews, and a variety of Protestants sects. In

addition, there were also a significant number of Germans who had no strong religious

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[56] Giles R Hoyt, "Germans," in *Peopling Indiana*, ed. Connie A. McBirney Robert M. Jr. Taylor
(Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996), 152.
[57] Ibid., 160-62.
[58] Dinnerstein, Reimers, and Nichols, *Natives and Strangers: A Multicultural History of Americans*, 73.

affiliation and who gravitated towards a humanistic moral center and formed organizations like the Turners.[59]

Differences continued between these two groups of migrants once they had arrived in the United States. Because the Irish were generally poorer, they needed employment as soon possible. This led the Irish migrants to take jobs close to the area of disembarking from their transatlantic journey, which happened to be in New England. Because of their more dire economic conditions, their jobs were the least desirable in the northern United States. Many Irish found work along the developing railroads in the Northeast and along the Erie Canal. These jobs could and did ultimately take them along the transportation lines into the mid-west. But for a majority of the Irish, urban life became their reality, and it was not a high class life. According to Roger Daniels, "large numbers of Irish," in the middle of the nineteenth century, "were at the very bottom of the economic structure, overrepresented as common laborers and domestic servants and as residents in various municipal institutions - poor houses, jails, and charity hospitals."[60] This experience in the United States was quite different from that of the other large immigrant group before the Civil War.

Some of the million and a half German persons that migrated before the Civil War to the United States experienced the same conditions as the Irish. But for the most part their situations were more varied. Those that gravitated toward the large urban centers were not as likely to occupy the bottom rungs of the economic ladder en mass, like the Irish. When settling in cities they tended to move into positions based on their previous knowledge and experience, allowing them to move into middle or upper class circles.

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[59] Gabrielle Robinson, *German Settlers of South Bend* (Chicago, IL: Arcadia, 2003), chapter 10.
[60] Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 136.

The Germans also had more success moving inland – where land was available to begin farming exploits.[61]

The Germans and Irish continued to migrate to the United States in large numbers after the Civil War. In the 1880s, for example, more than 1.5 million German and over 600,000 Irish emigrated to the United States. But these immigrants were increasingly joined by millions of other Europeans from many different countries. The Austro-Hungarian and Scandinavian states sent more than one million immigrants and the Russian and Baltic States combined to send more than 750,000 between 1870 and 1900. These newer immigrants were at somewhat of a disadvantage to the German and Irish immigrants since the earlier migrant groups had the benefit of finding a large population of their countrymen already established in the United States when they arrived to help them find work and housing.[62] One of the immigrant groups that arrived in larger numbers after the Civil War migrated from Sweden.

There was of course a Swedish colonial presence in the New World and prior to the mass migrations beginning in 1868, there were several group migrations from Sweden, in which community members would leave together from Sweden and establish new communities in the United States.[63] But after 1868, the number of Swedish migrants increased significantly. Sweden experienced similar economic and social changes that other European countries experienced - increased food production and population, along with a decreased size of land ownership created a large landless working class. By the middle of the nineteenth century, an agricultural proletariat made up 40 percent of

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[61] Dinnerstein, Reimers, and Nichols, *Natives and Strangers: A Multicultural History of Americans*, 80-2.
[62] Dinnerstein and Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*, 19.
[63] Lars Ljungmark, *Swedish Exodus* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979), 14-23.

Sweden's population.[64] Those moving to the United States in general were looking for economic solutions to their changing world, though religious persecution and military conscription may have added to the "American fever" in Sweden. Immediately after the Civil War, Swedish migrants were more likely to be single, and under 25 years old. They also were more likely to find work as a farmer or farm hand. In the decade after 1880, as land became less available in the United States, the Swedish, like most immigrants, were forced to find work as factory hands in urban settings. Chicago, for example, was home to more Swedes than any other city in the world except Stockholm.[65] And more importantly for this paper, there was a small Swedish community working in the industrial sector in South Bend. In 1880, these small number of Swedes congregated around the Oliver and Studebaker manufacturers.[66]

People living in eastern Europe began to migrate to the United States in larger and larger numbers throughout the nineteenth century, but the highest number of emigrants for many countries did not occur until the turn of the new century. Italy and Austria-Hungary for example did not begin sending large numbers until after 1880 while both ethnic populations peaked in the decade after 1900, sending more than 2 million persons each. For South Bend, the Polish migration needs the most attention prior to the twentieth century. The Poles were the largest Eastern European ethnic group in South Bend before 1900, and as such they received the most publicity in the local newspapers in the post Civil War years, which was not complimentary initially, as described by one local newspaper:

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[64] Ibid., 30.
[65] Norman, "Migration Patterns in the Nordic Countries," 52-9; Ljungmark, *Swedish Exodus*, 28-43.
[66] See Chapter Four.

The new Polish arrival has an unpleasant, cringing way of doffing his hat that makes you think of monarchy. The men shake hands when they meet, and salute each other, in the name of the Mother of All Sorrow, at parting. A few of them, if the very quintessence of the truth were known, doubt that this is the best country lighted by the sun.[67]

However, the migration of the Poles continued through the nineteenth and early twentieth century until they were second in number only to the native born, with twice the number as the next immigrant population.[68] The increased number of Poles in one area led to the development of a vibrant Polish community and a valuable addition to South Bend's economic and social life. Frank Renkiewicz described how this transformation occurred:

Then [about 1870] they were few, poor, culturally isolated, unaware of a common nationality – not unlike several other immigrant groups in the city before and since – but they soon revealed they shared certain association and value which, strengthened by the experience of migration and resettlement, became the basis of their community. They built upon their common membership in the Catholic church, the habit of looking to the priest for social and intellectual leadership, the Polish language, the nuances of thought and feeling the language made possible, old homes near one another in a few districts of Poznan and West Prussia, the mentality of peasants not far removed from the traditional rural-village way of life, a fairly uniform level of economic achievement and aspiration, and a secular faith in the virtues of hard work, frugality and ownership of land.[69]

The movement of Poles to the United States dates back to the settlement of Jamestown. But the number of Poles moving to the United States was minute until after the Civil War. Prior to 1851, Polish immigrants never exceeded 100 in any year. After that, the annual migration was less than 1,800 prior to 1879, except for 1873 when it reached 3,338. The cumulative number of Poles having resided in the United States prior

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[67] *South Bend Tribune*, (South Bend, IN: Tribune Printing Co), 16Nov74; Frank Renkiewicz, "The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana: 1855-1935" (Ph. D. disertation, University of Notre Dame, 1967).

[68] William Paul Dillingham and United States Immigration Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries: Part 14: Agricultural Implement and Vehicle Manufacturing* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 553.

[69] Renkiewicz, "The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana: 1855-1935", 318.

to 1870 was only 50,000.[70] Moreover, Poland as a state failed to exist between the

French Revolution and the Treaty of Versailles. During this period the territory of

Poland was partitioned among three major powers in central and eastern Europe. Prussia,

Russia, and Austria, had each seized a section of the Polish kingdom in which resided

much of the Polish nationality. Russia held most of the old Polish-Lithuanian

Commonwealth, while Austria possessed Galicia, which contained a Ukrainian minority.

Prussia, later Germany, held parts of Western Poland, particularly Poznan, in which the

Poles far outnumbered the Germans.[71] In the nineteenth century during liberal

revolutions in Europe, noblemen and veterans of the old Polish army were forced to leave

as political refugees, particularly from the German dominated section where repression

was more intense. These Polish political immigrants usually moved to France or

England, rather than the United States, so they could return quickly to assist if a popular

uprising occurred. The Poles that did migrate to the United States, like the previous

Poles, planned to return to their homeland when Poland was freed of foreign oppression.

Prior to the 1870s then, Polish immigrants were more likely to have political motivations,

and to be better off in terms of education and wealth. They were usually more liberal and

nationalistic, and assimilated individually into the American society without the help of

organizations like churches, benevolent societies or schools.[72]

The group of Polish immigrants that migrated to the United States after the Civil

War came from a different socio-economic class and numbered many more than the pre-

Civil War group. The Poles who migrated from the partitioned Poland during this period

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[70] Victor R. Greene, "Pre-World War I Polish Emigration to the United States: Motives and Statistics,"
Polish Monthly Review (summer 1961): 46.
[71] Ibid.: 48.
[72] Joseph Anthony Wytrwal and Eduard Adam Skendzel, *America's Polish Heritage: A Social History of
the Poles in America*, 1st ed. (Detroit,: Endurance press, 1961), 77; Greene, "Pre-World War I Polish
Emigration to the United States: Motives and Statistics," 50.

did so in three different waves, coinciding generally with the section in which they lived. But like most migrant nationals, they planned to return once their condition became more stable. In the 1870s, the German Poles were by far the most likely to leave. During that decade, 152,000 departed from the German provinces, while only 2,000 left from Galicia in the Austrian section, and a small number from the Russian section. The average yearly number of emigrants from the German region during the 1880s fell to 37,000, and continued to decrease in later decades. Conversely, in the 1880s, the Galician Poles increased their immigration to the United States to 82,000, and during the 1890s to 340,000. Similarly, the Russian Poles increased their tendency to immigrate to the United States in the last decade of the nineteenth century. During the 1880s, 40,000 Russian Poles entered the US, while in the 1890s the number grew to 134,000.[73]

The conditions in Ireland and Germany that lead to migrations in the pre-Civil War period were repeated in Poland. The population, for example, of the Polish region doubled from twelve million to twenty four million between 1850 and 1900, making life for a majority of the peasants there unstable. In addition, the traditional system of land distribution led to small plots that were often separated and, in many instances, too small to sustain a family. Typically, a peasant farmer would divide his land among his sons, which ultimately led to them being squeezed off the land. Victor Greene considers this the main cause for chronic poverty in Poland.[74]

There were, however, other reasons for the widespread poverty. Liberal rebellions during the 1830s and 1840s, which came from the minority landed gentry and middle class, saddled the region with an enormous debt and caused extensive property

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[73] Greene, "Pre-World War I Polish Emigration to the United States: Motives and Statistics," 47-8.
[74] Kraut, *The Huddled Masses: The Immigrant in American Society, 1880-1921*, 28; Greene, "Pre-World War I Polish Emigration to the United States: Motives and Statistics," 60-1.

damage. Poor crop harvests in 1848, and from 1853 to 1856, destroyed the agrarian

industry and added to the distressed economy. Prussian Poland was generally an

agricultural region that fell on hard times in the middle of the nineteenth century. In

addition, the primitive agrarian background was inefficient and wasteful. For example,

superstitions prevented the use of agricultural advances, such as a metal plow, because

many peasants believed that the rust from the plow would poison the crops. These

factors inhibited the peasants from embracing modernization in agriculture and deterred

them from utilizing the market economy that was encroaching on their local market.[75]

Additionally, the foreign ruling powers added to the economic woes of the Poles.

The Prussian government provided loyal Germans with loans used to buy land from

Polish farmers wracked with debt; this resulted in over one million acres of land

transferred from Polish to German ownership. After German unification in 1871, the

German premier, Otto von Bismarck, also pursued a policy of *kulturkampf,* which

persecuted Poles for their religion and nationality. He sought to assimilate the Poles into

German society by passing laws requiring Poles to speak German, by assuming

governmental control over the parochial schools, and by instituting compulsory military

service for the Prussian Poles.[76] In Polish Russia, similar "Russification" took place after

1870 as policies were established to limit the Polish language in schools and the power of

the polish clergy.[77]

The Polish experience, then, resembled the experience of many other nationalities

in the latter decades of the nineteenth century; this made them consider taking the chance

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[75] Greene, "Pre-World War I Polish Emigration to the United States: Motives and Statistics," 50-1, 60.
[76] Wytrwal and Skendzel, *America's Polish Heritage: A Social History of the Poles in America*, 122-7.
Thernstrum 470.
[77] James S. Pula, *Polish Americans: An Ethnic Community* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 15.

of moving to the United States. What Joseph Wytrwal wrote about the Poles could be

said for most of the immigrants that would ultimately find their way to South Bend,

Indiana:

> …. a multiplicity of factors was responsible for Polish emigration. Foreign
> oppression, an overflowing population, primitive methods of agriculture, meager
> productivity of the soil; all were instrumental in producing the Polish exodus. In
> addition to land hunger, the Poles suffered from low wages, excessive taxation,
> and insufficient industrial development. . . . This exodus was the result of the
> unrestrained agitations of transatlantic ship agents . . . crop failures. . .
> Bismarck's cruel policy of extermination directed against the Poles, and the
> German, Austrian, and Russian practices of assisting the exportation of
> 'undesirable Poles' to America. Although the underlying cause for Polish
> emigration may be found in the stimulus given to this movement by Germany,
> Russia and Austria, yet it may be traced fundamentally to the lack of economic
> well-being. Modern transportation had only greased the wheels of the vast
> movement of peoples caused by fundamental economic changes....The important
> cause of driving the Polish peasant to the shores of America was the desire to
> improve his material welfare.[78]

The fact that as many as a third of the immigrants who left for the United States to

flee the conditions Wytrwal enumerated and to improve their economic condition

returned home, requires a close examination at the conditions the migrants encountered

when they entered the United States. Those who chose to remain in the United States

found themselves in a country that was experiencing a transformational shift from an

agrarian to industrial society. The experiences of those immigrants were shaped by the

industrialization process – for it was economic opportunity that they sought. But the

immigrants were not just victims of industrialization, they also help shape their own

lives, and they used their cultural resources they brought from their homeland to help

them manage the transition and create their own communities.

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[78] Joseph Anthony Wytrwal and Eduard Adam Skendzel, *Poles in American History and Tradition* (Detroit: Endurance Press, 1969), 148-9.

As a frontier town that was evolving into an industrial city, South Bend's growth was aided by the immigrant groups discussed in this chapter. The German and Irish immigrants made significant contributions to the antebellum development, and they were joined by others in the post war period specifically those from Sweden and Poland which were also instrumental in the success of South Bend's industrial growth. The influx of immigrants into South Bend created a complex network of relationships between these ethnic groups and the dominant native born population. Furthermore, the large number of immigrants and rise of their communities created a divisive atmosphere in the working class that was growing in the town as a result of the industrialization. These themes will be addressed more fully in chapters four and five. First, however, chapter two presents a broad overview of the industrialization process in the United States, and chapter three presents a more detailed account of the development of South Bend, Indiana, from a frontier settlement to an industrial center.

Chapter II: The United States Industrial Growth from Civil War to 1900

As chapter one examined the larger European immigration patterns into the

United States, this chapter explores the economic growth of the United States from a

macro-economic level in the nineteenth century. Beginning sporadically in the northeast,

the industrialization would eventually spread across the country and affect almost all

manner of production – including agricultural production. The effects included increased

production of goods at lower cost, but also an increase in the industrial labor force

required to manufacture the products. Though industrialization was a global occurrence,

the United States experienced a phenomenal transformation from a small rural country

with little economic power to an industrial leader and economic giant. South Bend,

Indiana, reflected that transformation, as it did immigration, and will be examined in

detail in the following chapter.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the United States economic record had

become impressive and signaled its emergence as an important economic presence in the

world. The Gross National Product (in 1929 dollars, averaged for five years) increased

almost 400 percent from 9.1 billion dollars from the early 1870s to 35.4 billion by 1901.

This was a period of rapid economic expansion, and capital accumulation. The United

States exported almost 1.6 billion dollars in goods in 1900, up more than three times from

the 473 million in 1870.[1] The number of manufacturers doubled between 1880 and 1900 from just over a quarter million establishments to more than half a million.[2] Part of the economic expansion came as the result of a quickly growing population.

The United States population of 76 million in 1900 dwarfed the 5.3 million residents at the turn of the previous century when the nation was new, and represented nearly twice the 40 million people who resided there in 1870 only thirty years earlier. No new territory had been annexed between 1870 and 1900, as the period of acquisitions, referred to as "Manifest Destiny" in the United States, occurred earlier in the century. Therefore a rising population without a corresponding increase in land led to an increase in the density of the population. The average number of people living in each square mile jumped from 13 to 25 in the years after the Civil War.[3] Not only did the population double, but its center moved markedly westward to populate the interior territory where Native Americans waged unsuccessful defenses against the encroaching Americans.

More significant than the increase in the number and the westward movement of the American population was evidence of a declining agricultural society coinciding with the rise of an industrial one in its stead. Between 1860 and 1900, the rural population almost doubled from 25 million to 45 million, while the urban population increased five times from 6 million to 30 million.[4] The nation was also in the midst of urbanization as one hundred cities doubled in size. Moreover, the urban increases were even more dramatic in the west where the number of residents in Los Angeles increased fifty times

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[1] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1960), 144, 562-63.
[2] United States Census Office, "Manufactures: Part 1, United States by Industry " in *Twelfth Census of the United States*, ed. Bureau of Census (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), 3.
[3] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 7-8.
[4] Ibid., 14.

from 5,000 to 100,000; Denver emerged from nothing to 134,000, Memphis rose from 23,000 to 100,000, Sioux City increased 500 percent, Kansas city, KS increased 1,100 percent.[5] No doubt, these changes played a part in the success and popularity of Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis which noted the importance of the frontier in American democracy just as it was disappearing.[6] But the engine of economic growth lay in the industrialization of the United States.

There were a number of products and industries that were instrumental to the success of the United States' turn toward economic and industrial advances. Primarily, these were the power, railroad and construction industries. In coal extraction, used increasingly in transportation and the manufacture of power, iron and steel, production increased more than six times, from 40.5 million tons in 1870 to 269.6 million tons in 1900.[7] Iron ore and pig iron output also rose: ore increased seven times from 3.8 to 27.3 million tons, while pig iron production increased more than eight times from 1.8 to 15.4 million tons.[8] Steel manufacturing was in its infancy at the end of the Civil War, but in 1900, more than 10 million tons of the material had been manufactured in the United States.[9] The harvesting of trees and production of lumber products jumped from 12.7 billion board feet in 1869 to 35 billion board feet in 1899.[10] Not surprisingly, all of these products contributed to the manufacturing and maintenance of the railroad industry. The number of railroad cars, passenger and freight, produced in 1871 was less than 2,000. The number produced increased sporadically for thirty years when in 1900 there were

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[5] Beatty, *Age of Betrayal: The Triumph of Money in America, 1865-1900*, 89-90.
[6] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, Variation: Library of American Civilization ;; Lac 10036. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1894).
[7] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 356-60.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., 416.
[10] Ibid., 312.

more than 100,000 cars produced. The total number of freight cars produced in the intervening years approached 1.5 million.[11] Oil was originally used as a lubricant for the machines used to produce manufactured goods in the nineteenth century, and for lighting. In 1870, according to the United States government's Energy Information Administration, the United States produced just over 5 million barrels of oil. By 1900, that number increased more than twelve-fold to 63 million barrels.[12] Its dramatic increase is an indication of both urban and industrial expansion.

The growth in these primary production industries was mirrored by the expansion of such basic commodities as tobacco, flour and cotton. These increases along with the expansion of the railroad into new markets contributed to the development and expansion of manufactured consumer products, and created more demand for consumer products and the material used to make them. The total value of manufactured construction material, for example, rose from 325 million dollars in 1869 to over one billion dollars in 1900.[13] The amount of flour produced more than doubled from 48 million to 106 million barrels, while the amount of cotton produced increased more than 4.5 times from 800,000 bales to 3.7 million bales.[14]

The materials used by manufacturers turned out a plethora of consumer goods. A variety of factors determined how much growth a particular industry experienced, including an enlarged workforce, the development of new technologies in production of a product or harvesting of a crop, reduced cost in labor or transportation, and new management or accounting systems. But leaving the specifics aside, the growth of

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[11] Ibid., 417-17.
[12] Energy Information Administration, "Us Crude Oil Field Production " (2008).
[13] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 422.
[14] Ibid., 415.

production allowed many more people the opportunity to purchase consumer goods, as table 2.1 indicates. Some of the more impressive value increases were made in the tobacco and newspaper industries which each experienced a four-fold increase, while books increased more than five times. The value of the toy and jewelry industries doubled while the clothing industry saw a three and a half fold increase.

Table 2.1: Value of Product Output
(in millions of dollars)

	Tobacco products	Shoes /footwear	Clothing	Toys/games	Newspapers and magazines	Books	Jewelry, silverware watches, clocks
1869	75	185	230	13	30	8	42
1879	120	174	258	17	61	19	43
1890	215	215	589	23	90	34	90
1900	304	290	817	29	122	44	100

Source: Bureau of the Census and Social Science Research Council. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*. (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Commerce, 1960), 419-20.

Part of this increase in production can be attributed to that doubling of the manufacturing establishments between 1870 and 1900 as indicated in table 2.2 below. But there was also a two fold increase in the average size of the plants. The largest manufacturers, those employing 500 or more people, numbered more than a thousand, with 443 of those manufacturers employing more than one thousand people.[15] And the amount of capital tied up in manufacturing establishments increased three and a half times. Obviously, as the number of firms increased there was a corresponding increase in the number of wage workers. As shown in table 2.2, there were 2 million workers in

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[15] Daniel Nelson, *Managers and Workers: Origins of the New Factory System in the United States, 1880-1920* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), 5.

1870 earning wages. That number more than doubled to over 4.2 million twenty years

later in1890. By 1900 another million were added to the rolls making the total more than

5.3 million manufacturing wage workers. The rising value of the products manufactured

also indicated increasing industrialization. Between 1870 and 1900 the value of

manufactured products increased two and a half times from $5.4 billion to $13 billion,

but the average wage paid to the industrial worker increased only 50 percent.[16]

Table 2.2: Growth of Manufacturing Firms, 1860-1900

	Number of firms	Capital Invested (millions $)	Ave yearly. wages (millions $)	Ave. number of wage workers (millions)	Average wage per year	Value of products (million $)
1860	140,000		379	1.3		
1870	252,000		620	2		
1880	258,000	2,800	948	2.7	$351	5,400
1890	355,000	6,500	1,900	4.2	$452	9,400
1900	512,000	9,800	2,800	5.3	$528	13,000

Source: Bureau of the Census and Social Science Research Council. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*. (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Commerce, 1960), 409; United States Census Bureau, "Manufacturers, Part 1, United States by Industry," *Twelfth Census*, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 3.

Several industries exemplified the increasing size of industrial establishments. As

table 2.3 illustrates in the wool industry, the number of manufacturers actually decreased

from 2,689 in 1880 to 2,335 in 1900, while all other indices increased. The capital

invested, for instance, jumped 150 percent from $159 million to $392 million and the

value of wool products manufactured increased over 45 percent, from $267 million to

$392 million. Similarly, there was a 50 percent increase in laborers working in the

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[16] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 409; United States Census Bureau, "Manufactures: Part 1, United States by Industry " in *Twelfth Census of the United States*, ed. Bureau of Census (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 3.

enlarged establishments in those years from 162,000 to 242,000. While the total wages

paid them increased 70 percent from $48 million to $82 million, the per capita increase

was less than 15 percent.[17]

Table 2.3: Increase in Wool Production

	Number of firms	Capital invested (million $)	Value of products (million $)	Ave. number of workers	Total wages (million $)	Yearly average wages ($)
1880	2689	159	267	162,000	48	296
1890	2489	296	338	213,000	71	333
1900	2335	392	392	242,000	82	338

Source: William J Battison,. "Wool Manufactures, also Hosiery and Knit Goods, Shoddy, and Fur Hats," in
*Twelfth Census of the United States. Census Reports IX, Manufactures, Part III, Special Reports on
Selected Industries*, United States Printing Office, 1902, 75.

Similar signs of increasing firm size were experienced in the agricultural

implement industry. As indicated in table 2.4 below, the number of firms producing

agricultural implements dropped more than 60 percent between 1880 and 1900 from

1,948 to 715. In the same period, the amount of capital invested increased 150 percent

from $62 million to $158 million, while the number of wage workers remained relatively

stable, increasing from 39,500 to 46,500. The average number of workers in each firm

rose a significant 225 percent while their annual per capita wages increased a modest 25

percent from $389 to $484[18]

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[17] William J Battison, "Wool Manufactures, Also Hosiery and Knit Goods, Shoddy, and Fur Hats," in
Twelfth Census of the United States, Manufactures, Part 3, Special Reports on Selected Industries, ed.
United States Census Bureau (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 75.
[18] United States Census Bureau, "Manufactures: Part 1, United States by Industry ", 3.

Table 2.4: Increase in size of Farm Implement Manufacturing Companies

	Number of Firms	Number of wage workers	Workers per firm	Total ave. wages (million $)	Annual per capita wages $	Capital invested (million $)	Product value (million $)
1880	1948	39,600	20	15.4	389	62	69
1900	715	46,500	65	22.5	484	158	101
Percent change	-63%	+17%	+225%	+45%	+25%	+150%	+45%

Source: United States Census Bureau, "Manufacturers, Part 1, United States by Industry," *Twelfth Census*, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 3.

By the turn of the century, it was clear that the United States manufacturing industry was on the rise and business leaders had embraced ideas that led to greater capital investments, increased plant facilities, and larger numbers of workers. But the rise of industrialization also affected the agricultural industry and communities in a paradoxical way. On the one hand, industrialization provided farmers with larger and more efficient machines to increase their yield with the purpose of increasing profit. But as the methods and machines made farming more efficient, the profits for many farmers decreased as the price of their product dropped below the cost to operate more modern farms.

After the Civil War, the United States was on a production trajectory to become a net food exporter, which consequently, would put many Europeans on the path to the United States, as they were unable to compete with the cheap food prices from American farmers.[19] The increase in agricultural products was directly tied to the new technology that allowed for greater production in larger manufacturing plants. In the years 1860-

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[19] A similar development has occurred in Mexico in the twenty-first century. Millions of farms there are unable to compete with the cheaper American corn products, forcing many farmers or their children to move to the United States in search for low wage jobs.

1900, the agricultural implement industry multiplied between seven and eight times.[20]

The number of farms in the United States increased from 2.6 million with a value of 9.4

billion dollars in 1870, to 5.7 million farms with a value of 16.6 billion dollars.[21] New

inventions and improved technology such as chilled caste iron plows, horse drawn plows

and reapers; or reduced prices for improvements like the steel plow, provided the

opportunity for those in the production of agricultural goods to reap enormous harvests.

And American farmers did indeed produce. Production more than doubled for wheat,

corn, cotton and hay between 1870 and 1900. Wheat increased from 254 to 599 million

bushels; corn jumped from 1.1 billion bushels to 2.6 billion bushels; cotton rose from 4.3

million bales to 10.1 million bales; hay more than doubled from 21.3 to 49.8 million tons.

Production for oats and barley more than tripled in those years as well. Oats increased

from 268 to 945 million bushels and barley from 29 to 96.5 million bushels.[22] The

amount of total livestock owned ballooned from 110 million head to 176.6 million: hogs

from 33.7 to 51 million, cattle from 31 to almost 60 million, sheep from 36.4 to 45

million, horses from 7.6 to 17.8 and mules from 1.2 to 3.1 million.[23]

An expansion in land cultivation and production increased as well. Its most

important and popular grain was corn, with farmers raising more than twice as much of it

as all other grains combined. In the thirty years after 1870, Indiana farmers increased

their corn yield more than 250 percent from 51 million bushels to 179 million bushels.

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[20] John Donald Barnhart and Donald Francis Carmony, *Indiana, from Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1954), 235.
[21] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 278.
[22] Ibid., 297-302.
[23] Ibid., 290.

Oats and barley each accounted for 34 million bushels in 1900. That was a 300 percent

increase in oat production from 1870, but only a 50 percent increase for barley.[24]

These numbers clearly indicate that American farmers produced an increasingly

abundant supply of agricultural products. However, it should be noted that the increase

in volume did not come from an intensification of output on each acre. For all the

advances made in farm output, the quantity harvested from each acre remained relatively

stable. As table 2.5 illustrates, the yield per acre did not increase as dramatically as one

might imagine for three important farm products. In fact, only cotton showed an increase

in per acre production after 1840, but it was only seven percent between 1880-1900.

Corn production hovered at 25 bushels per acre throughout the entire nineteenth century,

while wheat production per acre actually dropped by several bushels.

Table 2.5: Nineteenth Century Farm Yields per acre

	Bushels of Wheat	Bushels of Corn	Lint per Acre
1840	15	25	147
1880	13.2	25.6	179
1900	13.9	25.9	191
1920	13.8	28.4	160

Source: Bureau of the Census and Social Science Research Council. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*. (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Commerce, 1960), 281.

The general increase in farm production came then not from intensifying the farming

procedure to coax greater yield from the earth, but from bringing more land under

cultivation. Indeed, between 1870 and 1900 the amount of land cultivated by farmers

increased more than two times, from 407 to 837 million acres.[25] Indiana farmers

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[24] Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana, from Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth*, 220.
[25] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 278.

improved more than six million new acres themselves between 1870 and 1900 – a 50 percent increase.[26]

Even as new land was being cultivated with new technology and more men, women and animals were working on farms, there was a converse relationship between the increase in production and the amount of men and time required to achieve those production numbers per acre. Table 2.6 below shows the decline in the number of man-hours necessary to reap one hundred bushels of corn, wheat and cotton that were the result of increased mechanization and technological advances. The man hours needed to produce wheat fell 35 percent between 1840 and 1880, and another 30 percent in the twenty years between 1880 and 1900. The hours required to produce 100 bushels of corn dropped 25 percent from 1840 to 1880, and another 20 percent between 1880 and 1900. In cotton again, the numbers are less impressive, as the decrease in manpower was only 15 percent between 1880 and 1900.[27]

Table 2.6: Man hours needed to produce

	100 bushels wheat	100 bushels corn	one bale cotton
1800	373	344	601
1840	233	276	439
1880	152	180	318
1900	108	147	280
1920	87	113	269

Source: Bureau of the Census and Social Science Research Council. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*. (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Commerce, 1960), 281

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[26] Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana, from Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth*, 209.

[27] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 281. (Note: the numbers concerning cotton are not surprising considering the effort southern farmers and plantation owners put into maintaining a form of debt peonage that was as close to slavery as they could get under their defeated condition, at the expense of increased investment in technology.)

