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# The Illinois Populists: Radical Politics at the Township Level, 1892

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THE ILLINOIS POPULISTS:

RADICAL POLITICS AT THE TOWNSHIP LEVEL, 1892

(TITLE)

BY

David Merle Holford

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
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1974

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## CHAPTER I

### Materials and Methods for a Grassroots Study of Populism in Illinois

The Populist Party was, in many respects, the most successful third party in American history. Populist efforts in the election of 1892 climaxed nearly a quarter century of agrarian unrest and marked the culmination of agitation by farm organizations demanding sweeping social, economic, and political reforms. For these reasons, and because Populism was representative of a general social upheaval during the late nineteenth century, the movement has attracted attention from several prominent scholars and from countless lesser figures. John D. Hick's seminal work The Populist Revolt, written in 1931, is perhaps the best known survey effort. However, more recent works such as Norman Pollack's The Populist Response to Industrial American (New York, 1962) and Walter T.K. Nugent's The Tolerant Populists, Kansas Populism and Nativism (Chicago, 1963) although more specialized, are also acclaimed as significant studies. Although not dealing exclusively with Populism, C. Vann Woodward, Richard Hofstadter, Chester McArthur Destler, and more recently Paul Kleppner, have produced books attracting considerable notice. Older,

narrower, but well-known research by Hicks and by Hallie Farmer has been widely read and frequently cited.<sup>1</sup>

Yet while these works are not by any means over-rated, and while they certainly deserve the reputation they enjoy, a great void exists in Populist historiography. Most existing works on Populism might be called "macro-studies." They examine the movement as a social and economic phenomenon with political manifestations on state and national levels. Other studies deal with relationships between the Populists and economic institutions such as the railroads or labor unions, or with the effects of physical conditions like soil type, rainfall, and agricultural production on agrarian discontent. The great oversight in traditional Populist historiography has been a widespread neglect of the movement on a grassroots level.

A general trend toward "history from the bottom up" has recently developed in American historical writing. Works written in such a vein usually deal with a variety of local, social, economic, and political conditions. The basic theory behind such research is that it can uncover at least as much truth about American development as can studies of state or national leaders and their handiwork.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, when speaking of social or economic

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1. The works referred to are: C. Vann Woodward, Tom Watson: Agrarian Rebel (New York, 1938), and Origins of the New South (Baton Rouge, 1951); Richard Hofstadter, Age of Reform, From Bryan to F.D.R. (New York, 1955); Chester McArthur Destler, American Radicalism, 1865-1901 (New London, 1946); Paul Kleppner, The Cross of Culture: A Social Analysis of Midwestern Politics, 1850-1900 (New York, 1970); The journal articles by Hicks and Farmer are noted in the bibliography of this paper.

2. For example, although this work is unrelated to this study, Stephen Thernstrom in Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City

history especially, it is doubtful that any composite national American development exists. Social and economic trends vary, if only by degree, from place to place across the nation. However, grassroots research has provided some interesting insights about typical segments of American society.

One of the motives behind this study is to provide a start toward writing the history of the Populist Movement in Illinois "from the bottom up." Its focus will be both economic and demographic, comparing areas which showed significant Populist strength in the election of 1892 to one another and to areas which did not show such strength.

The Populists did not win in any Illinois counties in 1892 and, according to existing records, carried townships in only three counties--Pike County, on the Mississippi River north of St. Louis; Shelby County, in the east central section of the state; and Marion County, in the heart of southern Illinois.<sup>3</sup> Sufficient tax records do not exist in Shelby County to carry out the kind of grassroots analysis this study undertakes. However, ample source material is available for Marion and Pike counties.<sup>4</sup> In addition to tax records,

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discovered that for Newberryport, Connecticut, at least, social mobility among the laboring class was nonexistent. Even intergenerational mobility was slight. Thernstrom's evidence seems to indicate that the Horatio Alger image of opportunity in mid-nineteenth century America has little if any veracity. Since Thernstrom's pioneering effort other historians, mainly studying urban America, have utilized similar approaches to their topics.

3. The state total for Illinois, and a breakdown of the returns by counties, for 1892, is found in a document compiled by the Illinois Secretary of State, Official Vote of the State of Illinois Cast at the General Election Held November 8, 1892 (Springfield, Ill.: H. W. Rokker, State Printer and Binder), pp. 1-2.

4. Both tax assessors' books and tax collectors' books exist for most townships in Marion and Pike counties in 1892. However only collectors' books

this study relies upon newspapers for the counties being examined, census tabulations for 1870 through 1890, the original population schedules for the Tenth Census, county atlases and plat books, county directories, and county histories--plus, of course, numerous secondary sources.