The reduction in man-hours needed to produce crops did not reduce the number of hours farmers worked. Instead, the hours saved planting the one crop were reinvested in the farm by cultivating an increased numbers of acreage. The average number of cultivated acres on Indiana farms, for example, increased almost 25 percent from 62 acres to 75 acres between 1870 and 1900.[28]

In light of the evidence that the output per acre remained relatively stable in the nineteenth century, coupled with a decrease in the amount of time and labor necessary to produce the same amount of product, the conclusion must be made that the increase in agricultural output was the result of bringing new farm land under the plow, rather than a more efficient method of turning out more goods per acre. The industrialization of agricultural implements provided farmers with tools and machinery that allowed them to cultivate greater acreage with fewer hands. Increased adoption of horse power over oxen also contributed significantly to the magnified output. The number of horses on farms increased more than 225 percent from 7.6 to 17.8 million horses between 1870 and 1900 while the ratio of horses to oxen rose from six to one in 1870 to fifteen to one in 1890.[29] Expanded use of horses and advances in agricultural implements, coupled with the elimination of Native American resistance, contributed to the westward movement into the vast flatlands of the middle-west, and to an increase in the size of farms. Between 1880 and 1900 the average size of the farms increased 10 percent, while the number of large farms increased 45 percent in those years.[30] In the upper mid-west's Red River Valley, for example, the number of giant wheat farms covering more than one thousand

[28] Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana, from Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth*, 209.
[29] Daniel Nelson, *Farm and Factory: Workers in the Midwest, 1880-1990*, Midwestern History and Culture (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 18-19; Stanley Lebergott, *The Americans: An Economic Record* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984), 299.
[30] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*.

acres increased from 82 in 1880 to 323 in 1890. One impressive farm contained 30,000 acres that was subdivide into "smaller" 2,000 acre units and employed three-hundred men to produce the wheat.[31]

The growth in farm size occurred for several reasons. First, there was greater opportunity through the opening of the Western lands and second through advanced technology. But these opportunities for increased production contributed to decreasing crop prices. As more land became productive and more crops were planted, the profits made from crops declined. This was the general development farmers faced after the Civil War, and contributed to the considerable agrarian discontent that reverberated through the Gilded Age.

The price decline of several crops shows the treadmill farmers experienced. As prices dropped throughout the Gilded Age, more seeds were planted to make up for the lost revenue, driving prices down further. In the case of the six commodities listed in the table 2.7, all products except corn saw at least a 33 percent decline in price. Corn only dropped 25 percent, but the price for oats and wheat dropped 40 percent while the price for barley plummeted over 50 percent.[32]

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[31] David O. Whitten, *The Emergence of Giant Enterprise, 1860-1914 : American Commercial Enterprise and Extractive Industries*, Contributions in Economics and Economic History, No. 54 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983), 101.
[32] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, 297-302.

Table 2.7: Decrease in Commodity Prices: 1870-1900
(in dollars)

	Corn price per bushel	Wheat price per bushel	Oats price per bushel	Barley price per bushel	Hay Price per pound	Cotton Price per pound
1870	.521	1.042	.426	.853	14.45	12.10
1880	.390	.952	.349	.663	11.82	9.83
1890	.496	.837	.417	.621	8.11	8.59
1900	.350	.621	.253	.407	9.78	9.15

Source: Bureau of the Census and Social Science Research Council. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*. (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Commerce, 1960),297-302.

Though prices declined generally during the period, the table also shows that the drop in prices was not smooth. In fact, the prices for farm products fluctuated violently. Prices for cotton and hay, for example, were higher in 1900 than in 1890, as were the prices for corn and oats higher in 1890 than in 1880.

A closer examination of one product, in table 2.8 below, illustrates just how tumultuous the economy for farm products was. The price of rye dropped nearly 40 percent in the thirty years after 1870, but there were periods within that decline when the price actually increased.   The price of rye generally followed the rise and fall of the larger economy. The price remained stable in the early years of the 1870s, but as the economic depression worsened in the latter years, the price fell, reaching a decade-low 54 cents per bushel in 1878. The price then rebounded in the early 1880s and actually reached its highest price in the thirty years in 1881 of almost a dollar. In just those dozen years between 1870 and 1881, the price dropped more than 30 percent before rising almost 70 percent. After 1881, the price again dropped immediately and remained consistently low for the remaining part of the decade before climbing again temporarily in the early 1890s. But the price again plummeted with the crisis in the 1890s,

fluctuating between 40 and 50 cents, except for the year 1896, when the price dropped to its lowest level in the thirty year period of just 37 cents per bushel.[33]

Table 2.8: Price of bushels of Rye: 1870-1899
(in dollars)

Year	Price	Year	Price	Year	Price
1870	.797	1880	.745	1890	.623
1871	.824	1881	.917	1891	.772
1872	.744	1882	.631	1892	.537
1873	.757	1883	.584	1893	.496
1874	.856	1884	.534	1894	.488
1875	.759	1885	.580	1895	.407
1876	.680	1886	.530	1896	.369
1877	.606	1887	.535	1897	.426
1878	.545	1888	.592	1898	.441
1879	.674	1889	.420	1899	.495

Source: Bureau of the Census and Social Science Research Council. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*. (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of Commerce, 1960),299-300.

The economic growth and increased agricultural and manufacturing production did not come without disruption and complications. The movement toward industrialization in the United States was a complex event. Additionally, industrialization occurred in fits and starts in various industries during the entire nineteenth century, not only in the period after the Civil War. Some industries experienced the mechanization and factory organization decades before others implemented the changes. Furthermore, it must be recognized that industrialization was a world-wide development and the United States industrialization was aided by close proximity to the necessary natural resources. There were several developments that pointed the United States toward industrialization even before the Gilded Age. The first

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[33] Ibid., 299-300.

were located in the nascent manufactories in the central and northeastern states at the very beginning of the nation's birth. The second can be found in the railroad. Once industrialization began, there were reverberations throughout the rest of American society.

The earliest industrial movement in the United States occurred in the shoemaking and textile industries in the northeast; both of which were directly connected to slavery. In the former, slaves were consumers of shoes and the latter as producers of the cotton to be used as textiles. These two industries contributed to industrial growth in different ways. In shoemaking, machine production was not fully integrated into the production process until the 1850s. But the organization of the production process away from artisan-based products began in the early nineteenth century. In the textile industry, mechanization occurred first, and the labor force was recruited to move into pre-organized facilities.

Cordwainers in the eighteenth century typically operated out of their homes or attached shops and plied their trade as skilled craftsmen. Craftsmen acquired an apprentice or two and hired journeymen to assist them in producing shoes. In the early nineteenth century, however, the process began to change. In New England, and more specifically around Lynn, Massachusetts, transportation improvements provided access to and demand from, new markets. Desire from southern states for large quantities of cheap shoes for the slave population was a large reason demand increased. The increased demand and new competition led to changes in the shoemaking industry. Larger central shops were constructed where more men worked together and a division of labor evolved within the shop. Master craftsmen (or bosses) found that dividing the shoemaking

process into smaller less complicated tasks allowed the work to be spread (or "put out")
into communities that had not previously participated in the industry. Unskilled men,
women and children from rural areas were hired to bind parts of the shoe together while
more skilled men were relegated to cutting or lashing the bottoms to the uppers in the
newly assembled and larger, central shops.[34] Technological advances such as the sewing
machines and stitchers powered by water, and later steam, soon made the putting out
system obsolete. Since the new machines required a central power source, the laborers
were brought together under one roof, either in a factory, or a series of close buildings.
The de-skilling process was an important part of industrialization, as the knowledge of
craftsmen was diverted into managers and their skill relegated to machines.
Industrialization required both greater power to operate machinery, but also a
reorganization of the production process that allowed unskilled people to replace skilled
mechanics.[35]

The textile industry also experienced the effects of industrial organization and
mechanical production early in the nineteenth century. But instead of mechanization
coming at the finale of industrial reorganization as in shoemaking, the introduction of
machines occurred quite early in the textile trade. As early as the 1790s, machines were
being introduced in the textile industry and by the early 1800s, giant mills were
constructed. Many states in New England and the mid-Atlantic experienced the

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[34] Mary H. Blewett, *Men, Women, and Work: Class, Gender, and Protest in the New England Shoe Industry, 1780-1910*, The Working Class in American History (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 44-96.

[35] Alan Dawley, *Class and Community : The Industrial Revolution in Lynn*, Harvard Studies in Urban History (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); Paul G. Faler, *Mechanics and Manufacturers in the Early Industrial Revolution : Lynn Massachusetts 1780-1860* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1981).

mechanization of the textile industry, but Lowell, Massachusetts became the epicenter of mass produced textiles.

Along with the mechanized nature of the industry, textile companies found a low skilled population of people to operate the machines, as later industrialist would do in the Gilded Age. In Lowell, for example, young women were hired from the surrounding agricultural community, which was experiencing economic distress due to the increased competition from farm lands being opened in the west. As unattached women, they required less compensation than men because they were not responsible for families and were not expected to work in the factories for a long time. The environment in the mills and housing facilities was disciplined and paternalistic. However, the "factory girls" earned wages and more opportunities for cultural experiences than life on the farm provided them.[36]

Construction of the Lowell Mills began in 1814 and continued with millions of dollars of investment poured into the community for decades. "By 1855 there were fifty-two [Lowell mills] employing 8800 women and 4400 men and producing 2.25 million yards of cloth each week."[37] Increasingly though, the young native rural farm women were replaced with an immigrant labor force willing to accept lower wages and declining work conditions. The wages and work conditions deteriorated as the number of mills increased, forcing factory owners to reduce pay and speed up production. Like millions of American men did when faced with similar conditions, the women organized and

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[36] Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).
[37] Walter Licht, *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century*, American Moment (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 27.

walked out to protest, but conditions failed to improve, leaving many of them to abandon their jobs when the conditions became too unbearable for them to endure.[38]

The development of industrial organization and production occurred differently in the shoe and textile industries, but they both exhibited methods that other industries mimicked later. It was in these industries that economies of scale and management techniques for maximizing profits started to develop. Throughout the early nineteenth century, the managers and owners in the textile industry found that more efficient and larger machines reduced the cost of production for each unit, and using less skilled and less expensive laborers also lowered operating costs. Meanwhile the shoe bosses first used a decentralized putting out system that contributed to the deskilling of the workforce, then proceeded to increase the size of the manufacturing centers with less skilled labor. The Lowell and Lynn developments exemplify community wide industrialization in one trade. But as noted, industrialization occurred in fits and starts. Bruce Laurie's analysis of Philadelphia made it clear that a thriving cottage industry was possible in the same proximity as large textiles mills. However, in 1850, more than 40 percent of the workforce labored in firms with more than 50 employees.[39] Textiles, shoes and urban development were all components of industrialization in the early nineteenth century. And one reason these areas expanded was the improvement of transportation systems that connected markets. Improved roads and rivers, and expanding canals contributed to this connection, but it was the railroad that did more to integrate United States markets than any other system in the nineteenth century.

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[38] Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860*.

[39] Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980), 13-7.

As a new nation, the United States looked more like its old confederation than a unified country. The several states were not well connected. Communication and transportation were slow and the cost of transportation made the economy of the United States resemble hundreds of small local economies rather than a unified one. The lack of efficient, affordable transportation allowed isolated businesses to survive without competition from outside. But even in the earliest decades there were attempts to build a unified country by political and economic elite. These early attempts started first with improved roads and water transportation systems and finally included railroad construction.

After the Erie Canal was finished in 1825, the time required to move material dropped significantly and the cost was reduced by 91 percent.[40] The success of the Erie Canal spurred widespread investment in canals across the country. Between 1820 and 1838, state governments had advanced $60 million in credit for canal construction and by the end of the 1830s, there had been almost 3,300 miles of canals erected.[41] The heyday of the canal era was short-lived, however. In the decade after 1840, only 400 miles of canals were built, making the total number of United States canal miles close to 4,000. While the canal system flourished, the beginning of rail transportation had also been laid. But by 1840 only 3,000 miles of unconnected track existed: its purpose mostly to serve or connect the canal systems. However, during the 1840s the railroad system expanded and more than 6,000 miles of track were laid. The following decade revealed the dominance

[40] David O. Whitten, *The Emergence of Giant Enterprise, 1860-1914: American Commercial Enterprise and Extractive Industries* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 36.
[41] Thomas C. and William Miller Cochran, *The Age of Enterprise: A Social History of Industrial America*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 42.

of the railroads and the demise of the canal system more clearly as more canals were

abandoned than constructed, and 21,000 more miles of railroad track were laid.[42]

The success of the railroads at the expense of the canals occurred for several

reasons. First, traveling by rails reduced travel times. But a more important reason

centered on its relative dependability and consistency, when compared to the canal. The

trains were able to run year round, even in the snow, while adverse weather conditions

impeded reliability of the canals. Too much rain or insufficient rains caused delays for

people and freight, and in the northern climes, the ice forced the canals to close for up to

four months during the year. In the old northwest, these practical observations led to an

explosion of railroad construction from just 600 miles in 1849 to 9,000 miles by 1860.

Indiana's railroads increased from less than 100 to more than 2,100 in those years.[43]

Even so, according to Alfred Chandler, the supremacy of the railroads had more to do

with organizational innovation, than the technological and engineering progresses:

> Technology made possible fast, all-weather transportation; but sage, regular,
> reliable movement of goods and passengers, as well as the continuing
> maintenance and repair of locomotives, rolling stock and track, roadbed, stations,
> roundhouses and other equipment, required the creation of a sizable
> administrative organization. It meant the employment of an administrative
> command of middle and top executives to monitor, evaluate, and coordinate the
> work of managers responsible for the day-to-day operations. It meant, too, the
> formulation of brand new types of internal administrative procedures and
> accounting and statistical controls. Hence, the operational requirements of the
> railroads demanded the creation of the administrative hierarchies in American
> business.[44]

The railroad before the Civil War was only a shadow of what it became, but even

in the early nineteenth century its importance to American economic development was

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[42] Alfred Dupont Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*
(Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1977), 82; Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana, from Frontier to Industrial
Commonwealth*.
[43] Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*, 83-7.
[44] Ibid., 87.

unprecedented. The size of the industry created demands in iron, wood, and coal, enlarging those operations. Connecting rural areas to urban areas created markets that ultimately forced competition for goods and labor between markets that had previously been isolated. And as Chandler pointed out, the size of the industries created management and organization problems that were solved through innovative models to control the industry. The railroads encountered the economies of scale before other industries and therefore provided a model for others to follow.[45]

In the post Civil War period, the railroad industry continued be an important leader in American economic growth and development. The miles of track laid increased more than three times from 53,000 in 1870 to 166,000 in 1890 when the railroads moved almost 700 million tons of freight, and 520 million passengers. Standardization of the industry and improved material coincided with the increased number of tracks laid. Improvements in road construction, signals, installation of air brakes, replacement of iron rails with steel, and doubling the size of the railroad car all led to increased traffic, safety and speed on the railroads. Standardized rail gauge and time zones also made the movement safer and more efficient. Several different methods to streamline the industry to make it more efficient and less competitive were attempted as well, including creating pools and supporting and steering federal regulation and mergers. The railroads led the path in "consolidating" or standardizing the nation as well.[46]

The United States Civil War also accelerated industrial expansion and intensified the moves toward bigness and a closer relationship between the government and certain

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[45] Whitten, *The Emergence of Giant Enterprise, 1860-1914: American Commercial Enterprise and Extractive Industries*, 39.
[46] Garraty, *The New Commonwealth, 1877-1890*, 86-9; Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*, 130-43.

business sectors. And both business and government became more nationally focused, instead of local.[47] The withdraw by southern legislators from the federal government was one reason national policy became more centralized. The southern states had generally pursued an economic policy that relied on agriculture, specifically cotton, for its survival. Obviously the south feared an extension of federal power that threatened slavery and its economic dependence on it. But it also opposed federal policies that favored internal improvements and industrialization that southerners perceived assisted the northern and western section of the country. It particularly despised tariff policies that were meant to protect the nascent manufacturing in the north for fear of sparking a reciprocal move by Europeans against the southern cotton product. With the south no longer in the union to object to internal improvement and business friendly policies, the federal government pursued a generally positive relationship with business which continued through the end of the nineteenth century. Northern political leaders also realized that improvements, especially in communication and transportation were vital to a successful military campaign and invested in those industries as well. The demands of war also contributed to the push for more power-driven, mechanized, and heavily capitalized industries. At a time when laborers were needed to fight the war, an increase in supplies was also needed to execute the war successfully. To meet the higher demand of supplies, but without the necessary supply of labor, manufacturers turned to machinery and immigrant labor markets to satisfy their needs.

However, there was no unanimity behind a war effort in the north after southern secession. Many northern business leaders opposed the war before it started for financial

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[47] Whitten, *The Emergence of Giant Enterprise, 1860-1914: American Commercial Enterprise and Extractive Industries*, 13-4.

reasons. For example, the manufacturers of shoes and textiles relied on southern markets

for sales and raw material, while the transportation industries benefitted from the north-

south trade. Those industries did experience considerable losses in the immediate

aftermath of Ft. Sumter, but once the war began in earnest, they were rewarded with

increasing federal orders that made up for the loss of their southern markets.[48] Even the

railroad industry, which slowed construction during the war considerably, was rewarded

by having a closer relationship with the federal government; as its success was deemed

necessary for a victorious prosecution of the war. The payoff for railroads came in the

form of new land grants and contracts after the war. A decade old debate over a

transcontinental railroad was resolved in 1862 without input from southerners and the

dearth in railroad construction boomed again after the war. During the war, total miles of

railroad in the United States rose from 30,000 to 35,000 miles. But in the five years after

the war the number of new miles increased to almost 53,000 miles. In the decade before

the war, new construction each year reached about 1,500 miles a year but in 1870 more

than 5,500 miles had been built.[49]

Other business ventures such as iron suppliers, and farm equipment manufacturers

were aided by the increased demand from the federal government during the Civil War as

well. The price for pig iron, for example, more than doubled from $20 to $46 per ton.[50]

In agriculture, the loss of workers to the war effort forced farmers to look to improved

farm equipment as a way to substitute machine for hand labor which proved profitable to

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[48] Cochran, *The Age of Enterprise: A Social History of Industrial America*, 89.
[49] Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*.
[50] Ibid., 366.

the companies positioned to supply the growing demand.[51] By 1863, the north experienced a booming economy, and because the southern agricultural interests were out of the federal government, those in favor of industrial expansion were more completely in control of government policy and rewarded northern businesses with:

> lucrative contracts, cheap labor, [and] high tariffs; railroad men and land speculators got huge grants from the public domain; bankers received war securities to market at handsome premiums; trade was facilitated by nationalization of the currency, by the creation through government loans of a great reserve of credit for business purposes….By the middle of the war, northern farms, factories, railroads and canals were paying dividends as high as forty and fifty percent.[52]

Among the many policies passed during the war to strengthen Republican and industrial constituencies were the Morrill Tariff, the Homestead Act and the Contract Labor Law.[53]

By the end of the Civil War then, the United States, though still a society based on agriculture, had moved towards a more industrial society. The transportation and communication systems added speed and accessibility to the market place. Several industries had already embraced the concepts of mechanization or a division of labor to mass produce goods. And the states and federal government provided incentives for greater business production. In effect, the seeds for the enormous growth during the Gilded Age had been laid in the first half of the nineteenth century and increased during the Civil War. Those seeds of industrial expansion exploded during the Gilded Age. However, the changes were not harmless for all the people and certainly were challenged by many in the United States who felt the alterations in American society were not to be coveted.

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[51] Whitten, *The Emergence of Giant Enterprise, 1860-1914: American Commercial Enterprise and Extractive Industries*, 21-23; Harold C. Livesay, *American Made: Men Who Shaped the American Economy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 80; Milton Allan Rugoff, *America's Gilded Age : Intimate Portraits from an Era of Extravagance and Change, 1850-1890* (New York: Holt, 1989), 43-4.
[52] Cochran, *The Age of Enterprise: A Social History of Industrial America*, 91.
[53] Ibid., 106-16.

The United States was founded as an agrarian republic. But even at its birth, a struggle existed between proponents, like Thomas Jefferson, who advocated for a future society that would maintain its agrarian character, and those who, like Alexander Hamilton, pushed for an American society based on commercial and manufacturing interests. This struggle played out for more than a century as the tide toward urban living and industrial life grew stronger. In 1800 only 4 percent of Americans lived in urban areas. This number rose to 16.1 percent by the Civil War. Though still a small minority when compared to the agricultural community, the United States was clearly moving toward a more urban society. The Civil War advanced the process of industrialization and centralization, and by 1870, though still primarily an agricultural community with 53 percent employed in the field, there were 20 percent employed in the manufacturing sector. Twenty years later, those earning a living on farms dropped to 42 percent. Meanwhile the number of wage workers continued to grow from 2.7 million in 1880 to 4.5 million in 1900. Moreover, even as the farmers were producing more volume and their standard of living improved, their share of national wealth was decreasing.[54] What was good for consumers in the growing urban areas, lower prices, was a bane for farmers as prices fell.

This placed many farmers in the Gilded Age in an untenable position. The transportation boom allowed markets to expand and competition from farther afield influenced prices downward. On one hand, the railroads allowed farmers access to markets far away, but on the other hand, the railroads brought more farmers into competition with each other, thus lowering the price they could charge for their products.

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[54] Nelson, *Managers and Workers: Origins of the New Factory System in the United States, 1880-1920*, 5; Garraty, *The New Commonwealth, 1877-1890*, 33-4; Ginger, *Age of Excess*, 57. And the number of wage workers would almost double again to 8.4 million by 1920.

As profit decreased, farmers looked for ways to increase their production to make up for the lower prices of their crops. This led to investment in larger and more expensive machinery. Those who could not afford the investment were left to find work as wage laborers - either in the enlarging pool of farm hands, or in the expanding pool of people, including immigrants, looking for work in the manufacturing sector. Those who persisted as farmers also faced difficult lives. The high cost of technology made each harvest increasingly more important. Loans drawn against future harvests meant that several poor years could end the farmer's dream in foreclosure. Prices fluctuated, but between 1860 and 1900 the price for wheat, corn, cotton and wool all dropped between 25 and 30 percent.[55] The declining real and relative economic and political position for farmers led to a series of movements in the farming community to forestall the deterioration of its economic and political position. The Granges, Farmers Alliances, and the Populists were among the groups developed to protect the farmers' interests. Many times, their enemies were those controlling the fate of the farmers - the railroad companies, grain elevators, and banks.[56]

The growing number of wage earners also confronted challenges during the Gilded Age. The early signs of change toward industrialization before and during the Civil War became widespread during the Gilded Age. Government policies favoring the interests of business, the movement in business toward larger size manufacturers, the increased control of the workforce by a corresponding increase in size of the management team all led to a variety of changes in society, including a backlash by workers. The

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[55] Beatty, *Age of Betrayal: The Triumph of Money in America, 1865-1900*, 104-6.
[56] Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); Robert C. McMath, *American Populism: A Social History, 1877-1898*, 1st ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993).

transformation has been described in a variety of ways. Robert Wiebe saw American society transformed from "island communities" into a unified one; a national society with urban values rather than the traditional one based on more familiar and agricultural values, made possible by transportation and communication advancements.[57] Melvyn Dubofsky described the transformation as a shift from a Gesellschaft to a Gemeinschaft society; from one "based on tradition, customary norms, and face to face personal dealings as the primary means of community control," to one built on "formal rules of social behavior, a variety of procedurally proper legal arrangements and bureaucratic structures that impersonally and mechanically managed society instead of the society of the former.[58] More specific to the workplace, Alfred Chandler found a "managerial revolution" had occurred, where transportation and communication developments allowed the size of companies to increase their ability to control larger numbers of people in a central location.[59]

In the twenty years after 1880, the average size of the industrial plant doubled. And in 1900 there were 1,063 factories with between five hundred and one thousand employees, and 443 factories with more than one thousand employees. Factories with plants that large needed more modern management models and strategies than older management models that allowed greater freedom in the workplace.[60] The enlarged gap between the workers and the manufacturers created a growing animosity of the workers towards their employers and the development of managerial bureaucracy meant that workers and owners were far removed from each other. In the traditional craft system,

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[57] Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).
[58] Melvyn Dubofsky, *Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865-1920*, 3rd ed. (Arlington Heights, Ill: H. Davidson, 1996), 36-37.
[59] Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*.
[60] Nelson, *Managers and Workers: Origins of the New Factory System in the United States, 1880-1920*, 5.

grievances between master and journeyman were handled on a familiar basis. With large

pools of workers, familiarity between the two was eliminated, and the animosity was

permitted to grow.[61]

As the divide grew between industry owners and workers, there was also an

increase in wealth differences that contributed to the tension between the upper and lower

classes during the Gilded Age. By 1890, the wealthiest one percent of families owned 51

percent all personal and real property, while the bottom 44 percent of families owned just

over 1 percent of all property. Wages were also unequally distributed. Unskilled factory

workers averaged just $360 yearly and agricultural hands in the north earned just $260.

With the poverty line between $500 and $550 during the period, multiple family

members (wives and children) were forced to work for their survival. Even with the

added family labor, the poorest half of Americans earned only 20 percent of the national

income, while the wealthiest 2 percent received more than half the income.[62] People

working at the lowest end of the economic spectrum endured frequent periods of

unemployment in addition to low wages and harsh working conditions. For some, the

response was to rail against the large business enterprises. Between 1881-1890 the

Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 9,668 strikes and lockouts, and in 1886 alone

there were 143 strikes and 140 lockouts involving 610,024 workers.[63]

Industrialization also changed the type of work involved in larger factories. The

mechanization of work meant "man" power was replaced by machine power. This

lightened the load for workers, but in many cases made work more repetitive, arduous

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[61] Henry David, *The History of the Haymarket Affair: A Study in the American Social-Revolutionary and Labor Movements*, 2nd ed. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1958), 6-8.
[62] Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), xx-xxi.
[63] Dubofsky, *Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865-1920*, 40.

and more dangerous. John Buzby, a youth from a well to do family in South Bend

described the conditions inside the Oliver Chilled Plow Works in 1898 this way.

> Entering these rooms [blacksmith and grinding] suddenly you think you have
> been transported to the Lower Regions. Men with smutty faces, their shirt
> sleeves rolled up to rush thither and hither thrusting heaving pieces of iron into
> furnaces from which the flames roll out like the tongue of fiery demons seeking
> to devour everything within their reach. Their angry tongues lick the iron which
> glows first red then white from the fury of the torment. The iron is grasped by
> long tongs and thrust beneath the gigantic "trip" hammer which strikes the
> almost molten metal such a blow that a blow from Hercules famous club would
> be as a child's compared with it and the water into which the iron is thrown is
> converted into a cauldron of boiling water….But in the grinding room men stand
> in front of the stones which turn round and round.[64]

Though this description may be a young man's attempt at literature, his observations

reveal some of the conditions that were present in large mechanized establishments. The

shops were large and ominous and equipped with huge furnaces, and machines that were

operated by hundreds of men. The work was hot in the summer and cold in the winter

and danger was a reality. James Oliver noted several times in his journal how men

injured their hands in those "drop hammers," Buzby described. In one instance, the

Herculean blow severed a man's hand, causing Oliver to pay the victim $10.00.[65] And in

the grinding room, where "the men stand in front of stones" used to smooth iron castings,

those giant stones could grind down a finger or "explode" and kill the operator.[66] The

Dillingham Commission's report on immigration, which investigated South Bend's

immigrants, made this observation about the working conditions of the grinders, which

were mostly Poles:

> Develops a kind of tuberculosis of the lungs, which is rapid in its development
> after the patient becomes affected. The work consists of sharpening and

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[64] Buzby, John Buzby, "Diary," in *Buzby* (South Bend, IN: Center for History, 1898).
[65] James Oliver, "Journal," (South Bend, IN: Copshaholm, Northern Indiana Center for History),
28jan1882, 17feb82, 27jan83, 24nov92.
[66] Ibid., 5jan1885, 14feb93.

planning steel implements on emery wheels. During the process the fine particles of steel and emery which are cut by the rapidly revolving wheels, are breathed in by the operators, and carried into the lungs. With all possible care taken by the company to prevent the 'grindings' from reaching the men operating the wheels, it is only a matter of a few years, possible only a few months, before they are affected by the disease.[67]

This was the world that many immigrants found when they came to the United States in the three decades preceding 1900. The social and economic environment in those thirty years changed significantly, but also erratically. The United States was a country in the midst of extraordinary transformation. The growth in agriculture and industry provided opportunities for many, and while some communities thrived, others dissolved. South Bend was one of those communities that experienced population and industrial growth as well as a significant growth in the immigration population. It is within the larger American experience that South Bend's native and immigrant communities developed.

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[67] Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, Vol 14, p571-72.

Chapter III: History of South Bend

The industrialization and immigration that occurred in the nineteenth century had a profound effect on towns, cities and agricultural communities. In some instances rural areas disappeared entirely to make way for expanding urban centers. Meanwhile towns in the frontier competed for survival and expansion. South Bend was one of the fortunate towns that survived the competition. Starting as a trading post in the Indiana Territory and developing into a manufacturing city, South Bend experienced on a microcosm the development of the United States. It contained an economic elite and a working class with a significant number of foreign born. This chapter traces the emergence of South Bend from its origins through the nineteenth century. It connects the broad sweeping histories of industrialization and immigration examined in the first two chapters across the United States with the specific circumstances South Bend's immigrants experienced in their communities and as laborers in chapters four and five.

The first immigrants to tread across the area known today as northern Indiana arrived about 11,000 years ago. Archeological evidence suggests Native Americans used the rivers, streams and Great Lakes to create a vast trading system. This network connected Native American communities from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic coast and the Gulf of Mexico to Canada. These early American trade routes were used over

and over again as different tribes became dominant in the region.[1] After more than ten thousand years, new migrants from across the Atlantic Ocean arrived in the area and challenged the Native American dominance.

The French were the first Europeans to navigate the area known today as Northern Indiana.   The initial group was led by the Jesuit priest James Marquette in 1673 who was interested in converting Native Americans to Catholicism.[2] Explorer Robert Cavalier Sieur de La Salle followed Marquette in 1679 into the region and claimed the area around the Great Lakes and Mississippi River down to the Gulf of Mexico for France, naming it Louisiana. The European explorers, trappers and traders that followed LaSalle into the region recognized, as the Native Americans did before them, the importance of the navigational waters and their portages in the upper mid-west for the movement of goods.   Of particular use for the inhabitants in the area were the St. Joseph and Kankakee Rivers, and the portage that connected them. The land bridge and rivers linked Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River.[3] To protect the trade route from other European interlopers the French constructed several fortifications in the Great Lakes region, including Fort St. Joseph on the shore of Lake Michigan near the Kankakee Portage and the mouth of the St. Joseph River.[4] Native American fur provided the motivation for the Europeans to control the mid-west. In exchange for furs, the French furnished guns, jewelry, alcohol, and metal cooking implements and tools.[5] In the 1700s,

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[1] John Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, Making of America Series (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2003), 14-9; Timothy Edward Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana* (Chicago, New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1907), 39.
[2] Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 20-2.
[3] Ibid., 22-4.
[4] Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 25-31; Chas C. Chapman and Co, *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana; Together with Sketches of Its Cities, Villages and Townships, Educational, Religious, Civil, Military, and Political History* (Chicago: C. C. Chapman & Co, 1880), 333.
[5] Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 125-6.

the trade between Europeans and Native American nations, originally the Miami and later the Potawatomi in the St. Joseph area, continued to develop and expand as more European traders made their way into the mid-west.

The interdependence led the Native Americans in the mid-west to become directly involved in the European conflicts that played out in North America. Various tribes allied themselves with the French, English and later American nations to improve or maintain their favored trading status or gain superiority against other Native American tribes and their European allies.[6] In the Treaty of Paris that followed the Seven Years War (French and Indiana War) in 1763, Great Britain and its colonies became the beneficiary of the trading network after it defeated France and her Native American allies. But the elimination of France from the American frontier did not end all conflict. In fact, soon after the French defeat, Great Britain issued the Proclamation of 1763 which prevented American colonists from advancing westward into Native American lands. This prohibition rankled many colonials and contributed to the general antagonism the colonists felt about British policy. Conflict with Native Americans continued as the Europeans moved westward. After the War for Independence ended in 1781, an increasing number of settlers coveted the lands across the Appalachian Mountains to the banks of the Mississippi River in order to establish permanent farms, instead of merely trading material. The expansion westward by the United States led to warfare between the European Americans and Native Americans and ultimately to the removal of Native Americans from their land. The Potawatomi in northern Indiana were forced to relocate onto reservations established on the land west of the Mississippi that had been purchased

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[6] Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 26-31.

from the French in 1803.[7] Lamenting the condition of one removal caravan of about 800

Potawatomi, a Roman Catholic priest described what he saw in a letter to his bishop:

> I saw my poor Christians, under a burning noonday sun, amidst clouds of dust, marching in a line, surrounded by soldiers who were hurrying their steps. Next came the baggage wagons, in which numerous invalids, children, and women, too weak to walk, were crammed….
> I found the camp…a scene of desolation, with sick and dying people an [sic] all sides. Nearly all the children, weakened by the heat, had fallen into a state of complete languor and depression.[8]

And several days later as the party was moving through Illinois the priest

complained again that the Native Americans were traveling, "under a burning sun

and without shade from one camp to another," and that they were in the midst of a

"vast ocean" and looking "in vain for a tree."   Furthermore he wrote, "not a drop

of water can be found," and " it was a veritable torture for our poor sick, some of

whom died each day from weakness and fatigue."[9] The removal of the Native

Americans from northern Indiana lasted for several years and required many such

trips in the late 1830s and early 1840. The acts of removal started less than

twenty years after the first European settled in the region.

The first permanent European settler to reside in what would become St.

Joseph County, Indiana was Pierre Navarre. He constructed a small cabin in 1820

and developed a close trading relationship with local Potawatomi as an agent for

John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company. At least three Native American

villages were in the area when he settled.   Navarre married a Potawatomi woman

and had six children with her. The proximity to navigable waterway and Native

American settlements drew other traders into the Indiana territory area soon after

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[7] Barnhart and Carmony, *Indiana, from Frontier to Industrial Commonwealth*, vol. I, 207-14.
[8] Ibid., vol. I, 214.
[9] Ibid., vol. I, 215.

Navarre. South Bend town founders Alexis Coquillard, also of the American Fur

Company and Lathrop Taylor, of Samuel Hanna and Company, established their

own fur trading posts along the St. Joseph River in 1823 and 1827, respectively.[10]

The river continued to influence the economic developments as a method of

transportation and later provided power for industrial development. There were also

three roads that had been developed by the Native Americans that, like the river, helped

connect the frontier posts to the markets in the east and were ultimately incorporated into

the modern transportation network.[11] Even with these advantages to commercial

enterprise, the growth of northern Indiana was slow when compared to the rest of the

state. In fact, by 1830, the year St. Joseph County was established, 80 percent of the

state's population lived in the southern counties, and when the town of South Bend was

platted in 1831, there were less than 170 Americans and Europeans living in the area

compared with upwards of 4,000 Native Americans.[12]

Soon after St. Joseph County was created in 1830, residents began vying to

establish the county seat in their respective property, knowing that the center of

government would attract people doing business to that location. The county

commissioners first located the county seat on an undeveloped section of land to the

north of South Bend owned by William Brookfield. But the two early fur traders,

Coquillard and Taylor greased the wheels of government and successfully lobbied the

commissioners to change the location to a newly platted South Bend in 1831. In an

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[10]Kilmer, "South Bend, 1820-1851: The Founding of the Early Community", 20-23; Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 131-5.

[11] Anderson and Cooley, eds., *South Bend and the Men Who Have Made It: Historical, Descriptive and Biographical* (South Bend: Tribune Printing Co., 1901), 10; Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 45-7, 130; Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 20, 45-6.

[12] Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 45-7; Kilmer, "South Bend, 1820-1851: The Founding of the Early Community", 79; Agnes Bertille Hindelang, "The Social Development of South Bend, Indiana as Shown by Its Ordinances" (Master's thesis, University of Notre Dame, 1933), 4.

apparent quid pro quo, Brookfield put up no legal resistance to the change and he was soon granted the position of South Bend Surveyor. At this time Coquillard owned the northern half of South Bend and Taylor the southern half. Until an official government building was constructed years later, county business in this frontier community was performed at Coquillard's house.[13] The logic behind attracting people to the county seat proved to be correct as a number of lawyers became early South Bend residents.[14] This was not unusual, however, according to Jack Beatty, as lawyers were more abundant in frontier towns than any other profession.[15]

Taylor and Coquillard were important early economic and political figures in the city of South Bend; each held political office, and developed commercial and financial opportunities for the budding community.[16] They realized that their personal economic wellbeing was tied up with the successful development of South Bend. Coquillard, for example, had a small number of cabins constructed so settlers would have a place to stay when they first migrated to South Bend. He also attempted to build a canal to connect the Kankakee and St. Joseph Rivers to spur further economic development.[17] Taylor held several county political positions and built up his trading post into a mercantile business as the town grew.

Agriculture was the primary occupation for most settlers in the mid-west, including St. Joseph County, and much of the labor was directed toward local

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[13]Bert Anson, "Lathorp M. Taylor: Fur Trader" (Master's thesis, Indiana University, 1947), 20-25. Kilmer, "South Bend, 1820-1851: The Founding of the Early Community", 64-71; Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 47-49; Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 354-55.
[14] Kilmer, "South Bend, 1820-1851: The Founding of the Early Community", 95.
[15] Beatty, *Age of Betrayal: The Triumph of Money in America, 1865-1900*, 101.
[16] Anderson and Cooley, eds., *South Bend and the Men Who Have Made It: Historical, Descriptive and Biographical*, 12-4; Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 181, 410.
[17] Kilmer, "South Bend, 1820-1851: The Founding of the Early Community", 75; Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 57.

consumption. There did occur, however, a small surplus of products that made their way

to eastern markets by way of the river transportation system. In the early 1830s gristmills

powered by the river produced the largest export from the area, 1,000 pounds of flour per

month in 1831-32. Other exports in those years included 80 barrels of whiskey and 6,300

pounds of pork.[18] But the town expanded as more land was cleared and demand for

increased services grew.

In the 1830s South Bend experienced sporadic growth. The population increased

early in the decade and reached 839 in 1837, but then it fell to 728 by 1840, due in part to

the reverberations from the Panic of 1837 that caused economic disorder on more

industrialized areas in the eastern United States. The town had been incorporated in 1835

but it languished following the panic and the government disintegrated when trustees

failed to meet and elections for county commissioners never materialized. The panic also

destroyed Coquillard financially. His canal venture designed to attract business interests

and raise the value of his land was never finished and as the depression dried up

investment funds, it stranded him without adequate finances to finish the project, which

resulted in his bankruptcy.[19] A New York company also failed to construct a dam and

race across the St. Joseph River in the 1830s due to the detrimental effects of the panic.[20]

However, both Coquillard and South Bend made recoveries after the effects of the

depression dissipated.

Population, infrastructure and businesses all grew through the 1840s. The nearly

6,500 people living in St. Joseph County in 1840 almost doubled to 12,366 in 1850, while

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[18] Kilmer, "South Bend, 1820-1851: The Founding of the Early Community", 89-93.

[19] Ibid., 112-13; Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 357; Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 57-59.

[20] Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 229.

the number of people in South Bend more than doubled to 1,652. The town was

reincorporated in 1845 and new officers elected. Two bridges were constructed across

the river to facilitate movement. And a dam across the river with mill races on the east

and west side of the river for water power was finished in 1844, where a number of small

manufacturers utilized the river's power. Two saw mills were among the first that took

advantage of both the abundance of timber available in the frontier town and the water

power made available on the races. However, larger scale manufacturing was delayed

until a railroad made the cost of transporting goods cheaper and faster than the water

transportation. The connection was finally accomplished in 1851 when the Michigan

Southern and Indiana Northern Railroad linked South Bend with the national market.[21]

According to South Bend historian John Palmer, the economic growth until this

time depended upon the slow and expensive network of trails and water travel. But after

1851, South Bend's relationship with the rest of the country and the world became

stronger with the arrival of the railroad in October of that year. The importance of the

railroad in the economic expansion of the country has been well noted, but Palmer argued

that it made the difference between continued growth of South Bend, and a town just six

miles north of it, called Bertrand. The two towns had been economic rivals in the 1840s,

but after the railroad arrived, South Bend continued to grow while Bertrand withered.[22]

In the 1850s, several businesses of note were established and, though starting out small,

grew into large international corporations by the turn of the century.

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[21] Belden Higgins and Co, *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of St. Joseph Co., Indiana / Compiled, Drawn & Published from Personal Examinations & Surveys by Higgins, Beldin & Co* (Chicago: Higgins, Beldin & Co., 1875), 6; Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 229, 332, 36, 57; Chapman and Co, *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana; Together with Sketches of Its Cities, Villages and Townships, Educational, Religious, Civil, Military, and Political History*, 871-72.
[22] Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 152-63.

An important component to the early South Bend community, and for later

European immigrant communities for that matter, was religion. The exploration of

northern Indiana and founding of South Bend occurred during what is referred to as the

Second Great Awakening. Like so many who were faced with challenging, uncertain and

perilous circumstances, the settlers in the frontier often turned to faith for comfort. In

South Bend, Presbyterian and Methodist services were both held as early as 1831 and

were organized and attended by the town founders. The First Methodist Church was

constructed in 1835 on Main Street followed by a new one in 1851. Presbyterian services

were held at Horatio Chapin's house until a church was constructed in 1834.[23] Chapin

arrived in South Bend in 1831 and established a successful mercantile house as well as a

"Sunday School."[24] According to the 1866-67 South Bend Directory there were already

nine churches in the town, including a German Methodist Episcopal Church.[25] The

adherents of the Protestant religion were dominant in South Bend, but Catholicism played

an important role in South Bend's development as well.

The presence of Catholicism in the area was limited after Marquette's travels

through northern Indiana until 1830.   In that year Father Stephen Badin was sent into the

Indiana wilderness to build a mission for the Potawatomi Indians. Here he remained until

1836 when many of the Native Americans were forcibly removed to the west by the

United States government. In 1841, Father Edward Sorin and seven Brothers of the

newly organized Congregation of the Holy Cross from France were charged with using

the Badin land to create a school for young men who would serve as teachers themselves.

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[23] Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 413-15.

[24] Anderson and Cooley, eds., *South Bend and the Men Who Have Made It: Historical, Descriptive and Biographical*, 80.

[25] *Holland's South Bend City Directory for 1867-8, Containing a Complete List of All Residents in the City; Also a Classified Business Directory of South Bend and Mishawaka*, (Chicago: Western Publishing Company, 1867), 27-28.

Only 28 years old when he arrived in January 1842 to the primitive mission, Sorin built a

successful college, become a leader to all the South Bend Catholic community and also a

friend to many of the town's Protestant industrial elite by the time of his death in 1893.[26]

Soon after arriving in South Bend at the home of town founder and Catholic, Alex

Coquillard, Sorin reported that there were about twenty Catholic families out of 742

residents worshipping in a log cabin by the lake that Badin had erected, in a county of

7,000 people. Sorin was disturbed with the state of Catholic religiosity when he arrived.

According to his recollection,

> The Catholic religion was consequently very little known in all this part of the
> diocese. The few ceremonies that could be carried out, being necessarily devoid
> of all solemnity, and even of decency, could have hardly any other effect in the
> eyes of the public than to give rise to injurious and sarcastic remarks against
> Catholicity. There was hardly a single Catholic in all the country able to defend
> his faith against these insults, and the conduct of many often served as
> foundations and proofs of the blasphemies of the malicious and the ignorant. All
> the surroundings were strongly Protestant, that is to say, enemies more or less
> embittered against the Catholics.[27]

By 1843, a new church had been erected to replace the old building that Badin had

constructed more than ten years previous for the small congregation at Notre Dame.[28]

Beginning only a decade after the founders of South Bend and with little Catholic

foundation, Sorin also experienced difficulties establishing a strong Catholic tradition in

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[26] See for example James Oliver to Father Sorin, 3Jan81, 31 Dec81, 27Dec84; "Sorin Files, Lay
Correspondence, Oliver," Congregation of Holy Cross Provincial Archive Center, University of Notre
Dame (Notre Dame, IN); Clem Studebaker to Father Sorin, 22Aug74, 27Dec78, 7Dec82, 11Dec82,
8Nov83, 8Dec86, JM Studebaker to Father Sorin 27Dec81, 26Dec83,10Feb90, and Peter Studebaker to
Father Sorin, 27Dec81"Sorin Files, Lay Correspondence, Studebaker," Congregation of Holy Cross
Provincial Archive Center, University of Notre Dame (Notre Dame, IN).———, eds., *South Bend and the
Men Who Have Made It: Historical, Descriptive and Biographical*, 88.
[27] Edward Sorin, CSC, "Chronicles of Notre Dame Du Lac,"
http://archives.nd.edu/episodes/sorin/chronicle/sorin000.htm.
[28] Campers, *History of St. Joseph's Parish: South Bend, Indiana, 1853-1953, on the Occasion of the
Centenary Celebration, October 25, 1953*, 32-35; "A Century at St. Patrick's: A History of the Priests,
Activities, and People of St. Patrick's Parish, South Bend, Indiana, 1858-1958," (South Bend: no publisher,
1958); Joseph Michael White, *Sacred Heart Parish at Notre Dame: A Heritage and History* (Notre Dame,
IN: Sacred Heart Parish, 1992).

the frontier environment. Shortages in money, disagreements with his superiors and occasional epidemics that forced students home, made the first two decades difficult for the young priest.[29] Even so, Sorin was committed to serving the needs of the Catholic community surrounding his fledgling school. In the decade following Sorin's arrival, many Catholics from the area near Notre Dame attended mass at the church there. But in 1847, Sorin purchased land for a new church, to be built closer to South Bend. Originally called St. Alexis and later changed to St. Joseph's, the church was completed in 1853. It was located on the east bank of the St. Joseph River just opposite of South Bend in the town of Lowell, which was annexed by South Bend in 1865. The 1854 census of the church recorded 46 families and 229 members.[30] The growth in the Catholic population reflected the improved economic standing and general population growth of the town.

Soon after the arrival of locomotives to South Bend in 1851, the industrial giants that contributed to the transformation of South Bend from a frontier village to a manufacturing center arrived. The founders of the Studebaker Brothers' Manufacturing Company[31] that became a prominent name in wagon building, and much later in automobile manufacturing, opened a small establishment in 1852. Clem and Henry Studebaker had moved to South Bend from Ashland, Ohio several years earlier at the urging of their father. When they opened their blacksmith shop, it began as just one of the thousands of small blacksmith shops operating in the United States before the Civil War. Their primary trade was not initially in wagons, though they did produce a few in the early years. Eventually, all five of the Studebaker brothers worked in the company at

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[29] John Theodore Wack, "The University of Notre Dame Du Lac: Foundations, 1842-1857," http://archives.nd.edu/wack/wack.htm.

[30] Campers, *History of St. Joseph's Parish: South Bend, Indiana, 1853-1953, on the Occasion of the Centenary Celebration, October 25, 1953*, 45.

[31] Originally H & C Studebaker in 1852 and changed to the Studebaker Brothers' Manufacturing Company when it was incorporated in 1868.

one time in their lives. Ironically, the father of the five Studebaker brothers, and five

daughters as well, lacked the business acumen that his famous sons acquired and battled

debt for much of his life due to business failures.[32]

The wagon building aspect of the Studebaker Brothers' grew slowly at first but

was aided immeasurably by the United States military action against the Mormons in

1857-58. In the incident known as "Buchanan's Blunder," the United States began

military operations in the west and needed supplies for such activities. One company that

contracted with the army to build wagons was the Milburn Wagon Company, in

neighboring Mishawaka, Indiana. The proprietor, George Milburn, was a wealthy and

successful businessman, but did not have the capacity to fill the wagon order himself, so

he subcontracted an order of one hundred wagons to the Studebaker Brothers in 1857.[33]

This fortuitous development created a contradictory set of circumstances that resulted in a

change in ownership of the company.

The large order generated increased revenue that put the Studebaker Brothers' in

the best financial footing in their short history. The Studebakers had employed other men

before 1857, but the government sub-contract allowed them to expand even more, and the

company saw a significant influx of capital. This particular business transaction,

however, caused considerable tensions within the company because the wagons were to

be used indirectly to perpetuate a war. This was problematic for the Studebakers because

they belonged to the Dunkard religion which placed a high value on peaceful existence

and prohibited the use of violence or taking part in a violent business venture. After the

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[32] Donald T. Critchlow, *Studebaker: The Life and Death of an American Corporation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 20.

[33] Emiel Joseph Fabyan, "The World's Greatest Wagon Works: A History of the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, 1856 to 1966" (Ph. D. dissertation, Ball State University, 1987), 43-44.

Studebakers began providing wagons for the purpose of war, Henry was visited by a committee of Dunkard elders who appealed to his religious sense to reconsider such activities. Henry's faith, and the elders' advice, convinced him that he could not follow his faith and continue the produce material for war.[34] Clem, evidently, did not have the same qualms over the conflict of religious beliefs, or as business historian Critchlow surmised, "the principle of [Dunkard] pacifism had been replaced with the principle of profit as he continued to fill orders for the army's wars in the west."[35]

Clem Studebaker's decision to divest from his Dunkard religion allowed the company to serve the Union cause as well during the Civil War. Henry was the only brother of the five that would eventually join the company to retain his faith, as one by one the other brothers moved away from the Dunkards "as increased prosperity brought changes in lifestyle no longer compatible with the strict discipline of the sectarian Brethren."[36] Clem would find a home in the Methodist faith in 1867 and contribute sizable donations to South Bend Methodist organizations. His conversion to Methodism may have begun with his difficulty squaring the Dunkard doctrine with war and profits, but it was solidified when he married George Milburn's daughter, Anne, a Methodist, as his second wife in 1863. Regardless, in the wake of the conflict with the Mormons in the late 1850s, Clem had a financial problem. Henry's desire to retreat from the wagon business and pursue an agricultural lifestyle required Clem to find the capital necessary to purchase his brother's half of the business. Clem, however, lacked the money to purchase Henry out. Clem was again fortunate enough to have another brother who had

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[34] Donald F Durnbaugh, "Studebaker and Stutz: The Evolution of Dunker Entrepreneurs," *Pennsylvania Folklife* 41, no. 3 (1992): 121.

[35] Critchlow, *Studebaker: The Life and Death of an American Corporation*, 22.

[36] Durnbaugh, "Studebaker and Stutz: The Evolution of Dunker Entrepreneurs," 121 - confirm.

cash and, once consulted, an interest in taking Henry's place as a partner in the business.[37]

John Moler (JM) Studebaker left South Bend in 1853 seeking adventure and riches in the western gold mines. However, he did not discover success in the streams and mines searching for gold, but in the blacksmith trade he had learned from his father. Soon after he arrived in California, JM Studebaker contracted with a man desperate for help supplying miners with tools and wheelbarrows. Therefore, instead of following his original plans to search for gold, JM, like his brothers became employed in the lucrative blacksmith trade. Within a few years he had earned enough money to purchase a share of the company and became a partner in the thriving business.[38] Thus, when Henry Studebaker wanted to leave the wagon company in 1858, JM had an opportunity to join Clem in the South Bend enterprise, and brought with him considerable cash to invest. The $8,000 JM Studebaker brought with him from California allowed him to buy Henry's share of the company and provided capital for improvements and the first of many expansions in the shop.[39] JM's entrance into the Studebaker family business marked the third, but not final brother to step into the family business. The youngest two brothers, Peter E., and Jacob joined in the administration after the Civil War ended.

Another company, the Oliver Chilled Plow Works,[40] was important to the development of the industrial growth of South Bend and also began in the 1850s. The

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[37] Fabyan, "The World's Greatest Wagon Works: A History of the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, 1856 to 1966", 46-47.

[38] Kathleen Anne Smallzried and Dorothy James Roberts, *More Than You Promise, a Business at Work in Society* (New York: Harper & brothers, 1942), 21, 33.

[39] Albert Russel Erskine, *History of the Studebaker Corporation* (Chicago: Poole bros., 1918), 17-23; Fabyan, "The World's Greatest Wagon Works: A History of the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, 1856 to 1966", 46-47.

[40] Though the company was incorporated as the South Bend Iron Works in, it was widely recognized in the contemporary press as the Oliver Chilled Plow Works. For simplicity and continuity I have used that name

company founder, James Oliver, migrated to the United States in 1835 at age twelve with his parents, who made their home in Mishawaka, just east of South Bend. Oliver learned the iron molding trade in a foundry there, and in 1855 combined in partnership with several others to open an iron molding foundry on the newly completed west race of the St. Joseph River. The partnership remained relatively small and experienced several setbacks including two floods during the first few years that destroyed the facilities. In 1857 while turning out a variety of iron works including fifty plows, there were only three employees working with the two remaining partners of the company, James Oliver and Harvey Little. The employees earned a daily wage of $1, $1.25 and $1.75, respectively, though some of the pay was given in notes to the stores owing the company money.[41] The company grew slowly in the last few years of the decade. In 1860 when a third partner, Thelus M. Bissell was added to the partnership, there were still only three other men working for the company at $1.50 a day, plus three boys whose total weekly wages were only $4.62.[42] The company was struck by disaster again in December 1860 when a fire completely destroyed the iron works. Thus as the country careened toward a national catastrophe with the southern states seceding from the union, the small iron molding business experienced its own small scale tragedy. But the three partners decided to start up their business again and by 1861 they employed eleven men and boys.[43]

Destructive to life and property, particularly in the South, the Civil War spurred economic growth in the North and many industrialists took advantage of the war through

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throughout the paper when referring to the company, the "Oliver's Plow Company" or "Oliver's Works." See Index for the name changes to the company.
[41] Joan Romine, *Copshaholm: The Oliver Story* (South Bend, IN: Northern Indiana Historical Society, 1978), 3-13; Douglas Laing Meikle, "James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works" (Ph. D., Indiana University, 1958), 48-49.
[42] Meikle, "James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works", 63.
[43] Ibid., 70.

government contracts and legislation to expand their businesses. Industries in general

benefited from the Homestead Act and the Contract Labor Law that were passed during

the Civil War. The former act was intended to make it easier for settlers to acquire land

in the West, while the latter law was intended to ease the labor demand on industries that

were having difficulty filling positions at lower wages. The war also forced the federal

government to sell bonds to raise money and infused the economy with greenbacks,

making more money available. The influx of cash into the economy did increase wages

during the Civil War, but not enough to counter the inflationary pressures, meaning that

though earnings for workers increased, the price of goods they needed rose faster.[44]

The Studebaker Brothers' was one of the companies that benefited directly from

the war. At the end of the 1850s, the company was employing about twelve men, besides

Clem and JM in their shop on Michigan Street in the center of South Bend. But the war

brought new contracts with the United States government and the company supplied the

United States Army with kitchen wagons, ambulances, forges carts and baggage wagons,

leading to significant expansion in the facilities. Vehicle production jumped from 8 to 80

vehicles a week and employment rose to more than 150 men by the end of the war. War

and profits continued to cause problem at some level for the Studebaker brothers. In

contrary moves, JM Studebaker discouraged his younger brother Jacob from joining the

Union cause, but defended the war to his employees in a letter he distributed to them

explaining the vital importance of supplying the wagons for the North.[45] The war also

brought one more brother into the family company. Peter Studebaker had been working

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[44] Whitten, *The Emergence of Giant Enterprise, 1860-1914: American Commercial Enterprise and Extractive Industries*, 30.
[45] Thomas A. Kinney, *The Carriage Trade: Making Horse-Drawn Vehicles in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 198-99, 202; Thomas E. Bonsall, *More Than They Promised: The Studebaker Story* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), 24.

on his own as a traveling salesman and owned a small shop in Goshen, Indiana, before

signing on with Studebaker Brothers' as the sales manager. He opened up its first branch

house in St. Joseph, Missouri in 1865 and later became the treasurer of the company.[46]

The Oliver Chilled Plow Company grew during the war as well. Actually, the

company grew from literally nothing, because of the devastating fire in 1860 that

destroyed the shop, to an operation employing 23 people in 1864 and 40 people in 1865.

This economic success was due in part to the rising price of cast iron, and inflation from

war, and in part to the new investor, George Milburn, the prosperous wagon manufacturer

in Mishawaka and an English immigrant himself. Milburn bought one-third of the

company in 1864 which infused the company with capital for expansion. Agricultural

implements were a good investment for farmers who faced labor shortages during the war

and Milburn recognized the possibility for growth in the industry. His investment into

the Plow Company earned him the office of treasurer where he was also instrumental in

the financial education of James Oliver's son, Joseph Doty (JD) Oliver, who later guided

the Oliver Chilled Plow Company, first as treasurer and later as president, to the pinnacle

of the industry. [47]

George Milburn, then, was a very important contributor to the Oliver and

Studebaker successes, but he was not the only thing that these two companies had in

common. The first was the Horatio Alger-like origins of both companies. A small

investment, hard work and good fortune was the raw material with which Alger filled his

books, and exemplified the ways any man could achieve the "American Dream." Both

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[46] Fabyan, "The World's Greatest Wagon Works: A History of the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, 1856 to 1966", 41-42,52; Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 481.
[47] For expansion during the Civil war see Meikle, "James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works", 65-83.

these companies lay claim to that story. But many times, success came from fortuitous

events, such as the well timed investment by a friend, or a war to boost revenue.

Somewhat ironically, the Studebaker "American dream" began with the help of Henry's

fiancé, who provided $40 of the $68 the brothers needed to start their blacksmith shop in

1852.[48]   Both of these companies also survived major fires and the cut throat competition

that crippled and destroyed many other small blacksmith shops. In an era filled with

small smithing and iron molding shops, with each town in the country having several of

each, these two not only survived, but became two of the largest producers in their field

by the end of the nineteenth century. They were also similar in their management

patterns. The management of the small early companies came from the personal

involvement of the direct owners. However, as the original owners aged, and the

companies became more successful and grew larger, the management of the company

was left to others. In the case of the Oliver Company, management fell to his son, JD

Oliver who did not enjoy physical labor as much as financial deliberation.[49] In the

Studebaker situation, the daily management was turned over to a variety of family

members and professional managers.

After the Civil War ended in 1865, South Bend, its industries, and working

immigrant groups continued to grow. The Oliver Chilled Plow Works continued its

success and expansions after the war. In 1867 it employed 55 men including JD Oliver

as a junior bookkeeper under the tutelage of George Milburn. In 1868, the company was

incorporated and reorganized. Two thousand shares of stock with a par value of $50 each

were distributed. James Oliver, as superintendent, George Milburn as president and

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[48] Kinney, *The Carriage Trade: Making Horse-Drawn Vehicles in America*, 193.
[49] Romine, *Copshaholm: The Oliver Story*, 18-19.

Thelus Bissell, who had first bought into the company in 1860, each held 400 shares. John Brownfield, a prominent town father and bank president was named secretary, with 100 shares. Clem Studebaker was also issued 100 shares, while the remaining shares were held by the company. Eventually, all the shares would be held by James Oliver and his family.[50]

The newly incorporated company constructed a 15,000 square foot foundry, and in 1869 there were 70 employees working in the new facility. The number of employees grew to 100 in 1870, 135 in 1871, and 200 in 1873 when depression struck. In that year the company produced $300,000 dollars worth of goods.[51] The economic crisis in the 1870s did not affect Oliver Chilled Plow Company. In fact, during those years the company experienced considerable growth. Thirty-two acres of land were purchased in 1874 to build 200,000 square feet of production capability. Plow production doubled almost every year in the early 1870s from 1,506 in 1871 to 3,049 in 1872 to 7,472 in 1873 to 14,976 in 1874 to 31,077 in 1875.[52] In a time when many general manufacturing companies were struggling to stay afloat, the Oliver Plow Company expanded considerably. The sales of the plows continued through the Great Railroad strike of 1877 and in that year the company shipped 46,835 plows for $577,861 in sales. In 1878 a new riding plow called the sulky was gaining favor, and Oliver shipped over 1,000 of those and almost 63,000 standard plows to combine for $710,185 in sales. In 1879, there appeared one of the few signs that the depression affected the company when the salaries of the officers were reduced.[53]

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[50] Meikle, "James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works", 92-103.
[51] Ibid., 111, 17, 31.
[52] Ibid., 143-45, 66.
[53] Ibid., 190-91.

The growth of the company during the seventies was also exemplified by the accumulation of capital and stock by individuals that owned stock in the company. The dividends paid to the stockholders in 1872 earned 10 percent on their investment followed by a 15 percent return in 1873 and a 20 percent return in 1874. For the largest stock holder, James Oliver, those returns amounted to $4,000 in 1872, $6,700 in 1873 and almost $15,000 in 1874. In that year, James Oliver owned 1,500 of the 2,000 stocks available in the company. At the January stockholders meeting in 1876, the capital stock was increased to $500,000 with 10,000 shares each par valued at $50, and dividends were paid in stock. Also in 1876, Leighton Pine, as the new secretary of the company and previously head of the Singer Sewing Machine cabinet factory, earned a salary of $5,000.[54] The dividend for the years 1877-81 leveled off to almost 6 percent each year at the plow company, netting James Oliver about $20,000 annually from dividends alone. Those were the lean years for the company, because beginning in 1882, the dividends yielded more than fifty percent annually for a decade. Oliver, as the holder of dozens of patents, also earned royalties paid to him by the plow company. By the time the corporation stopped compensating him for the use of the patents in 1882 it had paid him more than $240,000 in royalties.[55]

The Studebaker Company also expanded after the Civil War, but not before experiencing a post-war decline. According to the Studebaker Company cash books, the number of men employed dropped below 100 between June 1866 and March 1867, with one pay period in January showing only 64 men.[56] However, demand for their vehicles

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[54] Ibid., 171-72.
[55] H. Gail Davis, "Notes Concerning James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works," (South Bend, IN: Northern Indiana Center for History, Copshaholm).
[56] Studebaker Manufacturer, "1867-68 Cash Book," (South Bend, IN: Studebaker National Museum).

increased significantly and the company expanded through the late 1860s and early

1870s. The firm was incorporated in 1868 at $75,000, with Clem as President, JM as

Vice President and Peter Studebaker as Treasurer, with each controlling a third of the

stock. Dividends for the new stockholders started slowly in the 1870s, paying only

$300,000 in the first ten years after incorporation, but then paid out $400,000 in the next

three years.[57]

Yearly vehicle sales and income varied considerably. The same year of

incorporation, 1868, almost 4,000 vehicles were produced with 190 employees.