Several obstacles, some major and some minor, were encountered in the course of this research. Compiling and tabulating raw data from county materials was a difficult and challenging operation. Tax records proved notoriously inaccurate. Assessors' computations were sometimes erroneous and illustrated a high level of arithmetic incompetence. But spelling was worse and presented even greater problems. Mistakes in assessors' tabulations were relatively easy to spot and correct. However, spelling errors involved judgements on whether two names were, in reality, one person. If a man owned real estate in several different sections of a township, his name might be spelled differently each time it was listed in the tax book. Furthermore, even if a surname was spelled consistently throughout the book, the first name was often in so many forms that the tabulation of data was somewhat speculative. For example, the tax on a tract of land might be assessed to James W. Nelson. Subsequent assessments on other property might be assigned to James Nelson and to J.W. Nelson. Were these three names one survived in Shelby County, the third candidate for study. Collectors' books show only the amount of tax assessed and paid, and do not divide real estate holdings into improved and unimproved acreage as assessors' books do. Neither do collectors' books categorize personal property holdings. Thus very little worthwhile analysis can be conducted from them, and, for this reason, it was decided to bypass a township study in Shelby County.



individual owning several pieces of real estate, or were they more than one person, perhaps relatives of the first? Sometimes personal property listings at the end of the assessor's book, and township plats, if they were drawn around 1892, were helpful in making such judgements.

Another problem related to the use of tax records was that residents reporting no personal property holdings were not on the townships' personal property tax lists. This omission meant a tenant farmer with no personal property, such as household furnishings, livestock, or agricultural implements-- items which might conceivably be furnished by the landlord--would appear nowhere on the tax rolls. On the other hand a man owning and farming a small piece of land yet so poor he had no personal property to report, would appear to be a non-resident landowner. Therefore, no way exists to determine the exact number of residents, and hence, the total adult male population-- the number of potential voters--in each township. If manuscripts for the Eleventh Census were available, an exact figure could be easily established. Unfortunately the original schedules for the Eleventh Census were almost totally destroyed by fire and are not on microfilm. Furthermore, schedules of the Twelfth Census (1900), supposed to be released in the spring of 1971, are still unavailable. The only source of raw demographic data is the Tenth Census, taken in 1880. Since this material is separated by twelve years from the period being studied, the research situation is less than ideal. However, it is doubtful that any ideal situation exists. Scholars are often plagued with inadequacies in their source materials--lapses in data, inaccuracy of data,

and conflicting information from different sources, to name a few of the more common problems. If historians are to produce any scholarship, they must not let these obstacles overwhelm them. They must use what they have, and try to make the best of it.

Fortunately, detailed, multi-volume compilations of the Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Censuses are extant. These resources provide a variety of demographic data. Some of the available statistics useful to this study include: age distribution of male residents, by counties; population by race and sex, by counties; number and nativity of foreign born, by counties; and population by minor civil divisions. This material, used in addition to the demographic data present in the tax books, and from the microfilm census schedules for 1880, provide enough evidence to facilitate reasonably accurate estimates about the size and characteristics of the electorate in the areas under examination. The tax records and the census volumes on agriculture, and on wealth, debt, and taxation provide a source of data useful for the economic analysis in this study.

Selecting the areas for examination was a two step process. Since the ultimate goal of this procedure was to uncover instances of Populist strength at the township level, search methods were aimed at minimizing its difficulty. The only available source of township election returns are 1892 newspapers, one for each county. However examining the election returns for every county would be a time-consuming process with a relatively small reward. Thus the first step was to identify those counties where the Peoples Party experienced

some degree of success. In twelve counties, mostly in southern Illinois, the Populists polled over ten percent of the presidential votes--the figure arbitrarily established as the minimum boundary for counties to be further investigated. However, 1892 newspapers no longer exist for five of these twelve counties, and in four more the election summaries show only a strong widespread level of political discontent, but no township falling into the Populist column--leaving three counties with potential for grassroots analysis.<sup>5</sup>

The townships studied in Marion and Pike counties were chosen according to the degrees of political partisanship they exhibited. All townships were studied where the Populist national ticket received more votes than the presidential candidates of both major parties. Any township where the Populists outpolled one of the major parties also was subjected to analysis. As a control, the two townships in each county where the Republicans and Democrats achieved their largest percentages also were included. Thus, in a sense, the "most" Populist, "most" Democratic, and "most" Republican townships were studied. Also included were townships which did not meet any of the above criteria, but where voting pattern were interesting--such as in one Marion County township which the Democrats carried but where the Populists came within three votes of equaling the Republican total.

In all, twelve townships were analyzed in this study. Several economic and demographic variables were examined to determine just what possible

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5. William E. Keller, ed., Newspapers in the Illinois State Historical Library (Springfield, Ill.: Illinois State Historical Library, n.d.). Newspapers covering the 1892 election do not exist for 30 of Illinois' 102 counties.

relationship they had, if any, to Populism in 1892. Some of the factors considered were: degree of land improvement and mechanization of agriculture, land value, rate of tenancy versus land ownership, and population variables. These factors were not only examined for 1892 but changes in them over time were measured. Furthermore, since most probably no single factor explains the incidence of Populism in those townships, variables which seemed to be related were compared to one another.

Two additional things would have been helpful to this study--a computer and a knowledge of the statistical techniques to make it useful. While the methodological level of this work is not quantitatively sophisticated, it improved as time passed. However lack of technical knowledge and the lack of a computer prevented simultaneous consideration of more than two variables when more than two factors may have worked together to promote agrarian discontent. Multivariate analysis may be needed to explain the existence of Populist enclaves.

Chapter Two of this study is a brief survey of the national Populist movement. Chapter Three deals with agrarian discontent in Illinois. The fourth chapter analyzes counties showing some degree of Populist strength. The two following chapters descend to the township level. Chapter Seven assesses the demographic factors related to voting behavior, and the final chapter provides an overview and reassessment of the Populist movement in Illinois.

## CHAPTER II

### From Bacon to Bryan: A Brief Survey of Agrarian Discontent

Agriculture is America's oldest and in many ways her most honored occupation. Few important figures in American history have denounced the farmer, nor have they repudiated his role as a pillar in the economic structure of this nation. For a great many years during the early history of the United States, agriculture was the foundation of the American economy, and farmers were collectively accorded a degree of respect by many persons who accepted Thomas Jefferson's admiration for the yeoman farmer as the example of frugality, industry, and purity. Yet farmers themselves have seldom attached much significance to their laudation, emphasizing instead what they perceive to be an economic condition less than commensurate with their supposed importance to the health and well-being of the nation.

Agrarian discontent in the United States is almost as old as American agriculture. Major rural uprisings date back to 1676 when Nathaniel Bacon led a thousand back-country pioneers against the government of colonial Virginia. A century later, in 1786, Captain Daniel Shays led a band of impoverished western Massachusetts farmers against the state government and the "money power." In 1794, the farmers of western Pennsylvania, motivated by similar economic concerns, defied the newly created federal government and were crushed by an overwhelming army of 13,000 men.

Rural politics in the nineteenth century, while generally less violent, was much more influential to American history. Land hunger, coming chiefly from the western United States, was a major factor driving America to war in 1812 and again in 1846. Although some scholars are beginning to question the role rural America played in the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828, most historians still agree the farm vote was a major factor in creating a new era in American politics.

After the Civil War, agrarian discontent once again played an important role in shaping America. Farm organizations like the Patrons of Husbandry and the Farmers' Alliances on occasion worked for economic reforms and for controls on Big Business. The Grangers, for example, successfully agitated during the 1870's and 1880's for passage of legislation aimed at regulating the railroads--legislation which ultimately led to creation of the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC). Post-Civil War farmers also played an active roll in the political process. Both the Greenback Party and the Populist Party were primarily agrarian movements. While by no means successful political organizations, these parties could claim some accomplishments. The Populists, in particular, were the most successful third party in American history, electing several western governors, senators, and congressmen in 1892 and 1894. Although the Populists did not accomplish their long range goals, they did help bring about a major redirection within the Democratic Party in 1896.

At the end of the American Revolution, Jefferson expressed the hope that the nation would always be dominated by agriculture, depending on Europe for

manufactured products. In antebellum America it seemed that Jefferson's hopes would be realized, as the agricultural frontier moved westward. In the 1850's farmers poured out of the Ohio Valley into the sparsely settled areas west of the Mississippi River. During the decade before the Civil War, the population of Minnesota multiplied by twenty-nine. The population of Missouri doubled, and in Iowa it tripled, while in Nebraska, Kansas and Dakota territories grew from almost nothing to 107,000, 29,000 and 5,000 respectively.<sup>1</sup> But by 1850, American industry had already challenged agriculture and by 1900, the farmer was of only secondary importance to the nation's economy. Census figures for 1860 indicate that three fifths of the persons in the United States lived on farms. By 1900, this figure declined to one third. However, it would be erroneous to conclude farming was a dying way of life after the Civil War. Even though the weight of population distribution shifted against agriculture, the total farm population continued to climb between 1870 and 1900; the most striking growth again occurred in the trans-Mississippi West.<sup>2</sup> Thus, while the agrarian population did not grow nearly as fast as urban America and while Eastern agriculture was on a slow general decline, the rapid settlement of new territory and improved farming methods continued to make rural areas a vital part of American life.