Production growth was above 20 percent for the first two years after incorporation, but

then dropped to single digits from 1870 through 1875, except for the banner year in 1873

in which production jumped 48 percent. However, in the decade following 1868 the

number of vehicles produced increased more than 325 percent to 17,500 (table 3.1).

Income from sales rose 200 percent from less than $400,000 in 1868 to almost 1.2

million dollars in 1878. But here too, the numbers fluctuated considerably from a high of

36 percent in 1875 to a low of -7 percent the following year.

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[57] Albert Russel Erskine, *History of the Studebaker Corporation*, 2nd ed. (South Bend, IN: The Studebaker Corporation, 1924), 27.

Year	Number of Vehicles	Production increase/ decrease	Sales revenue in Dollars a	Sales Increase	Number employed	Dividends in dollars
1868	3,955		360,000		190	
1869	5,115	29%	463,000	29%	220	
1870	6,505	27%	566,000	22%	260	
1871	6,835	5%	609,000	8%	285	157,587a
1872	6,950	2%	688,000	13%	325	
1873	10,280	48%	820,000	19%	453	
1874	11,050d	7%	761,000	-7%	550d	
1875	12,000b	9%	1,032,000	36%	600d	
1876	15,500d	29%	997,000	-3%	650 d	150,000 a
1877	17,500e	13%	1,107,000	11%		
1878	18,000 e	3%	1,181,000	7%		150,000 a
1879	20,000 e	11%	1,200,000	2%	800 e	150,000 a
1880			1,526,000	27%	890c	100,000 a

Source: Higgins. *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of St. Joseph Co., Indiana*, 28.
a. Erskine, *History of the Studebaker Corporation,* 27.
b. Fabyan,. "The World's Greatest Wagon Works: A History of the Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company, 1856 to 1966," 89.
c. Beatty, *Studebaker: Less Than They Promised*, 10.
d. Kinney, *The Carriage Trade: Making Horse-Drawn Vehicles in America,* 210
e. Chapman, Chas C. & Co. *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana,*875.

The overall gains were made all the more impressive considering the factory was partially destroyed by fires in both 1872 and 1874. Clem Studebaker noted the total losses in his journal on 17 June 1872 as $70,000 with only $19,666 of insurance coverage making the net loss $50,334.[58] The second fire was even more destructive, with losses reported at $350,000 and only one third covered by insurance.[59]

The Studebakers had been increasing their shop space in the center of South Bend during the late 1860s, but in 1871 they purchased land in the southwestern part of the city

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[58] Clement Studebaker, "Journal," in *Clement Studebaker Collection* (South Bend, IN: Northern Indiana Center for History, Archives, 1834-1929), June 17, 1872.
[59] Higgins and Co, *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of St. Joseph Co., Indiana / Compiled, Drawn & Published from Personal Examinations & Surveys by Higgins, Beldin & Co*, 28.

adjacent to the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad to make transportation more efficient and allow for future expansion. It was this facility that was destroyed twice.

When a new facility was finally completed in 1875 it housed an engine that delivered 200 horsepower and was capable of driving dozens of machines. In a modernized factory such as Studebaker's, a wagon wheel, for example, might pass through fourteen different machines on its way to completion. This modernization occurred across the industry and country as more machines made the manufacture of parts less laborious. It was a different workplace than ten years before when men subcontracted to make hubs and spokes, for example. Power lathes and mortising machines assisted men in spoke production, while a power spoke driver set the spokes into the hubs before the felloes were attached.[60]

South Bend proved to be more than a breeding ground for home grown industrialism. It was also an attractive location for established industries to locate new facilities. John C. Birdsell, for example, was an inventor and entrepreneur who moved his factory from New York to South Bend in 1863. Birdsell had invented a clover huller; a machine that cut clover heads from their stems and separated the seed from the head. The huller was part of the larger agriculture revolution that sought to increase yield from fields while reducing the labor. Clover was a valuable crop that provided hay for livestock and nutrients for the soil. By planting clover as a cover crop, farmers were able to reap profits from a field while still enriching the soil with the benefits of a natural nitrogen producing fertilizer. Farmers used clover as a "green manure" in their crop rotation to increase their soil's productivity, without letting it go fallow. The clover

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[60] Kinney, *The Carriage Trade: Making Horse-Drawn Vehicles in America*, 203-04.

huller made the harvesting process more mechanized, efficient, and less dependent on human labor.[61]

Birdsell invented his clover huller in 1856 in New York, but he found very little success in manufacturing and selling his new invention in that state and decided to move his factory and family to a more suitable location. He recognized the center of farming in the United States was moving westward and he followed that trend to be closer to the people who would purchase his machines, and closer to the material needed to build them. Birdsell found an empty building located near the hard and soft woods necessary for production in South Bend, Indiana that could house his machinery near a railroad on the west side of the St. Joseph river.[62]

In 1870, Birdsell expanded ownership of the business and incorporated with his sons, but the company only produced 270 machines that year. In 1871, Birdsell erected a new facility in the southern part of the city on Division and Columbia, close to the newly constructed Grand Trunk Railroad. Upon its opening, the *South Bend Tribune* reported it to be one of the largest facilities in the city. In 1873, Birdsell employed 75 hands and sold $150,000 worth of goods.[63] Unfortunately, demand for the hullers fell off soon after the move to the new facility and production occurred only sporadically after 1873 and through the rest of the Depression; in 1875 only 68 machines were manufactured.[64] However, the tide turned for Birdsell in the late 1870s when the depression lifted and the courts granted patent protection he had been pursuing for decades. Business continued

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[61] Roger Birdsell, "Birdsell: The Invention, the Family, the Company," (South Bend, IN: St. Joseph County Library, 1994), 2-3.
[62] Ibid., 5-6.
[63] Higgins and Co, *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of St. Joseph Co., Indiana / Compiled, Drawn & Published from Personal Examinations & Surveys by Higgins, Beldin & Co*, 7.
[64] Birdsell, "Birdsell: The Invention, the Family, the Company," 6-8.

growing during the 1880s necessitating several expansions to the factory.[65] In 1887 the

demand for wagons in the United States lured the company into that industry as well and

it soon became one of the largest manufactures of wagons in the country.[66] In 1890 the

facility expansion included eighteen acres of floor space under roof. It was employing

between 400 and 700 hands and could turn out 1,500 hullers and 15,000 wagons

annually.[67]

Another transplant to South Bend after the Civil War was the Singer

Manufacturing Company which established a facility to manufacture wooden cabinets to

house the sewing machines made elsewhere. Singer was unlike any of the previous

establishments surveyed thus far. Headquartered in New York, the company came to

South Bend in 1868 already established as an international leader in its field. In 1867, it

became the largest sewing machine manufacturer and in 1870 it produced more than

127,000 machines.[68] In 1859, the Singer Manufacturing Company had 14 branch offices

and 200 by 1877 with sales operations in Central and South America and Europe.[69] Prior

to constructing the cabinet factory for their sewing machines in South Bend, the firm had

completed a new machine production facility in Glasgow, Scotland in 1867 to handle its

European market. Future president George McKenzie (1882-89) indentified Glasgow as

an ideal site for the new factory in part due to the low labor cost and docility of the labor

force.[70] The American trade was handled by a factory in Bridgeport, NY that was

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[65] Ibid., 10-13.
[66] Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 492.
[67] *South Bend Tribune*, 13March90; Birdsell, "Birdsell: The Invention, the Family, the Company."
[68] Ruth Brandon, *A Capitalist Romance: Singer and the Sewing Machine* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1977), 101.
[69] Whitten, *The Emergence of Giant Enterprise, 1860-1914: American Commercial Enterprise and Extractive Industries*, 81.
[70] Robert Bruce Davies, *Peacefully Working to Conquer the World: Singer Sewing Machines in Foreign Markets, 1854-1920* (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 45.

capable of producing 1,400 machines each week in 1871. Increasing demand for the

sewing machine forced the company to build a new facility in 1876 that was capable of

completing 5,000 machines each week.[71] In South Bend, the cabinet production had

steadily increased and by 1873, only five years after opening, the factory produced $1.1

million worth of cabinets and was one of the largest employers in the city.[72]

Striking differences existed between the Singer Sewing Company and the other

large industrialist in the town concerning the structure of ownership and management. In

the 1860s and 1870s the original inventors or entrepreneurs and their families were

intimately involved in the daily operations and management of the Studebaker, Birdsell

and Oliver companies. As the century advanced and the original founders aged, much of

the daily operation was still overseen by the original families. Meanwhile, I. M. Singer,

the person who patented the improvements to the sewing machine, was not involved in

the management of his company by the 1860s. And though Singer's partner, Edward

Clark, was very much involved in the overall management and success of the company,

he was still 1,500 miles away from South Bend and had to rely on the management team

below him in New York and South Bend to direct the cabinet business. Obviously then,

the company's production size and market territory made its management bureaucracy

substantially larger in the 1860s and 1870s than the other companies in South Bend, and

it required more complex record keeping and management methods, of which Singer

became an international leader.[73] While ownership of most other factories remained in

the hands of the original entrepreneur or family until the turn of the century, the top

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[71] Ibid., 47-48.

[72] Higgins and Co, *An Illustrated Historical Atlas of St. Joseph Co., Indiana / Compiled, Drawn & Published from Personal Examinations & Surveys by Higgins, Beldin & Co*, 7.

[73] Davies, *Peacefully Working to Conquer the World: Singer Sewing Machines in Foreign Markets, 1854-1920*, 55-91.

management in South Bend for Singer was an extension of a large corporate structure based in New York from the time it opened in 1868.

For most of the nineteenth century, the South Bend cabinet factory was managed by the capable Leighton Pine. (Pine left Singer to work for Oliver in 1875 but after four years he returned to Singer again in 1879 and remained there until his death in 1905.) He was a 24 year old cabinet maker when he was tapped by the Singer Company to establish a factory in the mid-west to construct cabinets for the sewing machines.[74] Though Pine was the manager of the cabinet factory and he was given the power to make many decisions, ultimately he answered to superiors in New York who at times were intrusive. One example of this was exemplified when Clem Studebaker solicited funds to build a new YMCA building in South Bend from Singer. Though Pine was clearly able to make the decision based on his experience and knowledge, the decision to donate $100.00 was voted on by the board of directors![75] Another occurred when JM Studebaker wanted to purchase from Singer an old furnace for the Presbyterian Church. McKenzie's permission was given to sell the furnace to JM at a low price, but urged his subordinate to get, "of course, something near its actual value."[76]

The production at the Singer plant in South Bend grew considerably after 1868. However, unlike the other large manufacturers who moved to the southwestern part of the city in the 1870s, Singer remained on the river until the turn of the century. When Singer first opened in 1868, it was able to produce 1,000 cases each week and employed 160 workers. As demand increased for the cases, Singer expanded its facilities so that it was

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[74] David A. Hounshell, *From the American System to Mass Production, 1800-1932: The Development of Manufacturing Technology in the United States* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 132.
[75] "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-Ca. 1975," (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society), SA Bennett to Clem Studebaker, 16July85.
[76] Ibid., McKenzie to Allen, 8Nov78.

producing between 800,000 and 1,000,000 units annually and employing 1,000 hands in the early 1880s. Production continued to increase throughout the century until it reached more than 2,000,000 units and employed 3,000 workers before moving to the industrial southwest side of the city.[77]

The city of South Bend was a different place in the post war period than it had been before the war. It had incorporated in 1865 and officially annexed the town of Lowell on the east bank of the St. Joseph River. The population had grown by almost 90 percent to 7,209 between the 1860 and 1870 censuses. And it would double again to 15,000 by 1876.[78] The manufacturers of Studebaker and Oliver and Birdsell had grown and were joined by several others. The design of the city was changing as well. The river that played an important role in early power for small manufactories was mostly abandon as technological innovations in steam power provided a more reliable and efficient source of power for mechanization. The transfer from water to steam forced some of the manufacturers to build closer to the railroads in the southwestern section of the city, bringing with them their employees.[79]

The shift of manufacturing to the southwestern part of town changed the appearance of the town's residential makeup. When the city was small, according to Dean Esslinger's analysis, its economic activity was concentrated in the central part of city and the social and economic class divisions were relatively weak. There was a slight tendency for laborers and artisans to reside in the Forth Ward (Lowell) and in the first and second were located most of the business houses:

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[77] Howard, *A History of St. Joseph County, Indiana*, 402; Hounshell, *From the American System to Mass Production, 1800-1932: The Development of Manufacturing Technology in the United States.*

[78] John Joseph Delaney, "The Beginnings of Industrial South Bend" (Master's thesis, University of Notre Dame, 1951), 132.

[79] Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community*, 19-20.

But before 1870, when the city was still small and its economic life relatively simple, the class structure was dimly reflected in residential patterns. Only after the major industries shifted away from the center of the city and became million-dollar operations employing hundreds of workers did the city develop residential areas clearly based on economic and occupational interests. The Second Ward, especially along Washington and Jefferson streets west of the business district, became the favorite location of the wealthier professional and commercial class. The First Ward between the market and the river to the north also became scattered with houses belonging to the business and community leaders. At the same time the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Wards, which contained the industries, increasingly became the residential sections for the factory workers.[80]

The growth after 1880 continued with ethnic neighborhoods becoming even more defined. And as industrialism increased, the separation between economic classes and ethnic groups grew as well, leading to conflict between the industrialists and their workers. These themes of ethnicity and labor in South Bend are taken up in the next two chapters.

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[80] Ibid., 21-22.

Part 2: Cross Cultures: Ethnic, Religious and Class Divisions

While the first three chapters described general immigration, industrialization and South Bend's founding and development, the following two chapters discuss the sporadic growth and decline of the labor movement in South Bend and the development of ethnic communities after the Civil War. The addition of European immigrants into the city as the industrialization process evolved gave rise to a working class that was fractured and prevented a strong labor movement from emerging beside the expanding industrialization.

The largest immigrant populations that moved into South Bend before the Civil War were from Germany and Ireland. Though these groups entered an area with strains of anti-foreign sentiments, the Germans and Irish rarely combined to deflect the anti-foreign criticisms. The backgrounds of the two groups were too dissimilar for them to find common ground. The German immigrants were generally better off financially with an array of job skills and so had greater opportunities in the United States. The Irish on the other hand had departed a country in the midst of a dire agricultural and economic crisis that left many of the Irish migrants with few financial resources when they emigrated and forced them to accept the lowest possible occupations in the United States. In addition to their poor economic state, their almost total adherence to Catholicism placed them, in the opinion of the native born majority, below the German immigrants

whose population contained many Protestant sects. There was even conflict among the German Catholic population and the Irish.

After the Civil War, more ethnic groups arrived in South Bend from Europe. The Poles were the largest of these, but there were also smaller numbers of Swedes, Belgians and Hungarians. The Poles, being both poor and Catholic, had much in common with the Irish. However, even these two groups did not cooperate in their efforts to raise their standard of living. Instead, each group found solace within their own ethnic group where they strived to continue their European traditions. Additionally, when the largest group of Poles arrived, the Irish were already established and the second and third generations were assimilating into the larger South Bend community.

Chapter four discusses the development of the Irish and German communities before the Civil War, and the Polish and Swedish communities after the war. Though there were similarities between the groups there were also contrasts. The causes of migration, residency patterns, occupational opportunities and religious organizations of each of these groups are considered in the coming chapters as well as the conflict that occurred between them. The various ethnic groups' inability to organize outside of their own communities was the primary factor in preventing a lasting labor movement in the city.

The management techniques of the larger employers in South Bend also contributed to a fractured labor movement. Chapter five addresses the various industrial relations policies of the larger manufacturers in the city and discusses how the presence of immigrants affected labor solidarity. The importation of immigrant labor, for a portion of native born workers, was considered detrimental to their own standard of living. The

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immigrants were also manipulated by their employers at times to prevent a united

workforce by either creating more favorable conditions for one group over another, or by

organizing work crews to maintain disunity across the immigrant communities. After

this evidence is presented, I conclude in the final chapter that the presence of an

increasingly large immigrant population into an area that was predisposed to anti-

immigrant attitudes, together with the immigrant groups' inability to organize outside

their own groups along with the management policies of the industrialists prevented a

strong labor movement from developing in South Bend in the Gilded Age.

Chapter IV: Immigrant Communities in South Bend

The ancient human tradition of migration to increase economic opportunities referred to in chapter one, coupled with the pressure of population growth and industrial advancements provided the necessary drive for migrations from Europe. The more efficient and widespread developments in transportation made the cost more manageable for a larger number of people to travel further than previously. South Bend, Indiana, though not a major destination like some farming communities in Minnesota and Wisconsin, or urban destinations like New York, Boston and Chicago, became the destination for a number of different immigrant groups. Like the rest of the United States, migrants from Germany and Ireland constituted the largest overseas immigrant groups to South Bend before the Civil War. And in the years after the war, though the Germans continued to arrive in large numbers, other immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in large numbers as well.

As a percentage of population, Indiana had the smallest number of immigrants than any other state. In 1850, the 55,000 foreign born accounted for just 6 percent of the state's population while the average in the states of the Old Northwest - Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin - was 12 percent. Ohio's foreign born population was 11 percent while Wisconsin's was 36 percent.[1] That trend continued into the twentieth century so that by 1920, Indiana had the highest proportion of native born whites than

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[1] Hoyt, "Germans," 146, 76.

any other state.[2] Nonetheless, migrants from several European nations did make their

way into St. Joseph County and South Bend. In 1850, there were 274 foreign born and

their children residing in South Bend, or 17 percent of the population, making the city

more in line with the general ratio of immigrants in the rest of the old northwest. On the

eve of the Civil War, the number of foreign born and their children grew to 1,216, or 32

percent, of South Bend's population of 3,832. South Bend's total population increased

225 percent while the foreign born and their children rose more than 400 percent between

1850 and 1860.[3] Immigrants arrived from such countries as France, Canada, England,

Scotland, and Switzerland, but the most numerous came from Ireland and the German

states. Together, those two nationalities accounted for almost 75 percent of the foreign

born population in South Bend in 1860.[4] This amalgam of people changed after the Civil

War as more foreign born of Polish stock immigrated to South Bend, along with a smaller

number of other European groups. Relative to other urban centers in Indiana, South Bend

became an immigrant destination after the Civil War and it contained the largest

proportional percentage of foreign born populations among the largest cities in the state.

For example, its 7,106 Polish population was the largest in Indiana in 1900.[5]

The antebellum German immigrants were a diverse group, representing a variety

of social, economic and religious classes. According to the 1850 and 1860 census

reports, the Germans who settled in South Bend came from a variety of central European

locations including Baden, Bavaria, Rhineland, Hohenzollem, Saxony, Prussia, Vienna,

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[2] John Bodnar, "Introduction," in *Peopling Indiana*, ed. Robert M. Jr. Taylor and Connie A. McBirney (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1996), 5.
[3] Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community*, 33.
[4] United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States,* (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1864).
[5] Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914", 6.

and Wuerttemberg, in addition to a generic "Germany."[6] The reasons for German

migration were as diverse as the communities from which they emigrated. Some,

particularly from the upper and middle classes, fled after the failed revolutions of 1848

with a number deciding to settle in the South Bend area. In marked contrast with other

migrants into the area, as well as later groups of Germans, these revolutionaries came

with a variety of skills and education.[7] According to Giles R. Hoyt's essay in *Peopling

Indiana*, the 1848-1861 post-revolutionary German migrants in Indiana were the most

educated and socially active group of German immigrants and discovered much to admire

and criticize in the United States. Specifically, Hoyt found these Germans appreciated

the liberty provided citizens in the United States, but condemned older natives and earlier

immigrants for embracing the material culture of making money at the expense of higher

social considerations.[8]

Other groups of Germans were motivated to leave Europe by the agricultural

crisis and crop failures in the late 1840s. In 1843, for example, Johann Schreyer from

Arzberg, Bavaria, became one of the first Germans to settle in St. Joseph County. Four

years later, twenty-two of his countrymen from Arzberg joined him in the United States,

convinced by an enthusiastic letter from Schreyer that their lives would improve in the

United States.[9] By the 1860 census, more than 160 people in South Bend claimed

Bavaria as their country of origin.[10] Gabrielle Robinson, a historian of the Germans in

South Bend, confirmed Hoyt's observation of the German diversity with her examination

of South Bend. She noted that the variety of religious and economic classes settling in

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[6] Ibid.; United States Census Bureau, *Seventh Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Robert Armstrong, Public Printer, 1853).
[7] Hoyt, "Germans," 152-53, 62.
[8] Ibid., 160.
[9] Robinson, *German Settlers of South Bend*, 11.
[10] United States Census Bureau, *Seventh Census of the United States*.

South Bend in part made the German community less cohesive than other immigrant groups.[11] Catholicism, Protestantism, secular organizations and eventually Judaism limited the type of unity other ethnic groups like the Irish found in common. In addition, the Germans found occupations throughout the employment spectrum from entrepreneur to common laborers that split the group even further by class.

According to the 1850 census of Portage Township, where South Bend was located, over 40 percent of the immigrants were from German areas.[12] The Germans claimed more than twenty different occupations on the record. The highest number were recorded as farmers and laborers, but also included were butchers, blacksmiths and one each of a physician, musician, carpenter, clergyman, miller, and brick maker, among others. Women were not listed as having occupations, but based on their position in the census recording a few assumptions can be made. Of the twenty-one German women in the census, nine were listed second after a man of similar age with the same surname, and can be logically concluded to be wives. Meanwhile, there were four others who were in young adulthood and listed after the children of a different family surname and can be assumed were domestic servants. The remaining German women were either head of households with no apparent husband, or were boarders.[13]

Immigrants from other areas, though not as large as the Germans, followed the basic employment pattern as those from the German areas. Of the foreign born men not from German areas reported in the 1850 census, farming was the highest reported occupation, followed by general laborer. From there, the more than twenty other

[11] Robinson, *German Settlers of South Bend*, 18.
[12] South Bend was not reported as a separate entity from Portage Township until the 1860 census.
[13] United States Census Bureau, *Seventh Census of the United States*.

occupations listed included blacksmiths, clerks, tailors, carpenters, a teacher, college

professor, painter, shoemaker, clergyman and miller.[14]

The Germans continued to be the largest foreign born population in South Bend in

the decade after 1850. According to the 1860 census, they made up almost 50 percent of

the foreign born population in South Bend and Portage Township and they continued to

find employment in a variety of occupations including carriage and wagon makers,

tailors, clerks, coopers, bakers, shoemakers and common laborers. One of the most

successful was thirty-eight year old Henry Barth from Baden. Already economically

comfortable in 1850, he reported himself a merchant with $2,500 worth of real estate. In

the next ten years his economic situation improved dramatically and he described himself

as a "manufacturing commissioner" in 1860 with $40,000 worth of real estate. He also

employed two domestic servants, which was a rarity in South Bend at that time. Barth

was the exception. Some in the upper class found employment in business or

professional pursuits, but many more were craftsmen and common laborers. German

women continued to have few alternatives other than as wives, homemakers and

domestic servants.[15]

The religious element of the German community was as diverse as its social and

economic classes. Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism were all practiced by

immigrants from Germany. And because of the increased number of Germans and the

importance the native population placed on religious development, the Methodist church

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[14]Ibid.

[15] Ibid; United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1862).

created a "German Department" in 1854 to assist German immigrants,[16] and after the Civil War, a German Methodist Episcopal Church and Zion Church were organized and constructed.[17]

Catholicism was also important to the German community. Many of the early German immigrants attended St. Joseph's Catholic Church on the east side of the St. Joseph River and St. Patrick's Catholic Church on the west side after it was built in 1858. But unlike other Catholic immigrant groups, there was not enough unified support to build a German national church until after the Civil War. Both the Irish and Polish, though fewer in total number than the Germans, each rallied to construct their own ethnic church before the Germans. The Germans instead contributed to the construction of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church and were permitted to hold a mass in their own language at 9:00 on Sundays.[18] Ill feelings, however, arose between the Irish and Germans groups in 1868 after a new St. Patrick's was built and an agreement to sell the old church to the Germans fell through. According to the German St. Mary's Diamond Jubilee Anniversary Album, many Catholic Germans discontinued their participation in Catholicism at St. Patrick's in 1868 because of the turmoil and turned instead to the Turnverein, an "infidel organization." The decrease in Catholicism in the German community was an impediment to the construction of the German Catholic Church and it was not until 1883, that the German St. Mary's of the Assumption of the Blesses Virgin, was erected.[19]

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[16] "Fourteen Decades: A Brief History of the First United Methodist Church of South Bend, Indiana," (South Bend: First Methodist Church, 1971), 5, 9, 15.
[17] Robinson, *German Settlers of South Bend*, 32.
[18] "A Century at St. Patrick's: A History of the Priests, Activities, and People of St. Patrick's Parish, South Bend, Indiana, 1858-1958," 26; "Diamond Jubilee, St. Mary's of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, 1883-1958," (South Bend, IN: s.n., 1958).
[19] "Diamond Jubilee, St. Mary's of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, 1883-1958."

Conflict between German and Irish Catholics was not uncommon in the United States. As Jay Dolan found in his research on New York's Irish and German immigrant churches before the Civil War, each nationality brought to the United States a unique style of Catholicism that developed in their respective homelands. Though the basic tenets of their religion remained stable and created a certain amount of harmony between immigrant groups, different languages and cultural practices made unity difficult at times.[20] That the German service had more pageantry and festivity than did the Irish service was one example of stylistic difference.[21] But even more significant was the relationship between priest and laity. In the Irish tradition, the priest was a leader with great authority in the community. He was the gatekeeper to heaven and wielded an enormous amount of power.[22] In the German tradition, though the priest was a central figure and leader, the laity held more power. In addition, there were well established boundaries that existed in the relationship between the priest and parishioners. The parishioners typically made more decisions, and the priest approved them.[23] Both the Irish and Germans also tied their religion to their nationality, and used it as a tool to retain their distinct European traditions. These factors all contributed to the lack of unity across ethnic lines.

Compared to the German diversity, the Irish exhibited more homogenous characteristics in religion, and occupation. In the 1850s, many Irish labored in counties neighboring St. Joseph County, digging canals and constructing railroads. The jobs were difficult on the canals and only paid about $13 per month in 1837, so many of the Irish

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[20] Jay P. Dolan and Eduard Adam Skendzel, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975).
[21] Ibid., 79.
[22] Ibid., 58.
[23] Ibid., 72, 82-4.

occupied the lowest economic class. As common workers, they endured long days in hazardous conditions and a life in the camps that was difficult and isolating. The Irish were often denied opportunities for skilled jobs because their low economic class and religious affiliation led to discrimination from native American groups. Conflict in the work sites and canal camps followed the Irish as they continued to experience similar religious persecution that they were subjected to in their homeland by the policies of the English.[24] Because of their Catholic religious devotion and job prospects, some of these men were enticed to move near or into South Bend by Father Edwin Sorin, at Notre Dame College.

In 1855, Sorin purchased more than one hundred acres of land on the east side of the St. Joseph River and just north of St. Joseph Church which he founded two years earlier. When the Irish were moving into the area in the 1850s he rented or sold small plots of land to the immigrants who worked as laborers at the school or in the nascent manufacturers in the towns of Lowell and South Bend. For the Irish who had labored on the canals in the 1840s and the railroads in the 1850s, the thought of living in a continuous religious atmosphere in the shadow of Notre Dame with a chance at steady labor was an alluring prospect for people who relied heavily on their religion in Ireland, but were unable to practice as regularly in the work camps.[25] Sorin's influence grew throughout the Gilded Age. With the establishment of a stable college for Catholic education and an increase in the number of Catholic immigrants, the need to serve them was met by Sorin. Many of the Catholic churches and schools organized in South Bend

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[24] "A Century at St. Patrick's: A History of the Priests, Activities, and People of St. Patrick's Parish, South Bend, Indiana, 1858-1958," 20; William W. Giffin, "Irish," in *Peopling Indiana*, ed. Robert M. Jr. Taylor, and Connie A. McBirney (Indianapolis: University of Indiana, 1996), 248-51.
[25] Campers, *History of St. Joseph's Parish: South Bend, Indiana, 1853-1953, on the Occasion of the Centenary Celebration, October 25, 1953*; Giffin, "Irish," 252-53.

were done so under the leadership of Notre Dame and the Congregation of the Holy Cross, and most of the Brother, Sisters, and Priest's who served the South Bend Catholics, came through the Order.

Meanwhile in 1858, across the river in South Bend proper, another Catholic church was organized to serve the growing Catholic, and predominantly Irish neighborhood. The Irish foreign born population in South Bend grew significantly between the 1850 and 1860 censuses from less than 20 to more than 160. This number did not reflect the Irish children who were born in the United States, or other non-Irish Catholics. All told there were 1,250 members of the congregation in 1859 when the St. Patrick's Church was completed.[26] The Irish in this area worked primarily on the Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana Railroad making between sixty and seventy cents a day. A few large donations came to fund the building, but much of the money and labor came from the working class.[27]

The development of the Irish community around South Bend was recorded in the 1850 and 1860 census reports. In 1850, only 12 Irish resided in Portage Township and South Bend, and more than half were women and children. There were more Scottish, English and Canadian men in town than Irish men at the time the census was recorded. Ten years later, the Irish would outnumber all other immigrant groups except the Germans, making up almost 25 percent of the foreign born population. In those ten years, the Irish population increased more than thirteen times.[28]

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[26] Campers, *History of St. Joseph's Parish: South Bend, Indiana, 1853-1953, on the Occasion of the Centenary Celebration, October 25, 1953*, 48-49.; United States Census Bureau, *Seventh Census of the United States*; United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States*.

[27] "A Century at St. Patrick's: A History of the Priests, Activities, and People of St. Patrick's Parish, South Bend, Indiana, 1858-1958," 22.

[28] United States Census Bureau, *Seventh Census of the United States*; United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States*.

During the 1850s dozens of Irish immigrants - families as well as single men and women - settled in South Bend. Almost half of the Irish adults were single, and just over forty families were enumerated in the 1860 census. Compared to the German immigrants, the Irish were much more likely to work in lower level occupations. More than sixty percent of identifiable jobs held by the Irish men were common day labor. Only three identified themselves in the 1860 census as farmers and three as peddlers. While the remaining ten claimed a trade, four lived with a man of the same trade, indicating an apprentice relationship and position. There was also one Irish physician. The majority of women, 62 percent, were married and indicated no other outside work. When not married, the women and girls were almost entirely engaged in "domestic service." As with the men, only one female was recorded as a professional, only it was as a teacher, not a doctor.[29]

The Irish had a greater tendency in the 1850s to live in close proximity to each other than German immigrants. Aside from those who lived in hotels or boarded with their employers - as many domestic servants or apprentice/craftsmen did – the residential pattern indicated a tight community. According to the 1860 census, those adults and their children lived in five clusters, of which three lived close together, while the remaining two lived close together.[30] One of these groups resided in "Sorinsville" on the east side of the St. Joseph River, while the other group congregated around the St. Patrick's Catholic Church on the west side of the river.[31]

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[29] United States Census Bureau, *Eighth Census of the United States*.
[30] Ibid; "Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970," Sanborn Map Company, http://sanborn.umi.com/.
[31] "A Century at St. Patrick's: A History of the Priests, Activities, and People of St. Patrick's Parish, South Bend, Indiana, 1858-1958," 20-22; Campers, *History of St. Joseph's Parish: South Bend, Indiana, 1853-1953, on the Occasion of the Centenary Celebration, October 25, 1953*, 42-43.; US Census Bureau, *Eighth Census*.