The agricultural boom which swept the trans-Mississippi West after the Civil War resulted from two main factors, railroads and cheap land. The opening

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1. Fred A. Shannon, The Farmers' Last Frontier: Agriculture, 1860-1897 (New York: Harper and Row, 1945), p. 33.

2. Ibid, pp. 349-52.

of this vast unsettled expanse of Western land was itself closely related to railroad development of the area. Although the idea of railroads in the West was an old one, the Civil War delayed implementation of any specific construction plans. After the war, western railroads were constructed with government assistance, either by cash grants or by gifts of land--alternating sections along the railroads' right-of-way which it sold to settlers to repay construction costs.

Both the railroads and territorial or state legislatures encouraged settlement and attempted to destroy myths which had created an unfavorable image of the West as the Great American Desert. Each western state had an immigration board, and many counties employed immigration commissioners. Towns and cities through chambers of commerce, real estate boards, and other similar organizations industriously presented the claims of their localities. They published pamphlets in a variety of languages and distributed them throughout the United States and in Europe. They encouraged foreign immigration and in the 1870's eastern depressions speeded the rate at which the discontented moved westward, lured by the propaganda of railroad agents and other western boosters.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps a bigger lure than conditions in the East or in Europe was the availability of western land. Railroads purposely kept land prices low, preferring to make their money from business the settlers would give them,

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3. Solon Justus Buck, The Granger Movement, A Study of Agricultural Organization and Its Political, Economic, and Social Manifestations, 1870-1880, Bison Books (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), p. 5, and Hallie Farmer, "The Economic Background of Frontier Populism," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, X (March, 1924), pp. 406, 409.



rather than from the sale of land to those settlers. Railroads reasoned that low land prices would speed settlement and would be more beneficial in the long run. Furthermore, not only were railroad land prices low, terms were easy. The Kansas Pacific, for example, refunded a percentage of passage money to immigrants who purchased land. The Union Pacific offered credit. Settlers paid one-tenth of the total price at the time of sale, but the rest could be deferred over eleven years at seven percent interest. However, for the first three years, only the interest had to be paid. If the buyer purchased his land over a shorter period, a reduction was made in the price. Much cheaper public land was also available under the Homestead Act, Preemption Act, and Timber Culture Act, although once the railroads came through, it did not last long, except in the arid western plains regions. Even so, between 1860 and 1900 about 400,000 families got such land and kept it for themselves.<sup>4</sup>

As public land vanished, and as railroad land fell into the hands of speculators, a boom developed. Increasing prosperity in the West caused capital to move in that direction. Good crop yields and high prices encouraged many Easterners to invest their money in western mortgages. Furthermore, as cheap land became more scarce, the need for borrowed money became greater. Interest rates were attractive to the potential investor, ranging from six to ten percent on real estate and from ten to eighteen percent on chattel

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4. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, p. 55, Farmer, "Background of Frontier Populism," p. 407, and John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt, A History of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party, Bison Books (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), pp. 1-18.

mortgages. Since profit was to be made from mortgage loans, and since western prosperity made these loans seem safe, investors were plentiful. So were borrowers, many of whom were expansionist and extravagant in the face of easy credit and overmortgaged their property. However, competition was greater among lenders than among borrowers.<sup>5</sup>

Even those farmers who homesteaded public land needed capital. It has been estimated that during the 1850's it cost a minimum of a thousand dollars, in addition to the cost of the land, to bring forty acres of Illinois ground into production.

There is no reason to believe that farm-making costs diminished after settlement crossed the Missouri. The geographer classifies eastern Kansas and Nebraska as prairie country, much akin to Illinois. As settlement moved into the plains country of central and western Kansas and Nebraska, the "cash capital costs" of settlement probably rose.<sup>6</sup>

On the plains frame or log houses cost more, as did fencing. In Illinois a farmer generally obtained his water from a nearby stream or, at worst, from a shallow well. Deeper and more costly wells were necessary on the plains. Even fuel was a problem there. The only satisfactory substitute for wood was coal, which had to be purchased from the railroad station. Plains farms required more machinery. Only by using larger horse-drawn machines could the plains soil be worked while its moisture content was adequate.<sup>7</sup>

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5. An extensive discussion of farm financing is found in Alan G. Bogue, Money at Interest: The Farm Mortgage on the Middle Border, Bison Books (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), pp. 1-18.

6. Ibid, p. 2.

7. Ibid, p. 3, and Farmer, "Background of Frontier Populism," p. 411.

Thus, through easy credit, agricultural machinery, and plentiful land, the West developed. Yet each of the factors which aided and encouraged expansion of agriculture also worked to the eventual detriment of the farmer. Chief among these detrimental factors, and related to most of them, was the railroad.