The development of the German and Irish ethnic communities in South Bend was strikingly different. In addition to a broader occupational spectrum, German religious and cultural organizations reflected a diverse population. In 1861, for example, the Germans organized a local chapter of the Turnverein. The Turnverein movement began in the early nineteenth century as a nationalistic physical fitness organization that, by the 1840s, had emphasized the importance of physical fitness as a foundation to the defense of liberties in Germany. The Turnverein, or Turners as they were known, were influential in the failed German revolutions in 1848 and as a result brought their ideas of physical fitness and progressivism to the United States with other Forty-Eighters. Their liberal political philosophy led them to a staunch abolitionist position in the antebellum years, even providing personal protection to President Lincoln at various times. In larger urban areas like Milwaukee and Chicago radical elements were found within the organization. August Spies, of the famed Haymarket trials and hangings was a Turner, and was aided in his defense by several Turner societies.[32]

The Turners in South Bend, however, never supported such radical elements. In fact many of the local leaders were from the business community and upper class. The South Bend group was more interested in physical fitness and social issues rather than political ideology that were the focus of other locals around the country. In addition to sports and gymnastics, the South Bend Turnverein organized singing and dramatic groups.[33] In 1887, they formed a Benevolent Society to assist members too sick to work, that included a death benefit as well. Festivals that celebrated their German homeland and displayed the various Turner activities were common, but celebrating American

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[32] Eric Pumroy and Katja Rampelmann, *Research Guide to the Turner Movement in the United States* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), find pages.
[33] Robinson, *German Settlers of South Bend*, 81-82, 90.

patriotic holidays such as the Fourth of July were also important. For most Turners, the

United States was their adopted home, and members were encouraged to apply for

citizenship as soon as they were able.[34] Even so, the Turners earned the antagonism of

other groups. Many native born Americans were annoyed by the outspoken

"Germanness" of the Turners who emphasized their cultural traditions. Meanwhile, the

Turner's' liberal political ideology appeared to threaten the United States political

system, and their refusal to support the temperance movements that were sweeping the

country irritated the sensitivity of some Americans. But the Turners were not just

criticized by Americans; there was even opposition from some German Catholics, with

one Catholic leader demonizing the Turners as anti-Christian and dangerous.[35]

Thus, although the Germans did have a vibrant cultural community in South Bend

- there was also an area in northern South Bend referred to as "little Arzberg" near

Lafayette and Marion streets where they constructed a Turner Hall - the wide diversity of

religions, social practices, and occupations weakened the unity within the German

community for a labor movement. This diversity began before the Civil War and

continued after it even as the forces of industrialization increased and the opportunity for

many European immigrants became limited to only semi-skilled or unskilled labor.[36] In

addition to the diversity in the German community, South Bend's immigrant community

as a whole was infused with a broader array of ethnic groups after the Civil War.

Post Civil War industrial growth fueled the increase in the number of immigrants

moving to South Bend to find employment in the factories. Industrialists generally

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[34] Ibid., 84-87.
[35] Ibid., 90.
[36] Ibid., 10; Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community*, 56.

claimed a lack of workers prevented economic expansion and that importing labor was

necessary, as the native labor force was not large enough to supply the demand for

labor.[37] The labor shortages caused by the war and the generally business friendly

Republican majority in Congress finally allowed for the passage of the Contract Labor

Law in 1864 which permitted employers to send money to Europeans to cover

transportation costs in exchange for a term of employment. The law was repealed in

1868, but manufacturers across the country, and in South Bend, still contracted with

agents in Europe and encouraged migration. In South Bend, both Studebaker and Oliver

used agents to procure various European workers.[38] As immigrants from Eastern Europe

flooded the United States, in South Bend the dominant German and Irish immigrants

were joined by an increasingly large number of Poles as well as a smaller number of

other groups. The Polish immigrants grew quickly so that by 1880, they represented the

largest foreign born population in the city.[39] The Polish experience exhibited some

similarities and contrasts to the other immigrant groups that entered South Bend.

The employment opportunities in the growing industrial sector of South Bend to

the south and west of the central city were attractive for many Poles. In addition, St.

Patrick's Catholic Church was located there and a number of small businesses developed

that catered to the emerging Polish enclave.[40] Like the Irish, the earliest Poles that began

arriving in South Bend after the Civil War first discovered employment as railroad

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[37] This was the one time industrialist favored importing foreign goods. In general they favored restricting imports from foreign countries to protect their economic interests.

[38] Maurice Baxter, "Encouragement of Immigration to the Middle West During the Civil War," *Indiana Magazine of History* 46, no. 1 (1950): 30-31; Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, 546, 51, 72.

[39] Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community*, 124.

[40] Jubilee Book Committee, *St. Hedwig Church 100th Anniversary Album, 1877-1977* (South Bend: St. Hedwig's Parish, 1977), 10.

laborers who then found the growing factories offered higher wages and more stability

than the railroads. In 1868, only fifteen Polish families lived in South Bend. The number

increased to sixty in 1870 and seventy-five in 1871. In January 1875, the *South Bend*

Daily Tribune reported that there were between four hundred and five hundred Poles in

South Bend; and Swastek determined that there were 150 adult male Poles employed in

South Bend industries in 1876.[41]

These numbers indicate that the population of Polish immigrants during this

period of time grew at an extremely fast pace. Typical of earlier and later immigrants,

the first arriving Poles congregated together. According to Swastek,

> It was a natural thing for the Polish immigrants, settling in South Bend during
> the late sixties and early seventies, to form a colony. Brought together by their
> jobs on the railroad and in the factories, the first few settlers sought quarters near
> the place of their employment. In this way, sprang up the first Polish center in
> the western section of the city, along Division, Chapin, Scott and Sample streets
> - all in the vicinity of the Oliver's, Studebaker's, and the Grand Trunk Railroad.[42]

Once a locale of familiarity was established, newly arrived migrants were drawn

to the community. Swastek identified this development of the Polish enclave

after only a decade of Polish immigration. In the twenty years after 1880 though,

the enclave grew larger. Instead of a few blocks, the Polish community grew

large enough to dominate an entire political ward in 1900. According to the

census of that year, the sixth ward was almost exclusively made up of Polish

immigrants and their children.[43]

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[41] Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914", 9-10; *South Bend Tribune*, 21
January 1875; Renkiewicz, "The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana: 1855-1935", 31.
[42] Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914", 74.
[43] United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States* (Washington, DC: Government
Printing Office, 1902).

As the population of Poles increased, organizations were formed that provided assistance and protection when dealing with other groups and the specific conditions of life in an industrial city. Organized in 1874, the St. Stanislaus Kosta and St. Casimir Societies were created to help Poles in need by rendering material aid, sick benefits and funeral expenses and were also intended to help retain Polish tradition and faith.[44] These two organizations were the more formal component of the new Polish community where its members were being challenged to retain their culture and traditions while adapting to unfamiliar life in the American urban setting. New settlers often depended on older migrants to help them find jobs and housing, while at the same time the continuous influx of new migrants kept the Polish traditions, customs, and language alive. The reliance on the Polish language prevented an abundance of American contact for Poles in their community. Catholicism further separated Poles from the majority of Americans in South Bend who were Protestant.[45]

The Polish experience mirrored several aspects of the Irish migration. Both groups came from peasant agrarian backgrounds, but neither was prepared for the unique American rural life, nor did they usually possess the economic means to purchase land upon arrival. They were steeped in traditional farming and close community ties where the church and village were within walking distance. In the United States, the Irish and Poles sought out the crowds in the city where their friends, family and churches were located, and were attracted to the neighborhoods close to their work. These communities

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[44] Renkiewicz, "The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana: 1855-1935", 39.
[45] Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914", 74-77.

reflected many of the characteristics that were present in European villages, with local schools, businesses, and clubs, all conducted in their own language.[46]

Religion played an important part in the lives of the Poles as it did with the Irish. And for both groups, their church was a place where they found relief and comfort. When the Poles first began to settle in South Bend, they were fortunate enough to find St. Patrick's Church close to the factories they settled near. However, the Poles were slow to join St. Patrick's and quick to leave. According to Fr. Adolph Bakanowski, the seventy-five Poles in South Bend in 1870 would not attend St. Patrick because there was no Polish priest.[47] Eventually, their desire for religious support and protection from the larger American society overcame their initial hesitation and they joined St. Patrick's.

Though St. Patrick's was a place where the Poles sought refuge from American pressures and prejudices, they found that they were discriminated against there as well. From the beginning, the Irish priests and parishioners ostracized their Polish neighbors. The religious needs of the Poles were never considered in the Irish church of St. Patrick's. The Polish homeland and their favored saints were not discussed in the services, only those of St. Patrick or St. Brendan or Ireland. Moreover, services and rituals like penance were held in a foreign language for the Poles, making mass a difficult and humiliating experience. In addition, the Polish children were often the target of Irish jokes, and fights broke out at the school and church between the boys,[48] while the men argued at work. The Irish were even opposed to holding Polish funerals at the church,

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[46]Donald J. Stabrowski, "Rev. Valentine Czyzewski, C.S.C., Immigrant Pastor," in *Conference on the History of the Congregation of the Holy Cross* (Kings's College, Wilkes-Berre, PA: 1985), 3.

[47] Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914", 38.

[48] St. Patrick's school was not always a well run or disciplined institution. In the Provincial report of 1877, Father Granger wrote that enrollment was low and the school had been closed early for the year. Additionally, the report noted that "there is a tendency among the young religious to visit the priest, from whom they receive wine and cigars: a great danger in the consequence. Rev. F Granger, "Book of Provincial Visits: 1868-1881," (South Bend, Indiana: Holy Cross Archives), May 15, 1887.

claiming that the bodies had an offending odor.[49] For many Poles, the Irish appeared as

just another group trying to take away their Polish culture and traditions, which enhanced

the determination of the South Bend Poles to build a church that they could call their

own. As noted earlier in the relationship between the Irish and Germans, a similar

tension existed between the Irish and Polish. In fact, discord between different Catholic

ethnicities was not uncommon. Elizabeth Milliken, in her study of Rochester's Catholic

immigrant communities found similar divisiveness that occurred in South Bend. The

Germans and Irish in that city quarreled over church hierarchy, parish organization and

tradition surrounding forms of worship, funeral processions, church songs, church

decorations, and over timing of communion for children.[50] One of the primary missions

of the two Polish Catholic societies in South Bend was to plan and prepare for a church.

Almost immediately they began agitating the Catholic hierarchy for a parish of their own

while trying to raise funds to purchase land and build a church.

The Polish population in South Bend increased considerably from the 1870s

through the end of the nineteenth century. As was typical for many immigrant groups,

once a small number of immigrants became established in an area, it acted as a magnet

for future immigrants to find a place to live and work. The earliest immigrants provided

valuable information for the new immigrant about places to live (even providing short

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[49] Renkiewicz, "The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana: 1855-1935", 41; Krzywkowski, "The Origin of the Polish National Catholic Church of St. Joseph County, Indiana".
[50] Elizabeth Ann Milliken, "Beyond the Immigrant Church: The Catholic Sub-Culture and the Parishes of Rochester N.Y., 1870-1920" (Ph. D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1994).

term housing) and most importantly information about finding a job.[51] At the same time,

the constant influx of immigrants continued to keep the Polish culture alive.[52]

After several years of population growth, preparation, fundraising and agitation,

the Polish community was granted its own ethnic church. In 1877 Father Sorin assigned

the Poles a newly ordained Holy Cross Priest from Notre Dame, Father Valentine

Czyzewski to lead their parish. Czyzewski was the leader the St. Stanislaus Kosta and St.

Casimir Societies desired. A native of Poland, he was a priest who performed sacraments

and delivered homilies in the language of their home. Soon after receiving his position as

the priest of the newly established parish, he found that property had already been

purchased by the two polish societies and land broken for a new church, St. Joseph's.[53]

Even so, with wages for most of his parishioners low, a new church required significant

sacrifice.[54] Nationally, the country was embroiled in the fifth year of an economic

depression with reduced wages.

Czyzewski became one of the most influential people in the South Bend Polish

community following his ordination. Starting with a small church in 1877 and about 125

polish families, Czyzewski watched his parish grow to 1,300 families by 1897 and he

guided the creation of three more Polish churches: St. Stanislaus Kostka in 1894, St.

Casimir's in 1899 and St. Adalbert's in 1910, as the community expanded. All of the

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[51] Ewa Morawska, "The Sociology and Historiography of Immigration," in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology, and Politics*, ed. Virginia Yan-McLaughlin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 203.
[52] Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914", 74-77.
[53] Jubilee Book Committee, *St. Hedwig Church 100th Anniversary Album, 1877-1977* (South Bend: St. Hedwig Parish, 1977), 10.
[54] Stabrowski, "Rev. Valentine Czyzewski, C.S.C., Immigrant Pastor," 8.

clergy for these churches came from Poland and were guided by the Holy Cross Order

and Notre Dame.[55] The growth, however, was not without setbacks.

In 1877, less than a decade after the first Polish migrants settled in South Bend,

the Polish Catholics had a place to worship and priest from their own country. And as

with most other Catholic immigrants, the Poles established a school for their children.

With the experience in partitioned Poland where the occupying powers tried to use

education to eradicate the Polish culture still in their minds, the Poles created a place to

pass along cultural traditions without the intrusion of American or, in this instance, Irish

influence. Both the public schools and the Irish Catholic schools were biased against the

Polish culture, so the Polish community sacrificed to limit attacks their children endured,

while building up their own traditions. According to the 1878 inspection by the Holy

Cross Provincial at Notre Dame:

> The [Polish] church, a frame building is rather poor but neat (and) well
> ordered…. [The] Congregation is poor but truly religious. In the school there
> are about 75 children boys and girls. The teacher is a layman, but good and
> zealous. A perfect order reigns in the school as the children are typically taught
> in the (Pole) tongue.[56]

Unfortunately, in two years the Poles were back at St. Patrick's Church

worshipping because their own church had been destroyed in what was called a

"whirlwind" on 14 November 1879. The animosity between the two groups was so high,

however,\ that after only a few months a house was found for the Poles which they used

temporarily as a church and school.[57] It took four more years of fundraising and

construction until a new stone structure, St. Hedwig's, was completed in 1883. The new

Polish church was less than two hundred meters away from the Irish St. Patrick's, and

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[55] Swastek, "The Polish Settlement in South Bend, Indiana, 1868-1914", 44.

[56] Granger, "Book of Provincial Visits: 1868-1881," February 3, 1878.

[57] Krzywkowski, "The Origin of the Polish National Catholic Church of St. Joseph County, Indiana", 89.

indicates how important having their own ethnic church was to the Poles. In addition to the new church, a primary school for the Polish Catholic children was also completed that year and reached a diocesan high enrollment of 235 students. As more Poles settled in the area enrollment in the school continued to increase and in 1891 there were 676 students enrolled while five years later St. Hedwig's enrollment numbers again topped the diocese with 1,000 students.[58] The purpose of immigrant schools like St. Hedwig's was two-fold and contradicting. On the one hand the schools provided Polish children with greater immersion in Polish language, culture and a unique Polish Catholic tradition than they could find at a public school, allowing second and third generations the opportunity to carry on European traditions. On the other hand, the immigrant schools created a safe and controlled atmosphere for the children to learn about American opportunities and essentially aid in assimilation.[59]

The immigrant communities and their churches were located in the southwestern part of the growing industrial center of South Bend. (map 4.1) The Oliver Chilled Plow Works and the Studebaker Manufacturing Company had relocated to that area of the city to be closer to the railroad and have room for expansion. Only three blocks separated these two facilities, while the Birdsell Corporation had relocated less than five blocks northeast of Studebaker, on the Grand Trunk Railroad. Singer was the only large manufacturer that remained in the older section of the city adjacent to the river, but it was also located just off a rail line - the Michigan Central. Much of the industrial expansion continued to move to the west, and with it, the immigrant labor force.

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[58] Rev. Wm Corby, "Regular Annual Visit: St. Hedwig's," (Notre Dame, 1891), 11 June 1891; Donald J. Stabrowski, *Holy Cross and the South Bend Polonia*, Preliminary Studies in the History of the Congregation of Holy Cross in America (Notre Dame, IN.: Indiana Province Archives Center, 1991), 9-10.
[59] Stabrowski, *Holy Cross and the South Bend Polonia*, 9-10.

South Bend in 1900: West side Industries and Ethnic Communities
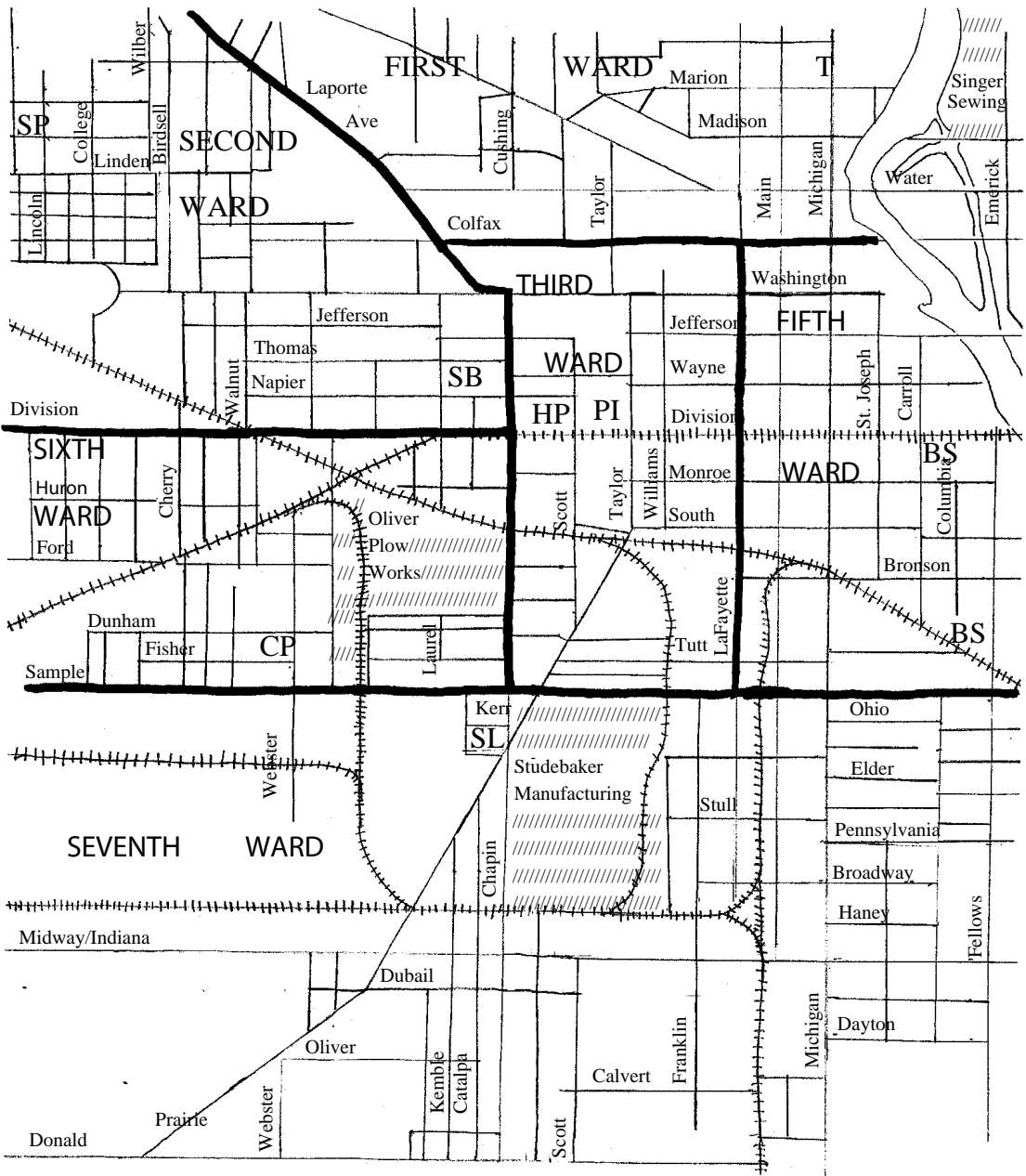
Adapted from: "Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970, South Bend, 1899 and 1917"
Sanborn Map Company, http://sanborn.umi.com/

Key: HP - St. Hedwig's Polish Catholic Church (est 1883, first est. as St. Joseph in 1877)
CP - St. Casimir's Polish Catholic Church (est. 1894)
SP - St. Stanislaus Polish Catholic Church (est. 1899)
SL - Swedish Lutheran Church (est. 1884, first est. 1881)
SB - Swedish Baptist Church (ca. 1890s)
PI - St. Patrick's Irish Catholic Church (est 1858)
T - Turner Hall (est. 1869)
BS - Birdsell Manufacturing Company

The addition of the Polish component to the city reflected the most dramatic

changes in the ethnic neighborhood development after 1870. Between 1870 and 1880 the

number of Poles in South Bend jumped from 160 to 1,577. Of these over 60 percent, or

more than a thousand, lived in the third ward, close to the plow and wagon

manufacturers.[60] This development continued through 1900. According to that year's

census, South Bend's population with foreign parentage increased to 17,691 or almost 50

percent of the city's total. The Polish were the largest part of that number including

almost 40 percent of the total population with foreign born parents.[61]

In the twenty years between 1880 and 1900, the city had added two more wards to

the south and west.[62] And as the town expanded the newer immigrants moved into the

areas following the jobs. The Polish community dominated the sixth ward with 940 of

the ward's 1,400 residents, or 67 percent, born in Poland. Meanwhile, there were less

than a dozen Poles in the newly created seventh ward. The sixth ward was organized to

the west of a truncated third ward, which had been the home of many of the Prussian

Poles in the 1880 census, and the industrialists. But when the sixth ward was created, the

border between the two located the industrial plants and the majority of Poles in the sixth

ward. Geographically, the sixth ward was only four blocks "tall," and ran east to west

from the south west border of the third ward to the western extreme of the city.

The Polish neighborhoods spread westward, and eventually northward, so that by

the 1890s, St. Hedwig's was no longer adequate for the religious needs of the growing

population, nor was it centrally located. To meet the needs of a growing community

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[60] United States Census Bureau, *Ninth Census of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government
Printing Office, 1872); United States Census Bureau, *Tenth Census of the United States* (Washington D.C.:
Goverment Printing Office, 1883).
[61] United States Census Bureau, "Twelfth Census of the United States, Vol. I, Population, Part I,"
Government Printing Office, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1900.htm.
[62] Due to fire, the 1890 census for most of the country, including South Bend, was destroyed.

another church, St. Casimir's, was organized and built in 1899 to the south and west of Oliver's Plow Factory. The Polish residency continued to spread and moved north out of the sixth ward and into the most extreme western section of the second ward.

The second ward, located on the northern border of the sixth ward, was the only other part of the city where a large numbers of Poles resided. Most of the almost 350 Poles in the second ward were located in this area. The growth for the Poles had been so swift that this group also organized a church for themselves, St. Stanislaus in 1900, just one year after St. Casimir's. The third ward, which had been the cradle of the Polish community and was anchored by St. Hedwig's, was no longer the center of the Polish community. There were about 100 Poles still living in that ward, but fewer than 10 in the remaining four wards. The sixth ward then held 66 percent of the foreign born Poles in the city, while wards six and two combined held almost 92 percent of the Poles.[63] No other ethnicity dominated its community like the Poles. One result of this concentration was the emergence of a middle class, though most worked primarily as lower wage workers. In 1901 there were a number of Polish owned businesses to serve this close-knit community including 11 groceries, 30 sample rooms, 15 meat markets, 2 bakeries, 2 confectioneries, 8 barber shops, 1 clothing store and 5 tailor shops and a Polish newspaper.[64] Dean Esslinger, in his study of South Bend's immigrant mobility through 1880, indicated that the Polish community, though the most concentrated in 1880, was

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[63] United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*.
[64] Joseph Swastek, Rev., "The Poles in South Bend to 1914," http://www.polishroots.org/history/PAHA/southbend_immigrants.htm.

not as dominant as immigrant groups in some cities in the East.[65] This clearly changed over the following twenty years.

Esslinger also found the immigrant groups that had initiated larger migration patterns before the Civil War, like the Germans and British, had shown little tendency to remain close together by 1880. But other smaller European ethnic groups like the Swedes and Belgians showed a propensity to cluster around the large industrial plants. Of the thirty-seven Belgians in South Bend's second ward, twenty-seven lived on the same block. Most of the remaining Belgians lived in the third ward on three streets close to the Oliver Chilled Plow Works where the majority worked.[66] The Swedish clustering was also just beginning in 1880 and serves as an example of small community development in the last twenty years of the century.

The Swedes mirrored the reality of many immigrants in their housing and employment choices. In the 1880 census only 59 Swedes were recorded in the city and of those an overwhelming majority, 46, was men. Additionally, more than half of these men, 25, were boarders, and most found employment as unskilled or semi-skilled laborers in the plow works or wagon works. The Swedish residency, according to the 1880 census, was spread evenly between four of the five wards, but in reality they lived in only a few areas. In the first ward, 12 of the 14 adults lived in three houses on adjacent blocks. In the second ward, 11 of the 16 Swedes lived just three blocks south of the first ward group in the Kunstmann House, a large hotel near the center of town that was home to 53 boarders. All of the Swedish residents in the hotel worked at the "iron" or "plow" works. No Swedes resided in the fourth ward while 17 lived in the fifth ward - 10 in two

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[65] Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community*, 45-60.
[66] Ibid., 51.

houses just a few blocks north of the Studebaker factory where all but one of them worked. The most concentrated were the Swedes in the third ward. Twelve lived in two houses, on the 900 block of Dunham Street which was two blocks south of the Oliver Plow Works, where all nine of the men worked. This location became a major attraction for Swedes in the twenty years following 1880 for just that reason.[67]

James Oliver created a special relationship with this group and an enclave of Swedish immigrants developed there, in the midst of an overwhelming majority of Polish immigrants.[68] In fact, James Oliver and the Studebakers contributed to the importation of Swedes into South Bend by employing a Swedish agent to bring workers from Chicago and Sweden.[69] The Olivers constructed houses for the Swedish immigrants adjacent to the factory and even provided a church for the growing community. According to the Swedish Lutheran Church history, the earliest religious services were held in the home of CE Anderson, a manager at Oliver's and a Swedish immigrant himself. But in 1881, the Olivers constructed a small church on west Dunham Street where the Swedes were already beginning to congregate, or as James Oliver referred to it, "Swede Town."[70] James Oliver noted in his journal on the day the small wooden structure was dedicated, 1 November 1881, that he, his wife, JD, and several other men from the office at the factory attended the dedication of the church they made possible.[71] Several years later, Oliver wanted the land the small church was built on and, after some negotiations about how much he was willing to pay, had the building moved to a new spot around the corner

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[67] "Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970."; United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*.
[68] United States Census Bureau, *Ninth Census of the United States*.
[69] Oliver, "Journal," 26June80, 12Jan81, 24Mar85.
[70] Ibid., 6April84; *A History in Words and Pictures of the 100 Years of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church*, (South Bend: no publisher, 1980).
[71] Oliver, "Journal," 13November81.

on Chapin street. There the church stayed until 1896 when it was moved several blocks south.[72]

The small Swedish population in 1880 grew to more than 500 by 1900, according to the twelfth census. Not a large number, but a 750 percent increase in twenty years. The census also showed the even distribution of the Swedes throughout the city's political wards was lost. Less than 25 Swedes lived in wards four and five combined, while a majority lived in three wards - the second, third and seventh. Eleven Swedes lived in the fourth ward on the east side of the St. Joseph River. That ward experienced an influx of South Bend's upper class that took advantage of improved transportation methods to leave the increasingly noisy and dirty industrial areas near the central city where the city's first economic elite had constructed their homes. In that respect, all but two of the Swedes were employed as domestic servants or coachmen.[73]

Though the Swedes were most populous in three wards, the political boundaries by themselves are not the best source to see the established community developments of the Swedes, as the ward boundaries often divided neighborhoods. The seventh ward, for example, contained the most Swedes with almost 160 residing there. One-hundred- six lived in four blocks that started two blocks south of Oliver's factory and ran four blocks south with the Studebaker's lumber yard on the east of the southern two blocks.[74] However because the political boundary between the sixth ward, where Oliver's Plow factory was located, and the seventh ward, was two blocks to the south of Oliver's, many of the sixth and seventh ward Swedes lived in the same community – where the Swedish

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[72] "Minutes," in *Gloria Die Lutheran Church Collection* (South Bend: Northern Indiana Center For History, Archives), 93:307, Box 7, folder 94:505; *A History in Words and Pictures of the 100 Years of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church*.
[73] United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*.
[74] Ibid; "Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970."

Lutheran Church was located. The 49 Swedes that lived in the sixth ward were in fact

divided with 22 living adjacent to the seventh ward Swedes, directly south of Oliver's,

and north of the 106 that were living in the seventh ward, making the number of Swedes

living south of the plow factory, 128. The remaining 27 Swedes in the sixth ward lived

directly north of the Oliver Plow Factory. And again, this latter group was adjacent to

another large Swedish cluster in the second ward.[75]

There were 120 Swedes living in the second ward with 86 of them located

between two and five blocks north of Oliver's, and adjacent to the 27 in the northern part

of the sixth ward. This group also was centered on a church, the Swedish Baptist Church.

Thus, with Oliver's Plow Works located in the sixth ward and flanked by the second on

the north and the seventh on the south, there were 113 Swedes to the north of the factory

and 128 to the south. But there were also 154 Swedes living in the third ward, with the

Studebaker manufacturing plant only three blocks east of the Oliver's plow factory.

Between them lay the homes of 72 more Swedes. In total, then, 313 of the 513 Swedes in

South Bend lived in a five block radius of Oliver's factory, with many finding work there

or at Studebaker's.[76]

The remaining 82 Swedes in the third ward were dispersed throughout the area,

but there were a dozen who were employed as servants in the northern section of the

ward where the houses of the upper class like James Oliver, JD Oliver and Clem

Studebaker were located on Washington Street. These twelve Swedes from the third

joined the eleven from the first ward that worked there as servants. Of the remaining 45

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[75] United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*; "Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970."
[76] United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*; "Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970."