The railroad benefited the farmer by supplying cheap land for settlement and by providing transportation into undeveloped areas. However this benefit was often a mixed blessing, for it induced development of some areas of only marginal agricultural value, where settlement should not have occurred. Potential settlers were, of course, concerned about problems other than Indians, wild animals, and disease. They knew about agricultural necessities such as the amount of rainfall, length of the growing season, and the availability of building materials. But nowhere in the West, except in the mountainous areas, is there an abrupt break between regions. They gradually fade into one another. So while one area might have adequate rainfall, another place a hundred miles from it may not--and in some parts of the West the difference of a few inches in rainfall, or of a few weeks when it occurs, can have a pronounced effect on the crop which can be grown.<sup>8</sup>

Railroads linked the rural farmer with the industrial areas of the East. Coupled with easy credit, this link enabled him to purchase machinery to work his holding and to increase its production. However, the expense of machinery reduced the percentage of farm owners and increased the percentage

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8. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, p. 21.

of tenants and workers. The farmer who during prosperous times purchased such machinery on credit often damaged himself in the same way as one who overextended in expanding his landholdings. During hard times he was as readily a victim of financial disaster as were those persons too poor or unprogressive to acquire the new implements, and as were others who had expanded operations too rapidly during the brief periods of prosperity. All "soon joined the ranks of the victims of the land monopolists, those remaining on the land no longer being free agents." <sup>9</sup>

The same railroads which opened up new areas to settlement and carried agricultural machinery to those areas also carried the crops back to market. Opening up new fertile western lands, creating more farms and farmers (including many immigrants), mechanizing agriculture, and giving formerly remote areas access to markets resulted in tremendous overproduction. Farm prices hit rock bottom in the years after the Civil War. Farmers countered this trend by producing more, not seeing overproduction at the root of their problems. For example, while production of such staple crops as corn, wheat, and cotton increased from 1866 to 1880 in acreage planted, in bushels produced, and in total value, the price per bushel declined just as steadily. <sup>10</sup> When the evils of overproduction were presented to farmers, they refused to accept that explanation, preferring instead to blame others for rural problems.

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9. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, p. 146.

10. Ibid., pp. 291-303, Buck, Granger Movement, pp. 24-34 and Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 54-58. Both Shannon and Buck provide numerous graphs and tables detailing and illustrating the above-mentioned trends. In addition to the pages cited in Shannon, see pages 415 and 417 in the Appendix.

Railroads and rate abuses became chief targets of the farmers' frustration. Since railroads sold their federal land grants at low prices to make profit from the carrying trade which would develop as those grants were settled and put into production, controversial practices developed. To avoid becoming mere trunk lines, shipping a farmer's crop to a city where it could be transferred to a cheaper competitive carrier, railroads often charged the same price, or more, for a short haul as they did for carrying the produce all the way to market. Thus a farmer could not save any money by transferring his cargo enroute. Furthermore, shipping rates between local points west of Chicago, where the vast expanse of land often caused one road to have a monopoly in an area, were much greater than such rates in the East, where competition existed between carriers.

Another monopolistic factor was the trend toward consolidation of lines, and hence, toward less competition. This pattern too was especially common in the West and was partly because many western lines, financially unstable like farmers, took advantage of boom periods and became insolvent during hard times. Such companies were absorbed by more successful and more wisely managed lines.

Stock-watering was another evil vigorously condemned in rural America. By increasing the paper value of the company, the railroad management raised the ceiling on its limits of indebtedness. Since most farmers believed that railroad funds came from bond issues rather than stock sales, and that railroads charged high rates to pay off these bonds while they passed out stock

for nothing, farmers were most vocal in their objections to such behavior.

Farmers vociferously opposed railroads giving rebates to preferred volume customers, since this practice caused the lines to concentrate their attention and services in large towns, at the expense of small ones. Rebates also widened the economic gap between prosperous and successful farmers and the poor ones. Farmers hated such trends, and also objected to the favoritism shown by railroads' free passes to government officials. Radicals suspected such practices compromised the position of these officials and allowed them to tolerate railroad abuses. Aggravating these grievances was the fact that many western areas had actually floated bonds and assumed a public indebtedness to help the railroads in their infancy--and had been abused in return.

Combined with railroad abuses were artificially low crop prices, due not only to overproduction, but accomplished indirectly through undergrading the farmers' grain at the elevators where it was loaded. When the elevator operators sold the grain at its true grade, and for a higher price at market, they realized a large profit, part of which rightfully belonged to the farmers. The railroads permitted, and even condoned, such practices by forcing farmers to use particular elevators. Many times the companies would not provide cars for any loading operation except at particular elevators. In other instances the railroads granted elevator operators monopolies along the right-of-way,

or even owned the elevators themselves. In such cases, the farmer had to take what was offered to him.<sup>11</sup>

Despite such conditions, westward migration continued. By 1887 the boom was at its height. The West was overpopulated and far more capital had been invested there than could ever be returned. At the height of the boom, the bubble burst and the collapse came. In some areas, such as in Kansas, the reaction was sudden and swift. In others, the decline was more gradual. But in the entire trans-Mississippi West prosperity vanished and did not return for a decade.