Swedes in the first ward, 30 lived on two blocks on Oak Street.[77] It is clear that based on the housing pattern for the Swedes, employment was the primary motivation for establishing residency on the southwest side of South Bend. But the effects of religion and community also pulled the Swedes into a close proximity to each other. Unlike the Swedes and Poles, the German residency pattern and community was much less coherent.

The Germans were the second most populous foreign born ethnic group in South Bend in 1900, with 5,400 having been born in Germany, or having German parents.[78] However, the German residency was diffused throughout six of South Bend's seven wards. The fourth ward contained the highest number of Germans with 301. Between 139 and 240 Germans were located in each of wards one, two, three, four and seven. Most telling of the ethnic and economic relations between the Poles and Germans, was that only 38 lived in the sixth ward, the location where a majority of Poles lived.[79] The housing pattern is indicative of the occupations made available for the Germans. Though unskilled and semiskilled were a part of the German population, many more members had the skill or economic standing before immigrating that led to better opportunities than were available for Polish immigrants. This was true before 1870 and continued to be the case through the remaining years of the nineteenth century. And because there was a larger German presence in South Bend before 1870, the immigrants that followed had a wider array of support systems and occupational opportunities.

Through 1880, the Irish exhibited the greatest tendency for clustering in two section of the city – one on the east side of the river and anchored by St. Joseph's Church to the south and Notre Dame to the north and one on the west of the river, centered on St.

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[77] United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*.
[78] ———, "Twelfth Census of the United States, Vol. I, Population, Part I."
[79] ———, *Twelfth Census of the United States*.

Patrick's Church. Their place of employment contributed significantly to residential

placement as many of the Irish in the fourth ward worked at Notre Dame, while many in

the second ward worked at the industrial factories of Oliver and Studebaker.[80] But during

the latter two decades of the nineteenth century, the number of Irish migrating to South

Bend decreased as did their tendency to live in one particular neighborhood. According

to the census taken in 1900, only 170 residents in South Bend were born in Ireland and

just a majority, 58 percent, still lived in the fourth and third wards with the remaining

spread out in the other five wards.[81] The reduced number of new immigrants led to the

second and later generations to move more quickly into Americanized working and living

arrangements, though traditional activities continued to keep Irish culture alive.

The ethnic environment in the last two decades of the nineteenth century

experienced considerable change. The German communities, already less discernable as

ethnic enclaves than other immigrant groups, were already breaking down by the 1890s.

This was in part due to the long period of migration that Germans came to a developing

city. Differing social class and occupations of immigrants lent itself to diffusion, and by

the later part of the century when mass transit allowed for "ghetto" type housing,

Germans were already spread throughout the city.[82]   Immigrants from Ireland, the

poorest and most insular group before the Civil War had become a much smaller part of

the ethnic community, and increasingly integrated into and accepted by the native

American population. For the most part they joined the German population in residential

and occupational dispersion. Once relegated to work as day laborers working at Notre

[80]Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community*, 52-54.
[81] United States Census Bureau, *Twelfth Census of the United States*.
[82] James M. Bergquist, "German Communities in American Cities: An Interpretation of the Nineteenth-Century Experience," *Journal of American History* 4, no. 1 (1984): 11, 19-24.

Dame and the railroads, they expanded into other occupations. At the same time a number of other ethnic groups increased. The most notable among them were the Poles, who had already started migrating to South Bend in the 1870s, but became the largest group by 1900. These were joined by smaller numbers of Swedes, Hungarians and Belgians.

South Bend expanded and modernized as industrialization continued to transform the town. According to the 1880 census the population for South Bend had doubled in ten years to 13,200 and again to almost 36,000 in 1900. The economic growth contributed to widened class differences and the increase in the number of foreign born population allowed for different social and economic groups to form. Immigrants from Germany continued to arrive in large numbers but a new, larger and more insular immigrant group, the Poles, also entered South Bend's labor market. The pool of immigrants into the labor market had a pacifying effect on the labor movement in the city for a number of reasons, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter.

Chapter V: Management and Labor

As evidenced by the migration of Europeans into South Bend and the international sales of Studebaker Wagons, Oliver Plows and Singer Sewing Machines, the city was clearly a part of the growing American industrial based economy in the Gilded Age. As a competitor in the market economy, South Bend was closely tied to national economic events and conditions. The national economic booms and busts were felt in South Bend, as were the rising and falling unemployment rates. Both managers and workers were aware of the general movement towards greater mechanization and efficiency in the production process. The method of production dominated by small scale manufacturing before the Civil War gave way to larger factories that employed large numbers of workers under one roof, or a series of buildings in a compound. The large number of workers required increasing layers of management, and the familiar relationship between laborer and owner diminished. The factory floor became "contested terrain" as the managers and owners sought to increase the production and profit from the workers' labors. As a result of declining familiarity and industrial work environments, workers attempted to assert their collective power by forming unions. One of the developments that coincided with industrialization then, was the rise of a labor movement.

The rise of class consciousness in the United States occurred as the size of the

industrial labor force increased. Industrialization also coincided with greater financial

instability which affected more people as their daily living became tied to industrial jobs

and financial markets. When the largest economic crisis in the ante-bellum period

occurred in the 1830s, its effects were felt throughout the nation, but because 80 percent

of the nation was primarily tied to agriculture, the economic impact was limited.

However, when the last financial crisis of the nineteenth century occurred in the 1890s,

less than half of the labor force was connected directly to agriculture work, making the

reverberations from the financial markets more widely felt throughout the nation. There

were, however, several other economic downturns prior to that largest economic

catastrophe of the nineteenth century.

The financial crisis of the 1870s was the largest to-date. It began with the failure

of the bank Jay Cook & Co., though it was not the sole cause of the depression. Cook

had been profitable for many years prior to its collapse. During the Civil War, the bank

contributed to the northern effort by distributing the majority of bonds issued by the

federal government, and recording substantial profits in return. After the war, Cook

invested heavily in the highly speculative railroad industry: an industry that was lucrative

for some investors, and disastrous for others. When the first transcontinental railroad was

completed in 1869 the industry boomed and hundreds of companies were formed.

Competition was fierce and corruption rampant as the railroads sold overvalued stocks,

and gave politicians stocks and bonds for legislative favors. Because building railroads

took a long time to complete, investments did not return dividends for years, if at all.

Often, more roads were constructed than the market could bear which forced the railroads

to cut rates below profitability, just to attract business. Ultimately, the rate wars between the companies drove many out of business. Cook had invested heavily in the Northern Pacific Railroad but was unable to see its completion before his bank was forced to close.[1] This process of overexpansion and bankruptcy continued throughout the Gilded Age as the 1880s saw more miles of roads built and the 1890s witnessed the most railroad bankruptcies.[2]

The Jay Cook Bank failure marked the beginning of an economic crisis in September 1873 that lasted five years. Cook's investments were so large and widespread that its demise sent shock waves across the county.   The New York Stock exchange was immediately thrown into disarray and was quickly followed by bank closures in New York that lasted ten days. Soon banks across the country failed and with them manufacturers who depended on the banks for financing, throwing their employees out of work. The depression was not just a problem for the United States. Europe's financial markets and banks also experienced an economic depression. The repercussions from the financial collapse were followed by the elimination of additional manufacturing jobs when employers eliminated jobs to reduce costs and losses while they tried to survive the depression.

As the financial panic spread across the country, wages dropped and unemployment increased. Relief agencies were overwhelmed with requests for help. Major cities experienced unemployment rates that reached previously unknown numbers. Labor historian Joseph Rayback reported that 20 percent of the labor force was entirely without work, while another 40 percent worked only seven months a year by the time the

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[1] Beatty, *Age of Betrayal: The Triumph of Money in America, 1865-1900*, 232-33.
[2] Chandler, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business*, 147.

worst of the depression struck in 1877.[3] Failing to find work, the unemployed organized

and demanded work relief from their local governments.[4] In Chicago, for example, on 22

December 1873, only months after the Cooke Bank failure, more than 5,000 people

turned out into the streets to demand work from the city and to chastise the "aristocrats"

for living in the lap of luxury while the working men lost their jobs and were destined for

poverty.[5] In Cincinnati, one day later, the number demanding relief was 1,000.[6] The

economic turmoil started a wave of wage cuts, reduced hours, strikes and violence around

the United States, and indeed the world. In South Bend, men building a bridge across the

St. Joseph River stopped work on 1 April 1874 to induce the contractor to pay back

wages.[7]

     The economic and labor news was not as cataclysmic in South Bend as larger

cities experienced, but evidence of the depression was seen in labor strife and business

failure. As documented previously, Oliver, Birdsell and Studebaker weathered the

economic storm of the 1870s in good fashion with high sales and dividend payments, but

that could not be said for all of South Bend. Singer cut its work week down to four days

and only seven hours each day in 1877.[8] *Turner's South Bend Directory*, a normally

laudatory source for information, opened its 1876 publication on a mournful tone, noting:

> It is hard to write of doubts and uncertainties, of reverses and bankruptcies. Yet this
> year, as never before we have to chronicle events of evil omen and evil results.   South
> Bend withstood the financial storm as very few other places did, but at length the
> cirocco [sic][9] struck her with unparalleled force and crushed several industries in a

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[3] Joseph G. Rayback, *A History of American Labor* (New York: Free Press, 1966), 129.

[4] Philip Sheldon Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, 7th ed., 2 vols. (New York: International Publishers, 1982), 445-48.

[5] *Chicago Tribune Historical Online Historical Archives*, (Chicago: 1849-1986), 22Dec73.

[6] Ibid., 23Dec73.

[7] Ibid., 1April74.

[8] Ibid., 18Nov77.

[9] Merriam-Webster: Sirocco: a hot dust-laden wind from the Libyan deserts that blows on the northern Mediterranean coast chiefly in Italy, Malta, and Sicily **b:** a warm moist oppressive southeast wind in the same regions. **2:** a hot or warm wind of cyclonic origin from an arid or heated region

moment. . . . Witness the utter prostration of her paper-mill industry – the decadence of her furniture establishments. Two of the finest paper-mills in the country closed and useless. Several furniture factories closed forever. Other industries are suffering. Men out of employment. Capital unproductive and in some cases gone to the winds. [10]

In addition to the paper mills and furniture factories, South Bend lost its largest flour mill in the fall of 1876.[11]

In 1875, in the midst of the depression, several men in South Bend organized the Independent Order of Free Laborers (IOFL). Like Knights of Labor, the IOFL began as a secret organization designed to protect and advance members' interests. Also like the better known Knights of Labor, the Free Laborers accepted members in occupations across the economic spectrum except those "practicing lawyers, Judges of courts, capitalists, holders of, or dealers in, railroad stocks, or US bonds, bankers, brokers, those who live by loaning money to manufacturers who employ more than 20 laboring men, nor any others who oppress laborers." They also pledged support of members who ran for public office, and supported public schools "to keep [them] free from requiring 'any system of religious belief of unbelief'" and "labor[ed] for just and equal taxation of all property" as well as provided death benefits.[12]

Secrecy was paramount for any labor organization in South Bend, or across the country for that matter, because managers and owners everywhere held an unfavorable opinion of all organizations that claimed to represent workers, or any man who was a member of such an organization. Leadership, and even membership in labor organizations was cause for dismissals from companies across the country, and South Bend was no different. Employers strenuously defended their right to employ and

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[10] "Turner's Directory of Inhabitants, Institutions, and Manufactories of the City of South Bend, Indiana," (South Bend: T.G. Turner, 1876), 9.

[11] *Chicago Tribune Historical Online Historical Archives*, 14Nov76.

[12] Keith Knauss, "South Bend's Labor Movement Emerges: The Panic of 1837 to the Great Uprising of 1877," (South Bend: Indiana Univesity of South Bend, 2000), 11-12.

dismiss people in their factories at will. Especially in periods of high unemployment,

laborers, though wanting to defend their own rights, knew that membership in a labor

union could get them fired and even blacklisted. James Oliver steadfastly believed in the

freedom to negotiate individually with his workers and fired, or refused to hire men if he

suspected they were part of a union.[13] It is not surprising then that the IOFL chose to

begin as a secret organization, as the depression was in full swing and employment was

not easily found.   However, in 1877, the IOFL changed course and made itself known to

the public so that it could try and sway public opinion on matters that concerned its

members.[14]

Though South Bend did not see the kind of defensive action by workers that other

cities experienced, there was an incident at the Oliver Plow Works that exemplified the

mood of industrial workers. According to the *South Bend Tribune*, the "Polanders in the

grinding shops of the South Bend Iron Works had quit work (on 18 July 1876) on account

of a reduction of wages."[15] The *Tribune* learned from a supervisor at the factory that

grinders were making between $1.25 and $2.25 per eight hour day. Furthermore, the

Tribune claimed the wages were as high as skilled occupations like carpenters, printers

and wagon-makers who "would be happy to do the work of the grinders if they could get

it – and work 10 hours instead of eight." The paper went on to criticize the workers

writing "these same Polanders could not make $1.15 on the railroad, a kind of labor they

would now be doing had they not got into the shops. If they had to find work in other

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[13] Oliver, "Journal," 23May82, 24Dec84, 5Jan85, 16Mar1885.

[14] Knauss, "South Bend's Labor Movement Emerges: The Panic of 1837 to the Great Uprising of 1877," 9-12.

[15] *South Bend Tribune*, 19July76.

shops in the city, they would be lucky to find $1.50, and more likely to find $1.00."[16]

The more sympathetic *Daily Herald* claimed that the workers could only make $.75 per

day with the reduced wages. Meanwhile, Esslinger's study of the wages in 1879 found

that semi-skilled workers earned an average wage of $1.61 while common laborers

earned a paltry $.91 a day.[17] Additionally neither the *Herald* in its defense, nor the

Tribune in its brow beating of the Poles, mentioned that during the depression years,

while many workers were having difficulty finding adequate financial resources, the

Oliver Plow Works that reduced their workers' wages paid dividends in 1873 of 15

percent and 20 percent in 1874, established its first branch house in Indianapolis in that

same year, and in 1876 raised its capitalization from $100,000 to half a million dollars.[18]

By no means was the corporation facing the same economic distress as its workers.

Nationally, after four long years of economic depression the nation reached a

boiling point in the summer of 1877. During the depression, agreements among rail line

management led to a series of wage cuts that made life even more precarious for the

railroad workers. In 1877, laborers reacted to the most recent 10 percent pay cut, on top

of the cumulative decrease of 35 percent since 1873, by refusing to work.[19] The protest

started on 16 July 1877 on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in Maryland. The following

day the rail workers seized the trains in Martinsburg, West Virginia, demanding the

resumption of wage rates. The strike wave in that summer spread rapidly along the

railroads and then into other industries and communities including Pittsburgh, St. Louis,

San Francisco, Buffalo and Chicago. After years of depression and high unemployment

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[16]Ibid.

[17] Esslinger, *Immigrants and the City: Ethnicity and Mobility in a Nineteenth Century Midwestern Community*, 63.

[18] "James Oliver, "List of Stock Holders, Record of Dividends" Copshaholm, Northern Indiana Center for History (South Bend , IN). Romine, *Copshaholm: The Oliver Story*, 27.

[19] Rayback, *A History of American Labor*, 134.

– it appeared that the latest cut was the match that ignited a tinderbox of labor frustration. The worst of the strike and related violence was over in two weeks, but before then hundreds of lives were lost and millions of dollars worth of property was destroyed.

South Bend was spared direct involvement in the strike, but the news of the strikes and riots across the country filled the air with tension. The strike wave arrived in Chicago on 24 July 1877 when the switchmen on the Michigan Central "abandoned their work and quit until further pay be granted them."[20] The following morning the strike spread to other railroads in Chicago and then into other industries and the unemployed as thousands of people took to the streets to physically redress their economic situation. The increasing numbers of striking workers were finally confronted by police on 26 July and after two days of bloodletting the trains were once again moving through the city.[21]

Not surprisingly, events in Chicago were followed closely by the residents of South Bend. Ninety miles separated South Bend from Chicago, but the connection between the two cities was strong. The Studebakers had constructed a large carriage facility on Michigan Street in Chicago and the Oliver family owned several properties in Chicago. Travel to the "Windy City" was made easily by both the elite and middle classes of South Bend by direct route on the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad.

South Bend residents anxiously watched the violence unfolding in Chicago closely, but events developed even closer to South Bend from the east and soon had the citizens even more worried. In Elkhart and Fort Wayne, Indiana, the rail workers stopped the trains running from the east. South Bend was buzzing with rumors that an

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[20] *Chicago Tribune Historical Online Historical Archives*, 25July77.
[21] Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, 470-71.

expeditionary force of striking railroad workers from Elkhart was headed to South Bend intending to cut off the railroad traffic to the West as well.[22] The strike that began in Maryland and spread across the rail lines was only ten miles away, though by the time it threatened South Bend, police and militias across the rest of the country had squashed the majority of protests. Having been cut off from the Chicago trains for almost a week, the *South Bend Tribune* was happy to report that one filled with groceries had finally arrived on the morning of July 30.[23]

However, rumors heard that morning declared a contingent of strikers were on their way to South Bend from Elkhart. The *Tribune's* headline, "A Raid By the Elkhart Strikers," added to the anxiety. The rumors continued through the afternoon, but the arrival of rioters never materialized. And in the event men from Elkhart arrived and threatened to harm the railroads in South Bend, the marshal and the police with specially deputized men awaited the strikers at the train depot prepared to repel them.[24]

The local IOFL revealed itself to the public at this time and came out on the side of law and order in this instance. Though not technically craft based – its ideology was not revolutionary nor did the IOFL favor violence as more radical labor groups did. On July 28 the union published in the *Tribune* a strongly worded resolution that declared their support of governmental policy and condemned the actions of the strikers and rioters. After stating the IOFL's lofty position that laborers hold as honorable and important members of society, they resolved as well that,

> the mode of redress resorted to by employes[sic] of railroads and other business
> companies throughout the country at the present time, as being productive of
> much distress to the working class, and tending to the destruction of the

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[22] *South Bend Tribune*, 30July77.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.

government; and that it is our duty to aid the civil authority in the maintenance of law and order.[25]

To reassure the public of the position against the current wave of strikes and violence, the IOFL followed up this resolution two days later when they called a meeting to organize for defense against any threat to property in South Bend.[26] Convinced that neither the Democrats nor Republicans were concerned enough with labor, the IOFL embraced political activity and put forward a slate of candidates for the 1878 election with planks that supported inflation through silver, a graduated income tax and federal oversight over corporations.[27]

In 1878, only a year after the IOFL revealed itself to the public and the same year it ran a slate of candidates in the election, the Knights of Labor (KOL) opened a local assembly in South Bend. Membership in the IOFL fell off as the popularity of the Knights took over. By 1884 there were only two IOFL members left, while the KOL had two local assemblies with a total of 1,200 members.[28] The Knights organization was similar to the Free Laborers in many ways, and in fact may have been the model for the IOFL organization. Started as a secret organization in 1869, the Knights grew slowly through the 1870s and early1880s. However, membership surged in 1884 and it grew rapidly for several years in the mid-1880s after a number of successful strikes, which was followed by a similarly rapid decline in the wake of business and government offensive against the labor movement in the late 1880s. Known for its inclusivity, the district assembly that included South Bend elected a woman to represent itself at the national

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[25] Ibid., 28July77.
[26] Ibid., 30July77.
[27] Knauss, "South Bend's Labor Movement Emerges: The Panic of 1837 to the Great Uprising of 1877," 17.
[28] Keith Knauss, "The South Bend Labor Movement During the Great Upheaval of the 1880's," (South Bend, IN: Indiana University of South Bend, 2000), 2-3.

meeting in 1887 in Minneapolis. Also indicative of its efforts to organized immigrants was the request by William Scherman, the 1886 representative from South Bend to the national meeting in Virginia, for a Polish language copy of the by-laws.[29]

As previously noted, the crisis of the 1870s did not stop the growth of the South Bend Chilled Plow Works, but it may have added to the anxiety of the workers who, after seeing their employer reaping significant gains tried to increase their own standard of living. James Oliver confronted a great deal of subterranean labor agitation throughout the Gilded Age. After returning from a trip through the western United States to promote plow sales in the fall of 1879, Oliver noted in his journal that "everything all right at the foundry."[30] As the original inventor and craftsman, James Oliver typically spent a good deal of time in the factory instead of the office. However, there must have been some kind of organizing activity taking place while Oliver was absent because within a week of his return, he penned, "Orders wer given to put up notices that the strike and rais of wages demanded should terminate Saterday and all willing to except the ould wages might come back and go to work Monday and they all came back."[31]

Confronting and immediately eliminating the threat of a union representing the workers' concerns for low wages proved to be Oliver's policy as exemplified above. Even so, his employees tried again and again to address the issue. Less than four weeks after confronting the demand for a wage increase in November 1879, Oliver noted that the mould board men "maid a faint atempt at as strike."[32] Though he failed to explain the outcome in his journal, based on his description that it was a "faint attempt," it likely

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[29] Knights of Labor, "Proceedings of the Knights of Labor General Assemblies" (Richmond, VA, 1886).
[30] Oliver, "Journal," 19Nov79.
[31] Ibid., 24Nov79. James Oliver had little formal education, which was reflected in his journal entries. In an effort to retain authenticity and continuity throughout the document, I have included the original spelling, but refrained from using "sic" in each instance of misspelling or grammar.
[32] Ibid., 18Dec79.

ended as many others - with the strike being defeated and the leaders fired. Oliver could only have been satisfied with his style of dealing with labor discontent because it appeared to work efficiently, at least in the short run.

The spring of 1880 brought more confrontations into the Oliver Chilled Plow Works as the molders once again tried to increase their wages through strikes and twice more they were defeated. The first protest started in the molding department on Saturday, April 3. Reminiscent of his November observation that everything in the factory was fine before a strike, again Oliver noted on Wednesday March 31, just four days before the protest, that everything was running fine at the factory.[33] However, at least a small number of the workers in the foundry were not as happy as Oliver surmised because within three days, a number of molders went out on strike.[34] Oliver acted quickly and decisively as per his history. The molders called for the strike on Saturday, April 3 and when work resumed on Monday, Oliver fired the man he believed was the strike leader, one "Mick Haistens." This action evidently broke the strike, as he noted in his journal that same day, "the rest of the men gon to work."[35]

As a strike leader, "Mick Hastens"[36] appeared to be a non-descript organizer. According to census and directory records, he was born in Ireland in the late 1840s and migrated to the United States in 1866, spending a short time first in New York before moving on to Indiana. His wife, Margaret accompanied. His first child, Mary, was born in New York in 1866, while his two sons, John and Patrick were born in Indiana in 1867

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[33] Ibid., 31Mar80.
[34] Ibid., 3April80. Probably in the moldboard department, since Oliver indicted that the molders who walked out later were "point" molders.
[35] Ibid., 5April80.
[36] The directories from 1867 through 1894 list his spelling as Michael Hastings. The Ninth Census recorded his name as Michael Hauster; the Tenth Census recorded his name as Michael Haighten; the Twelfth census recorded his name as Michael Hasting.

and 1871 respectively. When the strike occurred in the spring of 1880, "Hastens" had

been working for Oliver for at least four years as a laborer. According to Esslinger's

estimates of a semi-skilled worker, he earned about $.1.50 per day. In that capacity

"Hastens" was able to maintain a permanent residence in the fourth ward of South Bend,

in the old town of Lowell. After Oliver fired "Hastens" he found employment, as many

other Irish from the fourth ward did, in the employ of Notre Dame. He worked there for

at least ten years while raising his children.[37]

With the labor leader ousted and the rest of the men returned, Oliver was again

satisfied that the "works running as usual," within a week of the strike.[38] Once again

however, more labor discontent laid ahead for Oliver that he did not notice. Not

intimidated by the release of "Hastens" from employment and the return of the failed

striking molders, the point molders initiated their own movement against Oliver on April

12 for higher wages.[39]   The strikers on this occasion, however, realized the importance

of solidarity within the shop to obtain their goals and made every effort to keep all the

molders out of work. According to Oliver, they were successful in turning out more men,

though he noted they employed the threat of violence to keep out men who really wanted

to work. The *South Bend Evening Register* reported that about 50 Poles had gone on

strike at Oliver's and on the evening of April 14 had visited all their countrymen to

persuade them not to report for work. In the morning, the strikers set up check points

around the city to enforce their prohibition. That move prompted Oliver to call in

reinforcement from the state. At 3:00 in the morning he requested the sheriff to intervene

in the strike because, according to him, "the Poles" congregated in "biter squads" all

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[37] "Turner's South Bend Directory," (South Bend, Ind: 1871).
[38] Oliver, "Journal," 10April80.
[39] Ibid., 12April80; *South Bend Evening Register*, (South Bend), 16April80.

around the city "in order to cut of the willing men that wants to work."[40] Interestingly, when the strike reached its climax and he called for law enforcement, Oliver interchanged the word "Pole" in the place of "men" and "molders" in his journal which he had used previously to describe the strikers.

The *Evening Register* also reported that the Poles were the cause of the trouble, both as agitators of the incident and victims of radical Polish leaders, though none of the leaders were identified. On April 15, the *Evening Register* confirmed what James Oliver had recorded the previous day; that there were about fifty molders out on strike, and there were at least four "crowds" of men, with between five and fifteen members, roaming various parts of the city to prevent others from entering the plow factory. According to the *Register*, all of the Poles employed at Oliver's were visited by a member of the striking group. One or two of the crowd were accused of carrying clubs to intimidate those less willing to strike. Even so, if there were several leaders in each crowd, the end result was not very effective since only fifty men stayed out. The paper also reported that there were rumors a general strike had been called.[41]

According to Oliver, once the Poles prevented others from going to work, and the sheriff had been called, a "better group of men mad a bold effort to break it [the strike] up and did it in grand stile."[42] Contrary to James Oliver, the *Register* did not insinuate any violence at all, except that which was implied by the clubs, to would be strikebreakers. In that account, the roaming groups were countered by police and representatives from the plow company who reassured non-striking workers that security would prevent any abuse on their persons. In some instances, workers turned back, but more than likely, the

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[40] Oliver, "Journal," 13April80, 14April80; *South Bend Evening Register*, 15April80.
[41] *South Bend Evening Register*, 15April80.
[42] Oliver, "Journal," 15April80.

strike ended for lack of participation, because by the end of the day, the strike leaders were asking for their jobs back at their old wages.[43]

Oliver's hard-handed management style continued to reflect his disdain of unionism and any threat to his control of the factory. For Oliver, there could be no negotiations with anyone who questioned his authority in the shop. Once again the leaders of the strike were refused employment "under any circumstances." Those who followed the strikers out of the shop were permitted to return at their old wages, but only if there were vacancies available, and after agreeing to a "forfeiture of $10.00 for six months."[44] To add fuel to the fire of ethnic competition, some of the Polish striking molders were replaced by Belgians, whom James did not relieve of their duty once the strike was crushed. The Poles whose positions were filled by Belgians during the strike were required to wait until the expansion of facilities or increased production warranted their return. Exactly one week after the point molder's strike commenced, work at the Oliver Plow Works had resumed normal production.[45] The incident foreshadowed a more devastating labor action that took place in 1884-85 and also caused Oliver to look to other nationalities to replace the dominant and problematic Polish workers in his factory. In the two months following the strike, he wrote that "a number of Belgiens went to work" and that he was "breacking in new molders – Belgiens," or that "a lot of Belgens ar hear to day and hired them to go to work."[46] He also hired a number of

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[43] *South Bend Evening Register*, 16April80.
[44] ———, "Journal," 16April80.
[45] Ibid., 19April80.
[46] Ibid., 26April80, 1May80, 6June80.

Swedes after the strike and contacted a Swedish labor agent to import more Swedish laborers.[47]

Ethnicity is a characteristic that is present throughout James Oliver's journal. He used it mostly in a benign fashion, as when he hired new employees like the Belgians in the examples above. Or, as he noted when "three Scots just arrived from Scotland to work,"[48] and again when they left six months later writing, "the three Scotch molders quit."[49] Oliver used ethnicity as an adjective to describe a person, and as a proper noun, as in "the Swede," "the Polander," or "the Belgian." In most cases Oliver rarely wrote of ethnicity in a derogatory manner. He would remark on a person's ethnicity if they were hurt, or sick, or if they were involved in an altercation at work for example when he "settled a quarrel between and Irishman and a Polander."[50] However, there were patterns that emerged in the journal that reveal some of his tendencies.

It is evident from his journal that the Swedes were regarded by Oliver in a different position than most of the other immigrants in his employ. Although he noted in a few entries negative comments about Swedish workers, for example when several Swedes were "groning" about pay, there are far fewer negative references to them than the Poles.[51] And in a rare church appearance, Oliver attended the first Swedish Lutheran Church service in 1881.[52] And for the small but growing Swedish community, Oliver, in atypically charitable fashion, gave $2000, provided the congregation raised matching

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[47] Ibid., 2May80, 22May80, 26June80.
[48] Ibid., 30July80.
[49] Ibid., 15Jan81.
[50] Ibid., 31Jan79.
[51] Ibid., 20Jan81.
[52] Ibid., 13Nov81.

funds, to build a new church in 1884.[53] Oliver also drove his buggy or wagon through

the Swedish neighborhood at least half a dozen times, something he never mentioned

once doing with regard to any other ethnic group.[54]

On the other hand, James had few good things to say about Poles, and does not

show a great deal of affection for them in his journal. An examination of the spring 1880

strike that was led by molder Mike Hastings was an example of Oliver's proclivity to use

Polish ethnicity in a negative way. When Hastings first tried to organize, Oliver made no

reference to his ethnicity, which was Irish, or the rest of the strikers. But when the

molders struck again, their Polish ethnicity was important enough to note. This would

not be the last time that the Poles were blamed for a labor disturbance. In the largest

labor conflict in nineteenth century South Bend, the Poles were singled out by Oliver and

the press as the primary cause of the trouble.

Even more pronounced than Oliver's tendency for seeing ethnicity, was his

vigilance against labor unions. Oliver's management style was displayed again when two

young molders from Pennsylvania tried to organize the molders in the spring of 1881,

only one year after the previous attempt. Oliver did not entertain any compromises with

the men. They were forced to stop enrolling molders in a union or face termination.[55]

And exactly one year later in the spring of 1882 eight more men discovered the contempt

Oliver had for unions as they were fired when a "union leag was discovered amongst

[the] moulders."[56]

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[53]Ibid., 3July84; "Minutes," 1Jan84 and 24April84, Box 7, folder 94.505, translation from minutes by Bob and Judith Larson.
[54] Oliver, "Journal," 26June81, 31July81, 7Aug81, 5Feb82, 21Jan83, 30June83, 6April84.
[55] Ibid., 16May81.
[56] Ibid., 23May1882.

Oliver retained tight control over his employees until the next great economic downturn in the post Civil War period occurred in 1884-86. Unlike the 1870s depression which left many of the industries in South Bend unscathed financially, orders for plows at the start of the economic downturn in 1884 dropped and forced wage reductions and cuts in employment. These actions were met by resistance from the workers which came to a violent head in January 1885 and resulted in the plow factory closing its doors completely for several months.