The immediate cause of the collapse was drought, resulting in widespread crop failure. In only two of the ten years between 1887 and 1897 did the western states attain their normal average rainfall. In five of the dry years, the drought was so severe that it caused almost total crop failure. In 1887, only half the wheat in Kansas could be harvested. In certain areas of the Dakotas the wheat crop averaged only 1.72 bushels per acre in 1889. Settlers in some Nebraska counties harvested no crop at all between 1887 and 1894. In 1894, sixty-one of the ninety-one Nebraska counties produced no crop whatsoever.<sup>12</sup>

Further aggravating the farmers' plight was further declines in crop prices, as farm lands to the east, unaffected by drought, continued to produce. Corn which sold for sixty-three cents a bushel in 1881 dropped to twenty-eight

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11. Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 60-78, Buck, Granger Movement, pp. 9-19, and Hallie Farmer, "The Railroads and Frontier Populism," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIII (December, 1926), pp. 387-97.

12. Farmer, "Economic Background of Frontier Populism," pp. 416-18.

cents in 1890. The price of wheat fell from \$1.19 a bushel in 1881 to forty-nine cents in 1894. In fact, during the lean years in the West per acre production costs exceeded the selling prices for both of these grains.<sup>13</sup>

The financial problems of western settlers during the late Eighties and the early Nineties were even more severe because most farmers were heavily mortgaged. The mortgage debt of the western states equalled one-fourth the value of all their farm land. There were counties in Kansas and South Dakota where ninety percent of the land was mortgaged.<sup>14</sup>

Farmers whose crops were taken by the drought could not make interest payments on their mortgages and lost their farms. In Kansas alone, over eleven thousand farm mortgages were foreclosed between 1889 and 1893, and in fifteen counties loan companies owned seventy-five to ninety-five percent of the land by 1895. In addition, much land was forfeited and vacated without the formality of foreclosure, as thousands of families abandoned their farms to return east. Eighteen thousand prairie schooners crossed the Missouri River to Omaha in 1891. Entire towns melted away.<sup>15</sup>

Emigration was most pronounced in the western sections of the affected states. While Nebraska showed a slight population gain between 1890 and 1900, thirty-five counties lost over sixty-seven thousand persons. South Dakota

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13. Farmer, "Economic Background of Frontier Populism," p. 418, and Raymond C. Miller, "The Background of Populism in Kansas," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XI (March, 1925), p. 476.

14. Farmer, "Economic Background of Frontier Populism," pp. 419, 420 and Miller, "Background of Populism in Kansas," pp. 476-79.

15. Farmer, "Economic Background of Frontier Populism," pp. 420-22, and Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, pp. 307, 308.



experienced a similar situation. While the state was gaining 2,167 persons, twenty-six counties lost 30,498 people. Twelve western counties suffered half the state loss, two counties losing half their population.<sup>16</sup>

Against this background the agrarian reform movement took on a new urgency. Although active farmers' groups had existed since the early years after the Civil War, they now became more numerous and more political in their aims.

The first of the important farm organizations after the Civil War was the National Grange or, as it was also known, the Patrons of Husbandry. Founded in 1867, the Grange organized around the premise that farmers suffered from an inferior social, political, and intellectual position in American society. Farmers sensed their position as tillers of the soil had suffered a rapid decline in status. However, they also knew this decline was not so much a direct one on the part of farmers as it was due to the rapid increase in advantages for those engaged in other occupations. In an era of budding business organizations, manufacturers' associations, and trade unions, farmers realized the need for organization and for presenting a united front in their own defense.<sup>17</sup>

The National Grange worked toward all these ends, and the original social and educational features of the Grange were soon secondary to its economic and political activities. These included cooperative stores and grain elevators, and even an attempt to manufacture their own agricultural machinery.<sup>18</sup> But Granger

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16. Farmer, "Economic Background of Frontier Populism," pp. 420-22.

17. Buck, The Granger Movement, pp. 34-39.

18. Ibid., pp. 360-70.

activity against the railroads was the organization's most significant and most successful attempt to improve the farmers' situation.

Working on the state level, the Grange waged a successful campaign against railroad abuses in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, and, to a lesser degree, in several other states. In general, the Granger Laws, as they were called, aimed at regulating railroad freight rates, passenger fares, and grain warehouses and elevators. While the rate provisions were invariably repealed and replaced by more innocuous legislation prohibiting only rate discrimination, and although all such regulations were universally opposed by the carriers, railroad rates did in fact decline during the height of Granger activity.<sup>19</sup>

The success of the National Grange and the deplorable condition of agriculture gave rise to numerous farm organizations. Among the most significant of these were the Farmers' Alliances. Like the Grange, the Farmers' Alliances were a loosely knit confederation of state and local groups. Lacking cohesive central leadership, the Alliances became constantly involved in internal squabbles and in factional differences. Yet they accomplished some important goals for the farm movement. The Farmers' Alliances heavily involved themselves in cooperative economic movements. These operations went far beyond the farm store and grain elevator activities of the Grange. The Southern Alliance attempted a huge cooperative effort to control both

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19. Buck, The Granger Movement, pp. 124-238, passim.

selling of crops and purchase of farm supplies. In this regard, the Farmers' Alliance Exchange was organized. At first this organization merely pooled the grain of individual members and, for a commission, attempted to demand a fair price. It also tried to save farmers money on agricultural implements by purchasing machinery in quantity, passing on to individual farmers the savings realized. However the Exchange was undone when it schemed to provide its own credit to Alliance members and instead provided for its own financial ruin.<sup>20</sup>

During the height of Alliance activity and, not coincidentally, during the depth of farm depression, the agrarian reform movement took on definite political overtones. While the farm organizations did not repudiate third party movements, they viewed the political allegiance of individual members as a matter of personal decision. Although many former Grangers and members of other farm protest groups had supported the Greenback Party in 1878, no agrarian organization had officially and openly called upon its membership to abandon the two major parties. Both the Grange and the Farmers' Alliances originally planned to work within the two party system and ultimately expected to capture one, hopefully the Democratic, by placing farmer candidates on its ticket, and by then electing them to high public office.<sup>21</sup>

By 1890, farm organizations began to perceive this plan of action was not working out. This feeling was due in part to the frustrations of a continuing

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20. Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 133-39.

21. Ibid., pp. 96, 141-42, 147-49.

agricultural depression and to a consequent impatience with the painfully slow rate of change which farmers felt necessary to improve their condition. They came to believe that members of their ranks who had been sent as agrarian representatives to Congress or to the Senate were being corrupted by a party system which was inherently evil and hopelessly dominated by greedy eastern capitalists.<sup>22</sup>

The idea of uniting not only the various farm groups, but also labor unions in an effort to capture for the poor working people some power and voice in the federal government was discussed in National Alliance meetings in both 1888 and 1889. The formal presentation of a plan for a third party took place at a National Alliance meeting in December 1890 at Ocala, Florida. However, the idea of a third party was not well received by all factions present at the Ocala meeting. Southerners feared such a move would destroy the white supremacist one-party system in their section and that a split in the ranks of white farmers would augment the power of southern blacks. Still others present at Ocala retained confidence in the ability of a united farm bloc to capture the national Democratic Party in 1892. However Northern Alliance members, buoyed by radical representatives from the drought-ridden and devastated trans-Mississippi West, generally favored a third party movement.<sup>23</sup>

At the annual meeting of the Northern Alliance held at Omaha, Nebraska the following month, six fundamental demands were presented. The most

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22. Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 151-52.

23. John Hicks, "The Birth of the Populist Party," Minnesota History, IX (September, 1928), pp. 226-28.

important of these called for free silver; government ownership of railroads and telegraphs; abolition of national banks and substitution of direct paper note issues; direct election of the president, vice president, and senators; and the secret ballot.<sup>24</sup>

The debate over a third party came to a head in Cincinnati in May, 1891. Delegates from all states and of all political persuasions descended upon the Cincinnati meeting, but it was dominated by western radicals and by "professional" third-party men. A major conflict emerged at the meeting between the faction led by Ignatius Donnelly of Minnesota, who wanted to form a third party on the spot, and the group led by James B. Weaver of Iowa, who wanted only to draft resolutions, but who held out the possibility of a third party if neither the Republicans nor the Democrats proved responsive to the resolutions produced. The result of the conflict was a compromise. The convention formed the People's Party and its executive committee was directed to attend a proposed conference of reform organizations in St. Louis in February, 1892. If possible, the committee was to enlist these other organizations in a united political effort. If this arrangement could not be made, the committee was directed to call a national convention by June 1, 1892 to name a presidential ticket, and the Populists would go it alone.<sup>25</sup>

In November of 1891, the executive committee of the Populist Party visited the meeting of the Southern Alliance supreme council. Urged by other

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24. Hicks, "The Birth of the Populist Party," p. 229.

25. Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 211-16.

reform leaders who also attended, Southern Alliance officers, although still distressed about the possibility of splitting the white vote in their section, adopted the Northern Alliance's wait-and-see attitude. They instructed Alliance congressmen to boycott party caucuses in Washington.