The 1884-86 slow down caused a greater effect on the Plow Company than any other economic recession.[57] Previously, Oliver closed the shop for several days or weeks if sales were slow or if one part of the factory was running slow. For example, laying off the grinders if the molders were behind, or laying off the molders until the malleable shop caught up.[58] But in the fall of 1884, the economic forecast for the spring market indicated that sales might fall off. The poor economic prognosis prompted cost cutting action to reduce the possibility of future losses. At the Annual Meeting of Branch Managers and Traveling Salesmen of the Oliver Chilled Plow Works on November 6 and 7 in 1884, the reports and forecasts from across the country were mixed. The report from the Indianapolis branch indicated sales for the spring down $10,000 while the fall sales were down $20,000. On the other hand, sales in the Northern Indiana territory reported that the spring trade of 1884 had increased by 50 percent over the 1883 spring season, and that the fall trade of 1884 had equaled that of 1883. Despite these conflicting accounts,

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[57] A more detailed account of the Oliver Strike can be found in Stephen R. Miceli, "James Oliver and the Strike at the Oliver Chilled Plow Works in 1885: An Illustration of the Success and the Strife of the Gilded Age" (Master's thesis, University of Toledo, 1997), Chapter Five.
[58] Oliver, "Journal," 27Jan83, 17March83.

all the agents present indicated that the Oliver Chilled Plows were outselling their competitors.[59]

The mail also brought conflicting reports on the economic forecast. In a letter from the branch manager in San Francisco, dated 17 October 1884, A. Listenberger indicated that plow sales were so good he feared that if his order for more plows were not filled he would run out of inventory.[60] On the other hand, a dealer in Columbia City, Indiana, Kensely, Zent, and Company, requested that he be excused from purchasing any new plows, and implied that the defeat of the Republicans in the recent presidential election would hurt the economy, and their plow business[61] After hearing mixed reports from the branch and sales managers from across the country in November 1884 and to prevent an overproduction in goods, the Olivers decided to cut production.

The method originally chosen on Monday, 10 November 1884, was to reduce production by half and keep all the workers at half pay. Not surprisingly, this plan was not enthusiastically endorsed by the Oliver employees. The *South Bend Tribune* reported that, according to the Oliver management, the half time solution did not sit well with either management or workers.[62] Oliver privately confirmed the unhappy sentiment from the workers as well, but he also foreshadowed in his journal that they would be even more displeased in one week.[63] The mood in the factory festered on for two more days and Oliver recorded the displeasure by writing on Tuesday, "the Polls are made becaus

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[59] "Stenographic Report of Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of Branch Managers and Traveling Salesmen of the South Bend Iron Works, Held at the Main Office, South Bend, Indiana, November 6 and 7, 1884," Copshaholm Basement, Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, Indiana, p 53-63.
[60] A. Listenberger, branch manager in San Francisco, California to JD Oliver, 10Oct84, *Oliver Family Private Papers*, Special Collections, Box OD3, File OD3/1/12, Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, Indiana.
[61] Kinsely, Zent and Co. to JD Oliver, 22Nov84, *Oliver Family Private Papers*, Special Collections, Box OD3, File OD3/1/11, Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, Indiana.
[62] *South Bend Tribune*, 18Nov1884.
[63] Oliver, "Journal," 10Nov84.

they are not alowed to do just as they have a mind to," and on Wednesday when he wrote,

"the moulders was very sassy today but concluded to behave."[64] On the fourth day after

the wage cut, the complaints became so loud that Oliver had to discharge fourteen

molders.[65] The workers were clearly not happy with the new work policy and

management was also frustrated. In light of the reaction, a new policy was initiated on 17

November 1884, one week after the first.

The new plan cut the work force, and reduced the wages further, so that a reduced

workforce was fully employed at "a trifling" reduced wage.[66] The workers received this

news with even greater outrage than the first attempt to cut costs. Oliver explained his

actions to Father Sorin of Notre Dame this way:

> I called the men together and told them that we did not need the work, did not
> know what to do with it when made, but for the sake of giving them employment
> I was willing to give them work at full time provided they would bear a portion
> of the burden and submit to a small cut in wages. I explained to them also that
> the deduction and allowances we would have to make to sell the goods would be
> far in excess of the cut they would sustain and it remained with them to say
> whether they would consent to this plan.[67]

The employees did not consent to the plan. According to Oliver when he "requested the

Pollanders to work for less or quit and they quit. They are now on a bum, swaring to

have blood."[68] In essence, because Oliver was adamantly opposed to a union

representing the opinions of the workers prior to this engagement, his employees were

left with only the two options Oliver gave them. He refused to negotiate with a

representative body for the workers, so their response, like that of so many other workers

across the country dissatisfied with their conditions, was to walk out.

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[64] Ibid., 11Nov1884 and 12Nov84.
[65] Ibid., 13Nov84.
[66] *South Bend Tribune*, 18 Nov84.
[67] James Oliver to Father Sorin, 24Jan1885, Archives, University of Notre Dame.
[68] Oliver, "Journal," 17Nov84.

That evening, after the most recent reductions in workforce and wages – and subsequent walk off by "the Poles," a meeting was held at Good's Opera House and the "Pollanders" began organizing a union to combat the actions by Oliver, though many other nationalities were involved in the meeting as well.[69] The city newspapers reported that the turnout numbered into the hundreds and the crowd displayed an enthusiastic response to the various speakers. After the speeches had ended a movement for the organization of an official union began and over three hundred men signed up with officers elected. Before the meeting ended a suggestion was made to prevent other workers from entering into the Oliver factory in the future. There was a small contingent of about twenty men who followed up on that strategy the next morning, but they were met by the marshal at the factory gates and left without incident.[70] Apparently, there was no need for the striking men to set up a perimeter to keep other workers out of the factory because Oliver decided to shut the factory down. As he had explained to Father Sorin, he did not have the orders to justify continued operation, and because there was a threat of violence from the workers.[71]

At the beginning of December, after being closed for three weeks, Oliver commenced production on a limited basis and slowly re-hired some of his old hands. On December 1, he started molding with a "few men", and the following day he "took in a lot of moulders and started the engine," while noting "the outside strickers are ancuious to get to work."[72] The next day there were "a large body of Poles and Hungarians were at the gate" but he told them they were not needed, and on Thursday he reported that

[69] Ibid., 18Nov84.
[70] *St. Joseph Valley Weekly Register*, 19Nov1884; *South Bend Tribune*, 18Nov84; *South Bend Daily Times*, 18Nov84.
[71] Oliver to Sorin 24Jan85.
[72] Oliver, "Journal," 1Dec84 and 2Dec84.

most of the men were out on strike.[73] Throughout the first few weeks of December

Oliver hired more men. He reported to Father Sorin that he did so because "the men

applied en masse to be allowed to work at the proposed reduction and they were taken

back."[74] Men who had joined the union were, of course, refused their positions until they

removed their names from the "union books."[75] By the week of Christmas, the weather

in South Bend had turned cold and more than two feet of snow had dropped on the

ground. Oliver reported that the reduced workforce he had proposed in November was in

the factory, leaving those laid off in the snow.[76]

The two weeks after Christmas proved to be the calm before the storm at the

Oliver Chilled Plow Works. In those few weeks there was one altercation "on account of

a drunken Pollander," who "wanted to come and go to work," and was turned away, but

on several occasions Oliver noted that the factory was running smoothly in his journal

and to Father Sorin he later wrote, "all went smoothly for awhile, the men glad to work

apparently, and pleased that steady employment was furnished them."[77] However, there

was a considerable amount of tension both in the shop and outside that was about to

explode.

On the same day that Oliver noted that the factory was running smoothly, 5

January 1885, the President and Vice-President of the Polish Union visited the plow

factory and asked to be taken back, to which Oliver responded in typical manner

concerning union leaders, "never."[78] Another union meeting was held two nights later to

discuss Oliver's refusal to re-hire the leaders. The tension in and around the factory

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[73] Ibid., 3Dec84 and 4 Dec84.
[74] Oliver to Sorin, 24Jan85.
[75] Oliver, "Journal," 17Dec84.
[76] Ibid., 17Dec84 - 24 Dec84.
[77] Ibid., 26Dec84, 2Jan85, 5Jan85.; Oliver to Sorin, 24Jan85.
[78] Ibid., 5Jan85.

became palpable as James Oliver noted on Saturday, January 10 that "the Poles are boiling for war," and he heard a strike was rumored for Monday.[79]

Oliver's intelligence turned out to be correct. On Monday he was presented with a petition signed by "all but the Swedes" demanding a resumption of wages to the pre-November levels. Later reports taken from the workers indicated a meeting was arranged between petitioners and management. The strikers stated that the cause of their dissatisfaction was the wage cut and additional demands placed on one of the grinding departments whose members were forced to work an hour each day in assisting others in the same shop, but were not provided extra pay. The Olivers, according to the petitioners, did not appear to discuss the situation, who then determined that their only recourse was to strike. The strikers said they were fighting for "bread and butter," and that they regretted their action but were forced into it by the actions taken by the "grinding monopolists."[80]

JD Oliver told the *South Bend Tribune* a slightly different story concerning the events of that Monday but, he conceded that wages had been reduced in recent months because of the depression. He contended, however, that the petition demanded the leaders of the November unrest be rehired and the wages not only be reinstated, but actually be raised above the November levels. He also claimed he responded to the petition by requesting a meeting between the labor representatives and management – to be represented by JD and James Oliver themselves. It would not be uncommon of a union to demand its leaders retain their position at a factory as a principal of solidarity, but based on the Oliver union policy leading up to this point, it is hard to fathom James

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[79] Ibid., 10Jan85.
[80] *South Bend Daily Times*, 13Jan85.

Oliver agreeing to negotiate or even employ anyone belonging to a union, much less the leaders. Regardless, when the determined time to respond to the petition passed, the workers struck. The stoppage started in the grinding departments. According to the Olivers, less than half the workers enlisted in the strike, most of them being Poles or Hungarians.[81]

On the following morning, Tuesday, January 13, about three hundred men had gathered at the factory gates to prevent anyone who wished to work from entering. Several were armed with iron rods and sticks. When the superintendent of the Works, L. Le Van, attempted to enter, he was met by the strikers and told that he could not enter until the wage increase demand was met. Le Van accepted the situation and left.[82] There were, however, other incidents that sparked the crowd to become violent. The *South Bend Daily Times* reported that the guard of the main gate became excited and emptied his revolver into the gathered protesters, wounding at least one, and setting off a violent reaction. After hunting down the guard, the crowd allowed him to leave the melee with little more than a few bruises. Another faithful management employee, Captain Edwin Nicar, however, was beaten badly when he refused the warnings of the strikers and forced his way into the factory grounds. There were several other loyal employees, who were beaten, but no fatalities occurred.[83]

The gunshots from the guard precipitated an unorganized frenzy as the strikers reacted violently at the attempts on their lives. The workers broke through the factory fence and proceeded to destroy products and property. At about 9:00AM, Father Czyzewski arrived at the scene and addressed the crowd. He preached to the assembled

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[81]Ibid.
[82] Ibid., 14Jan85.
[83] Ibid., 13Jan85 and 1Jan85; *South Bend Tribune*, 13Jan85; *South Bend Weekly Tribune*, 17Jan85.

men, many of whom were his parishioners, about the importance of peace and reverence to law and order. He counseled his parishioners to leave without any further demonstration or violence and when he finished his speech, many in the crowd cheered and heeded his words by leaving the scene.[84]

The most ardent protesters remained, however, and were joined by many more until the crowd was as large as before. Local law enforcement was not prepared to handle a problem of such size, and it called for the Veteran Guard unit from Elkhart. When the Guard arrived that evening, the protesters retreated without violence. They were disarmed and several were arrested.[85] The Elkhart Guard remained at the Oliver Chilled Plow Works until January 15, when it was determined that the factory was no longer in danger. The violence at the factory had ended, but the turmoil caused by the plant closing continued for several months. After shipping a few carloads of plows on January 16, the factory was closed with no indication of whether it would ever open in South Bend again. Outside the factory gates mingled a mix of strikers and those wishing to return to work.[86]

The Singer Company was also experiencing the effects of the national economic recession in 1884. As early as May in 1884, the Singer company plant superintendent, Leighton Pine, and the company president in New York, George McKenzie were observing national and world events and preparing their company for a slow down. Pine voiced his concern on 13 May 1884 when he wrote that "business in American[sic] is far from being encouraging. The recent failure of the Marine Bank, Grant, Ward and Co, the large car shops at St. Paul (with liabilities 1,000,000 and assets of over 4,000,000) due to

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[84] *South Bend Daily Times*, 13Jan85.
[85] Ibid., 13Jan85 and 14Jan85.
[86] Meikle, "James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works", 283.

slow collections, have created a feeling of distrust that I fear is going to produce more business stagnation."[87] He reported that he was doing all he possibly could to reduce costs including reducing the workforce down to its lowest possible working limit. He also prophesied that the upcoming presidential election and "wild speculators" would contribute to even more business stagnation.[88] McKenzie entirely endorsed Pine's assessment of the situation and the actions he was taking. Indeed, while traveling to Europe, McKenzie warned Pine to "spend as little money as possible"[89] because "things are hard all over the world."[90]

    After Pine had written to McKenzie in early May he travelled south to Cairo, Illinois, where Singer had built a smaller wood working factory in 1881. He reduced production there which he wrote "was a bad dose for the men."[91] Throughout the summer Pine continued to see the signs of depressing economics in general and slow orders for cabinets specifically.[92] By the time the leaves were changing in September, Pine had reduced the work force in South Bend down to 450 and was only running a nine hour day.[93] Then a month later, Pine's worst fears were realized on October 23 when McKenzie wrote:

> Want to say especially that the necessities of our business demand closest economy. Shut down on everything but absolute necessities and make your preparations to close the works at both places for at least two or three weeks on Jan 1st. This policy is a matter of necessity and must be carried to the extreme limit consistent with safely.[94]

[87] Pine to McKenzie, 13May84, "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-Ca. 1975."; Milton Cantor, *American Workingclass Culture: Explorations in American Labor and Social History*, Contributions in Labor History; No. 7 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979).
[88] "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-Ca. 1975," Pine to McKenzie, 13May84.
[89] Ibid., McKenzie to Pine, 27May84.
[90] Ibid., McKenzie to Pine, 14June84.
[91] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 29May84.
[92] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 6June84.
[93] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 22Sept84.
[94] Ibid., McKenzie to Pine, 23Oct84.

Pine continued to slowly reduce the number of workers and the amount of time each worked. By November 12 he was down to 430 hands and only running eight hours each day with many hands working less. He was also laying-off between one and five men each day. But at the same time, he was afraid that cutting wages across the board would cause more united indignation.[95] This is the same week that Oliver was giving his employees the distressing news about their jobs. However, there was no violence or rebellion at the Singer Sewing Machine Company like there was at Oliver's.

To Pine, Oliver was to blame for the violence in South Bend because of the way he treated his workers. Pine explained the labor rebellion at Oliver's to McKenzie after the worst of the trouble had ended. He corroborated what the Olivers had said to their employees and newspapers - that the trade had been slow and there was an over-supply of plows in their store houses. Furthermore, to reduce costs, the Oliver's reduced wages and the amount of work available for each of the remaining men. This was the first wage cut. After a contentious election the Oliver's cut wages again, and "increase abuse was resorted to, to induce a strike."[96] A staunch Republican, James Oliver recorded on November 4 his displeasure that the Poles were all voting the Democratic ticket.[97] According to Pine, Oliver wanted to punish the men but got more than he could handle until, "(as old Oliver has admitted) he had not friends enough in South Bend to bury him, should he die."[98]

Pine continued his accusation of malicious intent by Oliver, alleging that Oliver raised wages in the spring of 1885 for ulterior motives. Primarily, according to Pine,

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[95] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 12Nov84.
[96] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 15April85.
[97] Oliver, "Journal," 4Nov84.
[98] "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-Ca. 1975," Pine to McKenzie, 15April85.

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Oliver wanted to reap the rewards of a respectable and benevolent employer, without actually being one. As such, Oliver claimed that he restored wages to the highest levels, when in fact he did not. Oliver had cut wages twice, the first out of economic necessity and the second out of political spite, which was the one that caused the riot. Pine asserted Oliver's recent wage increase covered the first cut, but not the second. However, he believed Oliver was trying to present himself as the highest paying factory owner in the city so that the hands at his establishment would be satisfied, and raise public opinion of himself in South Bend and abroad.[99]

Finally, Pine accused Oliver of trying to foment strikes for higher wages at the other factories in the city. He wrote that men from Oliver's management "were on the streets last night saying, 'the other factories will have to advance wages, as we have done, or they will have their turn with strikers.'"[100] In fact, Pine reported that "the air is full of rumors already, and workmen will soon be on the tip toe of expectation, looking for an advance, which if not forthcoming, will eventually be demanded."[101] Pine's attempt at soothsayer was based on solid observations in the town.

The issues surrounding the events at Oliver's wage cuts, lockout and riot were complex. The national economy was depressed, and the local economy was feeling the effects. Additionally, the national labor movement was growing substantially with the rise of the Knights of Labor in the 1880s and several locals operating in South Bend.[102] The Knights of Labor augmented the already established traditional trade unions, and essentially took the place of the IOFL which dwindled away after its brief foray into

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[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Knauss, "The South Bend Labor Movement During the Great Upheaval of the 1880's," 3.

politics.[103] In this atmosphere it was not hard for Pine to surmise that after Oliver, the

KOL would try to organize other large factories, or that the workers would be moved to

better their conditions.

The presence of the KOL in South Bend and their activities forced Pine into a

preemptive wage increase at his own factory, but only after seeing the events unfold at

Studebaker Brothers' Manufacturers. On Saturday 6 March 1886, the same day that the

KOL struck against wealthy financier Jay Gould's southwest railroads, a local Knights

assembly in South Bend walked out of the Studebakers. The strike was called after

negotiations had failed to produce an adequate solution to workers' concerns. Three

weeks prior to the walkout, a committee from the KOL demanded an across the board 25

percent wage increase. Studebaker responded to the demand negatively, but agreed to

negotiations. To that end, a committee was first formed with the workers' representatives

and company representatives to investigate work processes and wages in every

department, and then the results were analyzed to uncover if and where any increases

could be made. After three weeks without a settlement, the KOL ordered a walkout to

pressure the Studebakers. In a statement from his office in Chicago, Peter Studebaker

was reportedly unfazed by the development and was confident that the strike would be

worked out.[104]

The events at Studebakers were observed closely by Pine. He wrote to his

superior in New York many times as they tried to decide the best way to combat the

rising tide of union power in South Bend. Even before the strike, Pine sensed that the

discussions going on at Studebakers were destined for failure. In his opinion, the

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[103] ———, "South Bend's Labor Movement Emerges: The Panic of 1837 to the Great Uprising of 1877,"
17.
[104] *Chicago Tribune Historical Online Historical Archives*, 7March86.

committee to investigate wages created after the Knights contacted the wagon company in February about their desire to change rates was in essence a ploy to "get around" the Knights influence on the workers. They did this by interviewing their employees "separately on the matter of wages, making two lists of their names; one to show the men who are satisfied, and the other showing the names of those who want more and the amount wanted."[105] The Studebakers, according to Pine, were naïve and failed to realize the psychology of the workers who "when brought face to face with the managers of the Co', will declare they are satisfied with their present wages, simply to save their jobs, and when outside, will tell a different story, and act more heartily than ever, with their society."[106] Pine also reported that there were rumors that a boycott would accompany a strike against Studebaker's. On March 1 his conclusion that the events at Studebaker had reached the breaking point proved to be correct and the strike began within the week.[107]

The strike lasted only three weeks before a settlement was agreed to by both parties. The union demand of an across the board increase of 25 percent was not achieved but there were increases in varying amounts to about half the workers, while the committee agreed that the other half had been receiving a fair wage. The lowest paid employees at Studebaker's had been receiving about ten cents an hour and only working eight or nine hours a day before the strike. The Studebakers agreed to raise the wages for those common laborers, lumbermen, elevator men and the like to $1.25 for a ten hour day. Additionally, the pay rates for piece rate jobs were standardized so that men doing

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[105] "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-Ca. 1975," Pine to McKenzie, 1March86.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid., 6March86.

the same jobs were receiving the same pay. Pine thought overall that the deal made by Studebaker was good for most of those involved.[108]

With the previous six months of labor events in his mind, Pine's debate with McKenzie centered on how to prevent an action by the Knights of Labor at Singer, and still retain control and profitability for the company. In this respect McKenzie and Pine discussed several scenarios and what results could be expected. One avenue they considered was to wait on the Knights to make the first move. This option had the benefit of saving the company money if the Knights chose not to pursue Singer. Waiting on the Knights would, however, put Singer in a less favorable bargaining position in the public's eye (if the Knights did target them) than proactively raising wages prior to any Knight demands. Additionally, waiting on the Knights would invite some conflict because they would probably ask for an across the board 25 percent increase, to which Singer would not concede.[109]

The second choice was adjusting wages upward before the Knights organized the factory. However, Pine and McKenzie both agreed that an across the board general increase was not an option because they felt that would benefit men who were not worthy of a wage increase. This meant wages for only a portion of the workers would be raised, which Pine considered had the potential for positive and negative consequences. A pre-emptive rate increase for some, thought Pine, might have the effect of increasing the rage by those who did not receive the increase and setting off an insurrection by those left out of the higher rates. However, initiating a wage increase for a segment of workers before a demand by the KOL would put the company on a solidly positive foundation with the

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[108] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 22March86.
[109] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 29March86.,

general public, and could take some of the steam away from the more radical elements of the Knights. Pine stressed that he,

> had it on <u>good</u> authority, that they [KOL] are divided, the hot headed ones being restrained by those who fear that any demands made on us, even though they may be granted, will hasten the removal of our business from this point, and that it would be charged against the Knights that they drove us from the city, and this would bring their order in bad repute with the citizens."[110]

By offering increased wages to a selection of the workers then, Pine supposed he might stave off a major uprising.

There were three different pay systems at the Singer plant that Pine needed to consider adjusting. First was the piece rate system in which a man was paid by his output: the more products he made the greater his pay. This was a system that was particularly odious to the Knights because it forced all the workers producing the same product into competition with each other. For the company, this process provided a simple solution for the workers who wanted to earn more. They just needed to produce more. But in reality, the piece rates were adjusted down, as the workers became more adept at production. The system led to frenzied pace as workers competed against each other for jobs and against the clock for pay. The system generally included bonuses which also drove workers to increase production, often at unsafe speeds. However, Pine felt that in 1886, the piece rate scale did not need adjustment.[111]

The second pay system, referred to as the "contract system" was one that Pine himself did not favor, but was forced to utilize by McKenzie.[112] Pine argued repeatedly that it was an inefficient management system and wanted it changed in favor of a

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[110] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 26March86.
[111] Ibid., 22March86.
[112] For the ongoing debate over the contract system see "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-ca. 1975," Pine to McKenzie, 16Jan81, McKenzie to Pine, 7Jan82, Pine to McKenzie, 4Aug84, McKenzie to Pine18Jan87.

foreman system. According to this system one man was contracted to run a department and given total discretion in that department, including who worked under him, what types of disciplinary actions were exercised, and what the workers received in pay. The contractor was entirely responsible for the quantity and quality of the product in his department – responsible to Singer standards. The contractor's pay was tied to the profitability of his department with each department operating, essentially, as a single entity and any profit made by that department was divided evenly between the contractor and the company. In this system, the motive for the contractor was to drive his workers to complete their tasks at low cost, and develop systems of production that reduced costs and increased profitability.   The contractor's motivation was tied directly to the company's interests, but left the management up to the contractor. Singer's system in South Bend had five different departments, with varying degrees of profitability. Pine found that most of the men working in the departments were making from $1.25 - $1.50. That being the going rate for most of the unskilled labor in the factories, he felt those employees working for contractors need not receive a raise.[113]

The third pay system was reserved for the men who worked directly for the company. These included men who did "rough work…such as piling lumber, shoving trucks…and working machines." Additionally, there were men in the packing room who were earning $1.10 per day. These were the jobs Pine wanted to target for a raise. He suggested to McKenzie that raising wages for these jobs to $1.25 per day was the best strategy for Singer.[114] However, Pine was concerned that this targeted raise could cause the laborers in the other pay systems to organize and demand increases in pay for

[113] "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-Ca. 1975," Pine to McKenzie, 22March86.
[114] Ibid.

themselves. Furthermore, he thought some of the men who were passed over would leave, but he hoped that the wage move would satisfy enough men to avert a strike, and if not, Singer would have earned the support of the public in a labor dispute. In essence, he wrote, "we'll have to 'feed the tiger, so he will not devour us."[115]

McKenzie gave Pine approval to move forward with his wage increase plan, which he implemented in the first week of April. As the events unfolded, he found his forecast became reality. The newspapers gave him good coverage and the public supported his moves. Furthermore, there was as expected grumbling, from those who did not receive increases and among that group several left the company in protest. Overall Pine felt a sense of guarded optimism writing, "although I cannot say that all is serene and peaceful, the indications are the men will generally submit."[116] Financially, Pine indicated that the pay increase still did not raise the daily wages paid out by the company to the level they were cut in January 1885, when the Olivers were battling their employees in the street.[117]

In contrast to the actions by the Oliver workers, no ethnic group was blamed or held in disdain for the actions at Studebaker or Singer. Instead, Pine saw the Knights of Labor as the instigating mechanism of the labor unrest. Additionally, Pine believed that the Knights were an extension of the Democratic Party because he thought "every 'big Injin'" in the Knights of Labor was a leading Democrat.[118] But he never actually saw the organization as an extension of the workers' concern for their economic well being. Ironically, the Knights agreed with Pine's position on contract labor.

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[115] Ibid.
[116] {, #465@PIne to McKenzie, 10April86}
[117] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 22March86.
[118] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 13March86.

The rise and fall of the Knights of Labor in South Bend mirrored the developments of the organization nationally. Its meteoric rise during the Great Uprising of 1884-86 was followed by precipitous decline in the late 1880s. The district assembly for South Bend reported 2,567 members in 1886 which outnumbered membership in all of Indiana in 1887. The South Bend district membership dropped to 752 in July of 1887 and to 554 in July 1888, and there was no representative from South Bend at the national meeting of the Knights of Labor after 1888.[119] The tumultuous labor relations period that occurred in the mid-1880s in South Bend was not repeated again in nineteenth century, though the following decade saw the worst economic depression in the nineteenth century.

South Bend was not spared the economic tsunami that broke over the rest of the world in 1893. Unemployment rose to double digits nationally, but the state of affairs for South Bend's manufacturers was mixed. Demand for Oliver Chilled Plows fell and rose throughout the depression as did the profitability. In 1893 the company returned a 60 percent dividend for the Olivers of $300,000. The following year's dividend was only 25 percent, while in 1895, no dividend was declared. However, 1896 saw a dividend payment of $750,000 to the Oliver family – a 150 percent return![120] It appears, however, that Oliver and the management of the plow factory learned a lesson from the riot in the 1880s, for when demand for the plows dwindled, the work was not immediately cut for the workers.[121] Oliver weathered the depression well, but there were other companies in South Bend that did not.

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[119] Knights of Labor, "Proceedings of the Knights of Labor and General Assemblies", 1886-90.
[120] Davis, "Notes Concerning James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works."
[121] Meikle, "James Oliver and the Oliver Chilled Plow Works".

Studebaker Brothers' was hit particularly hard in 1893. According to JM

Studebaker, by October 1893 they were running barely at one-third capacity and had

required all the salaried, offices staff and foremen to take a 25 percent pay cut, and work

on the factory floor if necessary.[122] The Birdsell Clover Huller was operating at about

two-thirds capacity in its huller facility, about half time in their wagon business and had

closed down the carriage department altogether, laying off all the workers.   According to

the cashier at Oliver's, business in the city was so slow, everyday felt like a Sunday.[123]

Singer meanwhile was forced to close for several weeks at the beginning of 1894.

Unemployment was high, and the number of people in South Bend who were

destitute became large enough that the city created a relief agency to feed the hungry, and

established a works program to assist the needy unemployed. The funds for the charity,

however came from voluntary solicitations, and were not liberally donated.[124] In one

small show of ethnic unity a group of "Poles, Hungarians and Belgens" threatened to

destroy a machine used to haul dirt out of a sewer "if they were not furnished work."[125]

But there was no violence in South Bend on the scale of what cities like Chicago, and

Pittsburgh were experiencing in the depression.

Through the 1890s, the labor movement in South Bend was not strong. Activity

was relegated primarily to the conservative minded craft and retail unions which

represented only a small portion of South Bend's workers. The conservative focus of the

unions was reflected in the sentiments printed in the 1898 *Trade Union Directory*.

Though it recognized the earliest movement of labor activism in South Bend as the

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[122] JM Studebaker to DC Firestone, 13Oct1893, "Clement Studebaker Collection," Northern Indiana Center for History, South Bend, IN.
[123] Nicar to JD Oliver, 8Aug83, *Oliver Family Private Papers*, Special Collections, Box OD3, File OD11/1/2, Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, Indiana.
[124]*South Bend Daily Times*, 18Jan94; *South Bend Tribune*, 18Jan94.
[125] Oliver, "Journal," 22May94.

Knights of Labor, it noted the "inherent weaknesses" of the organization "manifest[ed] because of its lack of unity," and led to the rise of the "modern trade union, preserving that which was good and practical and eliminating that which had proven by experience to be impractical." Furthermore, the more rational and recent Central Labor Union, had "always exerted a conservative and healthy influence of the Locals, preventing rash action." Admittedly, this course of action had produced no "brilliant victories to boast of," and, in fact there were fewer unions and men represented by unions in 1898 than in 1893, though the editors had faith that the effects of the depression were over and membership would return.[126]

The craft unions declared in their writings the necessity of working class unity, but they were wary of organizing men in an industrial method, rather than a trade method. This left most semi-skilled industrial and common workers outside South Bend's union movement. These were also the occupation held by many immigrants. In fact most trade unions favored ending immigration, "of labor from one country in order to cheapen it in another, at the behest of capital."[127] As the labor unions understood the law of supply and demand, wages for workers declined as more labor migrated to the United States. But this anti-immigration policy of the unions was not embraced by recent immigrants who wanted family or friends to migrate to the United States. Reflective of the anti-immigrant and conservative position held by craft unionists were the inclusion of only two foreign born biographies out of two dozen men highlighted with sketches in the union directory, while several politicians and business owners' lives were described.

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[126] "The Trade Unions of South Bend Labor Directory: History of the Various Trade and Labor Unions, Biographical Sketches of Leading Union Officers and Prominent Business and Public Men," (South Bend: Tribune Printing Co, 1898), 3.
[127] Ibid., 5.

By the end of the nineteenth century the labor movement in South Bend was weak. The occasional strike, protest, and one melee, failed to materialize into a sustained organization that benefited the workers. The rise and decline of the Knights of Labor in the mid-1880s was the most impressive unionization movement in the city, but as experienced across the rest of the country, its appeal disintegrated at the end of the 1880s. The reason for disunion within the working-class in South Bend rested primarily on the complex relationships that developed between the city's native born work-force, *within* the various ethnic communities, *between* the ethnic communities, and the varied management strategies of the city's industrial leaders.

Chapter VI: Conclusions

A strong socialist movement dreamed of by Marxists and dreaded by capitalist, seemed to be on the verge of reality in the latter half of the nineteenth century as the United States moved through a period of rapid industrialization. Based on European models, many contemporaries of the time expected that a class-based political party would rise in the United States as the number of people subjected to industrial work increased. The political and economic corruption combined with the increasing gap between a small wealthy elite and a large class of working poor in the United States appeared ripe for a strong socialist/labor movement. There have been many theories to explain why socialism never developed. Warner Sombart postulated in 1906 that socialism could not grow in the United States because, relative to conditions in Europe, the workers' conditions and compensation were too high to allow a worker's movement to thrive. The lack of a socialist movement lent credence to the concept that the United States was exceptional among other nations.

Theories followed Sombart's "Roast Beef" thesis to explain what made the United States resistant to a socialist movement and included the lack of a feudal tradition or aristocracy, access to western land, greater upward economic mobility, and the practicality of American workers.[1] But in South Bend, Indiana, the more appropriate

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[1] Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955); Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American*

reason for the limited labor movement was the presence of issues that fractured the working class. The primary rift in the working class was caused by the presence of multiple ethnicities. The native born were the dominant culture in South Bend, but the foreign born ethnic groups created bulwarks designed to protect recent migrants from the dominant culture, and also to help them navigate through it. As a result, ethnic neighborhoods developed that fostered tight-knit communities rather than class consciousness. In addition, the industrial relations policies of South Bend manufacturers reinforced the ethnic divide among the working class.

The previous five chapters examined the industrialization and immigration of a frontier community in the nineteenth century. Chapters one and two provided a broad overarching view of the economic development that took place in the nineteenth century and what those changes did to the process of world migration. Advanced agricultural methods and technology increased the volume of food production that led to a rising world population which required a relatively smaller number of people to produce the necessary supply of food. This contributed to the growth in the number of people leaving their communities to search for other economic opportunities; an already well established tradition of economic migration. The surplus labor from agricultural areas was one important component necessary for large scale industrialization to occur.

The United States, though not an economic giant at the start of the nineteenth century, grew to become an industrial leader by the century's end. The young country was fortunate to have many of the other components necessary for large scale industrialization including undeveloped land to feed a growing population, water for

History (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1920); Stephan Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964); Selig Perlman, *A Theory of the Labor Movement* (New York: MacMillan, 1928).

power and transportation early in the century, and coal and iron ore later for railroads, and manufacturing as the industrialization process matured. The rapidly growing American manufacturing sector was an attractive alternative for many Europeans forced to look outside their own communities for economic opportunities at the same time the emerging manufacturers were looking for larger numbers of laborers to work in their factories. It was, in essence, a natural movement of the labor market from surplus area to demand area.

In chapter three, the broad perspective of economic growth in the United States was reduced to focus the specific industrialization and immigration processes on one community, South Bend, Indiana. This community exemplified the rapid industrialization and population growth as it matured from a small frontier community to a bustling urban center. The town grew slowly for the first thirty years after its founding in 1831, but after the Civil War, when the industrialization process at several large manufacturers intensified, the population expanded until in 1900 it was five times larger than it was in 1870. Though there was natural population increase, the migration of native born and foreign born immigrants and their children to South Bend was the primary cause of this increase. Because the migrants were drawn to the prospect of economic opportunity based on the success of large manufacturers in South Bend, the developments of those larger companies were outlined in the chapter. In fact, according to the Immigrant Commission's Report, "The rapid growth of these establishments [Studebaker Manufacturer, Oliver Chilled Plow, Singer Sewing Machine] has been due to the immigrant labor supply which has enabled them to rank among the most important

industrial concerns in America."[2] Furthermore, smaller manufacturers were drawn to South Bend "to take advantage of the opportunity to employ immigrants," leading the commission to conclude that, "Immigrants…have contributed largely to the present industrial importance of the community, and many of the most representative citizens give full credit to them as the ones who have developed the city."[3]

Chapter four identified the European groups and their communities that played an important role in South Bend's economic growth and development. Like most of the United States, the Irish and German migrants were the most prevalent in South Bend before the Civil War. The contrasts between these groups were more noteworthy than their similarities. Economically, the Germans immigrants had greater resources and skills, and their social and religious diversity acted as a break against the creation of an insular German neighborhood. The Irish, on the other hand, had greater solidarity to each other because they had limited economic opportunities and relied on one religion. In the post war period, the migration of a large number of Polish immigrants became the most visible change in the South Bend population, though they were joined by smaller numbers of other European migrants. German immigrants continued to arrive in large numbers, but except for one neighborhood their residency was diffused throughout the city, based on their variety of economic and social classes, while the Poles and the smaller number of other groups lived primarily in one part of the city - close to the factories. The rapid growth of the Polish community gave rise to the most segregated community in South Bend. They were similar to the antebellum Irish immigrants in their economic position and religion, but larger in number.

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[2] Dillingham and Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries: Part 14: Agricultural Implement and Vehicle Manufacturing* 572.
[3] Ibid., 573.

And finally, chapter five discussed the various attempts by South Bend's workers to mollify their condition as it deteriorated due to the emerging industrialization and the management practices in response to the workers' actions. Job shifting, demands for increased pay as well as attempts at organization were among the variety of ways the workers protested. Several craft unions were formed, as well as industrial unions like the Knights of Labor that attempted to unite workers of all skills - even a Polish Labor Union was briefly formed. But there was never an organization that united the workers for a sustained time period. The management methods of the larger factories did much to subdue the moves for solidarity in the working class from outright firing of union members, negotiation, to ethnically divided work groups. But the managers were simply exploiting a divisive situation in the working class, not creating it.

In this concluding chapter, I argue that though the workers in South Bend were aggrieved enough at times to try to alleviate their condition, they were unable to do so primarily due to their inability to organize across ethnic lines. The two primary factors present in nineteenth century South Bend that prevented the working class from building a unified organization to address their concerns were the varied and fractured ethnic groups and the management policies of the larger employers. These two factors dovetailed together and had several different components themselves. It was not simply, for example, that the workers were harshly treated at all the factories and for that reason, unions were never present. Sometimes employers used firings to prevent union organizing, but negotiations with the workers were also employed to prevent workers in a shop from rebelling and joining a union. Similarly, the introduction of foreign labor did not simply divide native workers against foreign workers, although that was an important

split. Also present were intra-ethnic class and religious divisions as well as conflict between ethnic groups.   But the first component of the ethnic dimension in South Bend was the hostile attitude the foreign born faced in Indiana.

As indicated in chapter four, Indiana's proportion of foreign born was small prior to the Civil War. This did not prevent the native born population from developing a suspicious and discriminatory attitude toward the foreign born that was rooted first in anti-Catholicism.   The hostility towards Catholicism was not uncommon in the United States in the nineteenth century because although there were a number of different religious traditions in the country, the most dominant was Protestantism, with a strong fear of Catholicism. The enmity towards Catholicism had its roots in the early colonial period though it subsided somewhat during and immediately after the American War for Independence.[4] However, with a large number of Irish Catholics entering the country before the middle of the century the hatred was reborn. Newspaper serials and itinerant preachers spread the word of the enormous challenge the "Catholic menace" posed to the United States.   Samuel Morse penned an anti-Catholic serial in 1835 that was eventually published in book form claiming Catholics in the United States were part of a foreign conspiracy whose mission was to destroy republicanism. That same year the newly formed anti-foreign Native American Party in New York polled 9,000 votes out of a total of 23,000 and the previous year, a fanatic anti-Catholic mob burned a convent in Maryland to the ground.[5]

South Bend's foundation and early growth occurred in that national atmosphere of Catholic animosity. Like Catholics spread across the country, those in St. Joseph County

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[4] Tyler Anbinder, *Nativism and Slavery: The Northern Know Nothings and the Politics of the 1850s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 111.
[5] Krzywkowski, "The Origin of the Polish National Catholic Church of St. Joseph County, Indiana", 42-44.

were subject to anti-Catholic sentiment that was coupled with anti-immigrant attitudes, especially in the 1850s. One Protestant missionary in northern Indiana, Rev. Joseph Gordon, wrote while pleading for resources to combat the growing Catholicism in northern Indiana:

> The enemy is striving to possess the land. The Romanists have founded a college at South Bend, and they are establishing churches and schools at nearly every point in this region. And shall the friends of pure, spiritual, life giving Christianity, be less zealous and self-denying than the votaries[6] of a cold, dead formalism – the emissaries of the "Man of Sin."[7]

The worst effects in St. Joseph County were felt by the Sisters of the Holy Cross in the mid 1850s when they were forced to leave the small mission they had established in Mishawaka because of harassment and threats of violence.[8] Instead, Sorin directed them move just west of his campus at Notre Dame.

This time of increased nativism was also the period of national discord over slavery. The Whig Party was in disarray in the early 1850s while the Democratic Party in the north was trying to remain a national party instead of a purely sectional, but it was hemorrhaging members who opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. In Indiana, the volatile political environment coincided with the rise of the Know Nothing Party whose object, according to its state constitution:

> shall be to resist the insidious policy of the Church of Rome and other foreign influence against the institutions of our country by placing in the offices in the gift of the people or by appointment, none but native-born Protestant citizens.[9]

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[6] "devout or zealous worshipper(s)." Merriam-Webster On-Line Dictionary. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/votaries%20.

[7] Sister Mary Evangeline (Thomas), "Nativism in the Old Northwest, 1850-1860" (Ph. D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1936), 105.

[8] "A Century at St. Patrick's: A History of the Priests, Activities, and People of St. Patrick's Parish, South Bend, Indiana, 1858-1958," 24.

[9] Mary Evangeline (Thomas), "Nativism in the Old Northwest, 1850-1860", 155.

The editor of the *St. Joseph Valley Register*, former Whig, future Republican Vice President and South Bend mayor, Schuyler Colfax toyed with the Know Nothings in the mid 1850s as he searched for a new party to join after the Whigs disintegrated. He promoted the sentiments of anti-immigrants in his paper, writing on June 21, 1855,

> We have condemned the efforts of the Papal Church and its dignitaries, to stride onward to commanding political power in the Nations…we have protested against the unjustifiable conduct of foreign authorities in emptying upon our hospitable shores, by the shipload, the inmates of their prisons and their poorhouses.[10]

Colfax was elected to Congress as an Anti-Nebraska representative of the short lived "People's Party" with Know Nothing support in 1854. In the following year he attended both the state and national Know Nothing conventions in 1855. Held in Philadelphia, the national convention ended catastrophically for the party. As slavery did to the country in 1860, it did to the Know Nothings in 1855. The question of slavery in the territories divided the representatives of the party when the majority refused to add an anti-Nebraska plank in the platform which resulted with the plank's proponents bolting the convention. This ultimately killed the party as a viable opponent to the Democratic Party. However, it was a boon for the emerging Republican Party, as many former Know Nothings gravitated towards the upstart Republicans.[11] This was true in Indiana as it was across the country, and once established, the Republican Party was dominant in Indiana politics until well after the Civil War. Therefore, when the economically disadvantaged Irish immigrants before the Civil War, and Eastern Europeans after the war began finding employment in and around South Bend, they experienced a heavily Republican population that was already predisposed to suspicion of the Catholic foreigner.

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[10] Robinson, *German Settlers of South Bend*, 72.

[11] Carl Fremont Brand, "History of the Know-Nothing Party in Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History* (1922).

Catholicism was an important issue for many native born, but the perceived

reliance on alcohol by immigrants also drew the ire of the Protestant native born.

Temperance arrived in St. Joseph County with some of the earliest settlers. In 1841 the

St. Joseph County Total Abstinence Society was formed and agitated to restrict alcohol

sales and register people to refrain from any consumption.[12] The crusade against drink

slowed while the Civil War raged, but attention returned to the subject again after the war

as immigration from Europe increased.

In the spring of 1874, at the same time Polish immigrants were beginning to

establish a noticeable presence in the area, a resurrection of the temperance issue started

in earnest. On March 11 a group of 100 mostly women gathered to discuss the best

methods to combat the evils of alcohol. A massive public meeting was chosen as the first

tactic in a larger strategy that included visiting saloons and signing people up to abstain

from drink.[13] The following week the Ladies Temperance Association hosted a large

temperance gathering at Good's Opera House. Schylar Colfax addressed the meeting as

did many of the leaders of the association, and a letter from Reverend D. Spillard, the

priest at St. Patrick's, was read. Spillard wrote to announce his support for a drive

against drink, though not an organization led by women, and indicated he had organized

his own total abstinence society at St. Patrick's Church. His letter included harsh words

for drinkers and those who supplied "the scourge that is devastating our fair land." He

called on minors to disclose "those who would deal out his poisonous potions to

innocent, unsuspecting wayward youth," and urged women who suffered at the hands of

the terrible demon have recorded the name of her tormentor." In closing he re-affirmed

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[12] Chapman and Co, *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana; Together with Sketches of Its Cities, Villages and Townships, Educational, Religious, Civil, Military, and Political History*, 582-83.
[13] *Chicago Tribune Historical Online Historical Archives*, 11March74.

his commitment to their cause "as a friend of temperance and the unrelenting foe of drunkenness."[14]

In the following week the association reported 1,200 signatures had been collected for total abstinence, but their attempt to sign up the workers at Singer failed to reap the numbers they had imagined. Amid the hundreds of laborers leaving the factory at closing time, only one hundred signatures were collected. However, the women returned in full force on March 25 at the invitation of Leighton Pine and the Vice President of Singer, in town from New York, George McKenzie. The factory drive engine was shut down and the women were permitted to go among the workers, led by Pine, McKenzie and other foremen, to acquire signatures. This coercion had some success, but was met in the factory by men feigning poor English skills, or hiding. Later in the day a counter protest against the temperance proponents was held "by parties setting out on the street a keg of lager, which was free for all."[15] Through the spring, the conflict over temperance continued. The Temperance Association members visited saloons pushing owners to close their businesses and urged patrons to sign abstinence pledges.[16]

The movement against alcohol was conducted primarily by the native born constituency in South Bend and had a similar Republican bent. The Democratic Party in the east had earlier courted the immigrant population and linked temperance to a moral, individualistic decision, and not one to be regulated by government. That message carried into the western regions of the United States. The infusion of temperance by the

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[14] ———, *History of St. Joseph County, Indiana; Together with Sketches of Its Cities, Villages and Townships, Educational, Religious, Civil, Military, and Political History*, 583-84.
[15] *Chicago Tribune Historical Online Historical Archives*, 21March74 and 26March74.
[16] Ibid.

native born into the immigrant "problem" was divisive and a source conflict between the mostly native born temperance advocates and South Bend's immigrant communities, particularly the Germans. And it was also a source of conflict within ethnic communities, especially between Catholic priests and their parishioners.

Part of the German community's heritage included a liberal attitude toward beer consumption; indeed Germans celebrated their beer. Consumption at beer gardens or in pubs was part of family life in Germany and was carried to South Bend, evident from the fact that a majority of saloons were owned by Germans in the 1870s.[17] Additionally, the fact that there were several large successful brewers among the many German owned businesses made the temperance advocates' arguments that alcohol was a sign of idleness and lack of industry appear invalid. When the temperance movement in South Bend pushed for prohibition, the German community rallied around a set of resolutions passed at a meeting of Indiana's German newspaper editors that protested all temperance legislation and pledged to work against any candidate running for office who supported such legislation.[18] For the Germans, criticism of their intemperance provided a buffer for the social, religious and class divisions that existed in their community as both upper and lower class, both Catholic and Protestant Germans were able to embrace their German culture in the face of temperance critics.

However, the condemnation of alcohol by religious leaders like Father Spillard made the temperance problematic of many Catholic immigrants. Unlike the general acceptance of alcohol in the German community, the issue caused tension between Catholic leaders and a significant part of their working class congregations. Spillard,

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[17] Robinson, *German Settlers of South Bend*, 12, 13 and 16.
[18] *Chicago Tribune Historical Online Historical Archives*, 6April74.

from the predominantly Irish parish, was not the only Catholic leader to speak out against alcohol consumption. The venerable Polish Reverend Czyzewski also spoke out loudly and publicly against consumption.[19] And according to Krzywkowski, "His policy on liquor undermined the solidarity of, and caused grumbling among, his people because it also reflected the criticism of the power structure."[20]

The pressure applied by the priests on their parishioners, especially the Poles, cannot be underestimated. The church and parish for Polish immigrants were as important to their lives as their family. The priest's position in nineteenth century Polish community was surpassed by no one. Therefore, when the priest supported the power structure of the dominant native born population, it carried significant weight with the parishioners. Czyzewski also supported the power structure during the workers' rebellion against the Oliver Plow Company in 1885. It was Czyzewski who broke the spirit of the Polish workers to carry forward their protest against the Olivers when he met them at the factory gates and admonished them. His action prompted many of the protesters to leave the factory in spite of their obvious dissatisfaction with the Oliver Plow Company. Czyzewski worked feverishly after the strike to get his parishioners rehired by writing to the Olivers and meeting with them, and when JD Oliver was hit by a snowball in the aftermath, the priest hunted down the culprit, a boy, who confessed after his hands had been "warmed…with a strap" by Czyzewski.[21]

The priests' motives for mediating the strike, and mending the rift between his parishioners and the Olivers came from his desire to help his community thrive, just as

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[19] Renkiewicz, "The Polish Settlement of St. Joseph County, Indiana: 1855-1935", 42-43.
[20] Krzywkowski, "The Origin of the Polish National Catholic Church of St. Joseph County, Indiana", 106.
[21] Czyzewski to JD Oliver, 2mar85, Northern Indiana Center for History, Copshaholm Mansion, Box OD2/2/3.

his position against alcohol was meant to protect it. But by acting as an extension of the employers, the priest risked alienating a portion of the Polish community who were aggrieved by the Olivers. Czyzewski understood that keeping good relations with the industrialists was important for the Polish community's survival, and as a result worked to ease class tensions between the workers and employers.

Residential patterns also strengthened ethnic unity at the expense of class consciousness. Though the primary force for migration was economic opportunity, once a small number of residents gathered together, usually around the large factories, migrants from the same European community often followed, using the previous migrants as a resource for housing and job opportunities. In South Bend, the industries in the southwestern region of the city were the original attraction and eventually, the number of immigrants became large enough to support religious, benevolent and even economic organizations. South Bend's ethnic groups all established such organization to retain their cultural heritage, while easing the affects of the dominant American society. Whether it was church organizations like St. Casimir's or secular groups like the Turners, these organizations brought people of the same ethnicity together at the expense of class unity across ethnic lines.

Working class divisions were accompanied by tensions between competing immigrant groups. Migration to industrial cities both from Europe and from American farms was economically driven. Suspicion and jealousy from the native born workers was a natural result of the employment conditions, even though the dirtiest and most demanding jobs were relegated to immigrants. But between the ethnic groups there was a hierarchy and competition that prevented unity.   Germans were the best equipped with

trade skills and ascended quickly into the higher realms of the labor market. Though the

Irish migrated without the knowledge of craft labor or money, they were well established

in South Bend before the start of intense industrialization after the Civil War, especially

in the Catholic hierarchy. This left the post war migrants competing for the lowest

occupations in the labor market, and for greater access to the Catholic Church authority.

In South Bend, the jealousy was stoked by the Oliver and Studebaker

management policies. Oliver routinely hired one ethnic group as replacements for

another. First Oliver recruited Poles for positions in the dangerous grinding and

polishing rooms, he then replaced them with Swedes, Belgians and later Hungarians

when the Poles organized and protested in response to wage cuts. Throughout his

journal, Oliver blamed his labor trouble on his Polish workers. After the most daring

attempt by his workers to resist further wage cuts, Oliver turned to a Swedish agent in

Chicago to send him new workers after he began production. While not afraid to

discharge anyone from his employment, including Swedes if he deemed it necessary, he

exhibited a much kinder disposition to the Swedish community than to the Poles.

Building and moving the Swedish church and frequenting their neighborhood were

outward sign of favoritism that could not have been overlooked by the Poles.

At the Studebaker Brothers' Manufacturing Company, more subtle methods of

control were employed that included negotiating with the employees at one point to ease

labor strife, and also fostering competition between ethnic groups to deliberately

manipulate the workers from uniting. This was achieved through a policy of breaking

their employees into large and small "gangs." According to the Dillingham Commission,

> "The small gangs are composed of from 2 to 10 men, and are always made up of
> one race. The large gangs contain more than 10 men, and are composed of mixed

races. . . . By this system they are able to secure better work out of all departments through the fact that in the small gangs composed of men of only one race there is a harmony of interests, without sufficient numbers to become a disturbing influence in the management of the plant. In the large gangs, to prevent clannishness and the opportunity to combine as a body, mixed races are employed. The practical results of the system are apparent when the fact that there has been no serious labor trouble in the establishment is considered, and the whole labor corps seems well satisfied with conditions under which work is offered. Outside of the establishment there is very little association between the immigrant races and the natives. The native seem to prevent association by maintaining an attitude of superiority.[22]

Leighton Pine at Singer's appears to have never used ethnicity as a wedge in his industrial relations; rather he employed a variety of tactics to placate his workers' protests. He was more inclined to raise wages for a few men to incite division among his factory workers, rather than use ethnic divisions. He explained his strategy of using targeted raises to subdue class consciousness to Frederick Bourne (Singer Sewing Machine president, 1889-1905) in April 1900:

> After investigating the matter carefully it was decided to advance wages to the men by classes, selecting the best men for an increase in wages, would be quite sure to create dissatisfaction with the large majority who would not be so favored. Therefore only a few men in each department were advanced (wages] . . . leaving a much greater number whose wages will be advance later on, when they shall have shown that they are worthy of it. Another group will have their wages raised next payday, and another group the following payday.[23]

This continued until all the men worthy of raises were compensated. Pine continued to explain his psychological understanding of the workers:

> The present situation, which we have no doubt will continue, is this: those whose wages have been raised feel very kindly towards the company. Those whose wages remain as before, now know that when they exhibit a disposition to treat the company as fairly as the company treats them, their merits will be promptly recognized and rewarded. This course seems to have fully

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[22] Dillingham and Commission, *Reports of the Immigration Commission: Immigrants in Industries: Part 14: Agricultural Implement and Vehicle Manufacturing* 574.
[23] "Singer Manufacturing Company Records, 1850-Ca. 1975," Pine to Bourne, 7April1900.

accomplished all that was desired. The agitators are silenced: prominent merit has been rewarded, and the sluggards have something to work for.[24]

He further argued that if he had raised the wages uniformly at the same time, "it would have indicated that the company makes no distinction between good and inferior hands." As it turned out Pine was as "pleased with the results," as he had been when he preempted the Knights of Labor in 1886 with a small wage increase for part of the workforce.[25]

Pine understood that labor was a commodity and when he saw that the labor market was tight, he refused to push wages down, as he did in the fall of 1881.[26] It was not for moral reasons or sympathy for the employees' standard of living, but because he recognized the workers also understood the market and would bolt for new employment rather than stand for a wage cut when other options existed. On the other hand, he also understood the value of making examples of agitators for higher pay when it seems judicious.[27]

South Bend was not alone in its inability to form a sustained labor movement. Nor was it the only city where the presence of a diverse immigrant population was seen as partially responsible for the disunity. Richard Oestreicher reached a similar conclusion in his 1986 study of Detroit, *Solidarity and Fragmentation*. Detroit was a larger industrial city, where immigrants were the majority in the working class, and where a more radical element of the working class contributed to a greater progressive political movement than in South Bend. But like South Bend, the various foreign born groups created space for their own cultural development, most times beginning with a

[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 17Oct81.
[27] Ibid., Pine to McKenzie, 27June81.

church, that made organizing across ethnic lines difficult.[28] In Detroit, Oestreicher

observed that a "sub-culture of opposition" developed in the late 1870s through the mid-

1880s that breached those cultural differences and coalesced behind the Knights of Labor

in a class-conscious movement. But after the Haymarket Square bombing, police

retaliation and ensuing business counterattacks, the Knight of Labor fell apart and the

ethnic divisions reasserted themselves in Detroit. The labor movement in South Bend

never achieved the type of unity found in Detroit. The largest labor uprising at the Oliver

Chilled Plow Works was spontaneous and a defensive response to wage cuts, was short-

lived, and a clear victory for management. The ethnic divisions prevented any long term

class unity. But in Detroit, the cultural difference that acted as barriers to class cohesion

were subdued.

One aspect that made working class unity a difficult achievement in South Bend,

but needs further attention elsewhere, was the role of gender. Women were typically

relegated to several traditional roles in the working class and immigrant communities.

The traditional role as mother and wife whose responsibilities were focused on raising a

large number of children and maintaining the household was common. Children,

especially in Catholic families, were seen as a gift from God, and large families were

welcomed, indeed expected, in immigrant communities. Furthermore, children were a

valued part of the family economy and once they reached an age to work, their wages

contributed to the family income. The Dillingham Commission reported that 40 percent

of the Polish families derived income from their children.[29] Additionally, many

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[28] Richard Jules Oestreicher, *Solidarity and Fragmentation: Working People and Class Consciousness in Detroit, 1875-1900*, The Working Class in American History (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 34-39.
[29] Dillingham, *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, 566.

immigrant parents regarded their children as an investment for their future survival when they were older, as well as a gift from God. An additional source of income that usually fell into the purview of women was tending to the needs of boarders. Like wages from the children, income from boarders was an important part of the revenue stream for immigrant families. Additionally, creating a place for individual immigrants, often recent arrivals, was an important component in establishing a thriving immigrant community. This role as household caretaker often included working as day labor on farms. James Oliver often employed women and girls to work on one of his farms during the planting and harvest seasons.[30] Based on his predilection for noting ethnicity, the fact that he failed to mention their ethnicity leads to the assumption that they were native born working class women. Furthermore, Oliver complained several times about driving "Pollen women" off his corn fields and hiring a guard to keep them from "stealing his foder".[31] Though often overlooked, because much of the work done by women caretakers was not paid in wages, the work was essential for the survival of the immigrant community and the larger working class.

In addition to the role as the household caretaker, there were a number of other traditional wage roles for women in South Bend. One role was that of domestic servant, but this position was primarily available only for German and Swedish immigrants. Because the servant lived and worked in close proximity to their employer, they were greatly scrutinized. On one occasion, JD Oliver's quest for a proper servant required contacting the German Consul in Chicago.[32] His mother, Susan Oliver, may not have

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[30] Oliver, "Journal," 17May83, 18June83, 19June83, 20June83, 21June83, 24May86, 6June87.
[31] Ibid., 30Octr95, 31Oct95, 1Nov95.
[32] Nicar to JD Oliver, 17Aug93, (Northern Indiana Center for History, Copshaholm, Northern Indiana Center for History) Box 11/1/2.

searched as widely, but James Oliver lamented when his wife came down to the factory and took is best "core girl" to work at the house once.[33]

Working for wages in several South Bend factories was another position for women, but typically for younger women that were not yet attached. James Oliver, for example relied on a few "girls" to make cores for iron molding. As early as 1881, he expressed optimism at his "experiment" of using "girls" and expressed range of pleasure[34] and dissatisfaction[35] with his "core girls" throughout the early 1880s. Except for the day he fired seven "girls," Oliver presumably continued his satisfaction with their performance overall and retained them, because he wrote several time through the 1880s and 1890s that he pulled his "core girls" out of is factory to work on his farm planting potatoes, harvesting beets, pulling weeds, or carrots, and picking strawberries.[36] Oliver never explained the work they did specifically, but Elizabeth Beardsley Butler conducted a study on Pittsburgh's women workers in the early 1900s that described conditions for "core girls." In general, she found women were used to make small and simple molds in a room adjacent to the ovens. They were regarded by the men in the shops with some resentment as their wages were between half and a third of the men's wages.[37] There were also other factory jobs in South Bend that were available to women. In 1900, the Wilson Shirt Company employed almost 1,000 women in South Bend's industrial west side.[38] And women had apparently entered offices as early as 1885 when Oliver noted

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[33] Oliver, "Journal," 29Mar89.
[34] Ibid., 14April81 and 22April81.
[35] Ibid., 27April81 and 29April81.,
[36] Ibid., 20March84, 3 Ap84, 14July86, 27July86, 12Oct86, 7June94, 13June94.
[37] Elizabeth Beardsley Butler, *Women and the Trades, 1907-1908*, with introduction by Maurine Weiner Greenwald (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1984; New York: Charities Publication Committee, 1909), 210-14.
[38] Palmer, *South Bend: Crossroads of Commerce*, 99.

"the office women of the Oliver Plow shop had a picnic at the office today."[39] This segment of South Bend's working class was clearly diverse and important to the development of both the immigrant communities and South Bend in general.

In summary, as South Bend industrialized, a unified working class never materialized because schisms developed within it due to the complexities of the relations between immigrant groups, and the industrial relations of the city's manufactures. In one instance, there was general animosity and suspicion between the primarily Protestant native born workers and the primarily Catholic foreign born populations. The foreign born were looked down on by the native born, and in fact occupied the lowest rungs of the economic ladder. This division between the native born and foreign workers was never breached. But this did not create a unified ethnic working class movement either. Instead, immigrants established separate communities that retained their own cultural heritage at the expense of class unity. In addition, the labor relations of the larger industrialists also contributed to the divisions between the ethnic communities. The result was a city with a fractured working class due to the divisions between ethnic groups.

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[39] Oliver, "Journal," 5Aug85.

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Appendix

Dates and names of James Oliver's Iron Works and Plow Manufacturing Company

1855: <u>South Bend Foundry</u>
James Oliver and Harvey Little bought one-half ownership of the South Bend Foundry from Ira Fox, beginning the business venture of James Oliver with the company. Emsley Lamb owned the other half of the company.

1856: <u>Oliver and Little</u>
Oliver and Little purchased the remaining half of the company from Emsley Lamb and changed the name to Oliver and Little.

1860: <u>Oliver, Little and Company</u>
Thelus M. Bissell bought into the company and the name changed to Oliver, Little and Company.

1863: <u>Oliver and Bissell</u>
Harvey Little retired and the company was renamed Oliver and Bissell.

1864: <u>Oliver, Bissell and Company</u>
Wealthy wagon manufacturer George Milburn bought one-third interest and the name changed to Oliver, Bissell and Company.

1868: <u>South Bend Iron Works</u>
Oliver, Bissell and Company reorganized and incorporated for a fifty year period. The name changed to the South Bend Iron Works.