The decisive meeting came at St. Louis in February, 1892. Present were leaders of the Alliance, the Knights of Labor, Anti-Monopolists, Prohibitionists, People's Party, Reform Press, and Women's Alliance. In all, eight hundred delegates representing twenty-one different organizations were awarded seats. While the majority of delegates at the St. Louis convention favored a third party, a highly vocal minority opposed such a move and threatened to bolt the meeting if it were attempted. To preserve harmony, the convention did nothing more than draw up a platform, including a list of demands upon the national government. Having accomplished this, the convention adjourned. However, a majority of the delegates remained to hear Donnelly and Weaver again debate whether or not the new party should precede before giving the two major parties a chance to react to Populist demands. Weaver's policy of delay was adopted and further action on the new party was postponed again until July 4, 1892, when a meeting was to be held at Omaha. In the meantime, local organizations were requested to meet, to ratify the St. Louis platform, and to select delegates to state nominating conventions.

The Republican Party met at Minneapolis on June 7, 1892 and, as expected, nominated the incumbent President Benjamin Harrison. The Democratic National

Convention convened in Chicago on June 21, nominating Grover Cleveland once again. Agrarian groups found little to please them in either candidate or platform.

Meeting in Omaha in July, the national convention of the People's Party experienced little difficulty in securing either a platform or a candidate. The platform had been constructed at the St. Louis conference, and in the interim the leading contender for the presidential nomination, Colonel L. L. Polk, president of the Southern Alliance died. An attempt to draft Judge Walter Q. Gresham of Illinois failed when he withdrew his name from consideration. This development meant the nomination would go by default to one of the old third-party leaders of the Northwest. Since many people considered Donnelly to be far too radical, only James B. Weaver, who had been the Greenback Party candidate in 1880, remained. He was paired on the ticket with General James G. Field of Virginia. Thus two retired generals, one Union and one Confederate, made up the Populist ticket in 1892.<sup>26</sup>

The results in the November election was viewed with mixed emotion by the Populists. For a new party, they did very well. By polling over a million votes and by gaining twenty-two electoral votes, Weaver became the first third-party candidate to break into the electoral college since the Civil War. The People's Party presidential ticket carried the states of Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, and Kansas. It lost Nebraska by less than a hundred votes. In

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26. A detailed account of the St. Louis Convention is found in Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 223-37, and in "Birth of the Populist Party," pp. 238-47.

addition the Populists elected governors in Kansas, North Dakota and Colorado. Eight to ten congressmen succeeded because of Populist support and a considerable number of others owed election to deals made with the People's Party. Furthermore, about fifty state officials and fifteen hundred county officials and state legislators gained office on the Populist ticket.<sup>27</sup>

However, cold analysis shows that the strength of the People's Party was not what its supporters believed it to be. Populist victories in several western states were accomplished only through fusion with the Democrats. Furthermore, Populist strength in Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming was due more to the fact that these states had economies dependent on silver mining, than to any popular sympathy with the Populist platform. The People's Party made no mark at all in the South, East, or Middle-West. Even in his home state of Iowa, Weaver polled less than five percent of the vote. Failure in the South was due in part to the presence of a complete Populist slate on the ballot. While white southern voters might have been willing to cast their votes for the presidential candidate of a third party, they were not willing to destroy the Democratic Party on the state and local levels, thus allowing a successful black-Republican coalition. Farmers in the East and Mid-West, unaffected by drought, had no protest vote to register.<sup>28</sup>

Events of the next few years aided the Populist cause. Grover Cleveland, returned to the White House in 1892, was a sound money man, and his gold

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27. Hicks, The Populist Revolt, pp. 261-69.

28. Ibid.



standard principles rose above all his other policies--as illustrated by events following the Panic of 1893. When, in 1894, an army of jobless workers descended on Washington, and when in that same year federal troops were used to break the Pullman Strike in Chicago, Cleveland did nothing except veto a bill to coin bullion stored in the Treasury vaults, thus prolonging the deflationary movement which was partly responsible for unemployment and labor unrest. As might be expected under these circumstances, the Populists did well in the midterm election of 1894, increasing their vote by fifty percent, and gathering some labor support. Yet the Republicans regained control in many western areas. Like the Democrats, the Republicans were beginning to talk like the Populists.<sup>29</sup>

The election of 1894 showed the Democrats that their party was losing touch with the masses. In the West in particular, most of their supporters had gone over to the Republicans or the Populists. They solved their problem and bid for Populist support by nominating William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska in 1896, and by adopting a free-silver plank. While the Democratic presidential candidate was acceptable to the Populists, they could not support that party's choice of vice president, a conservative eastern banker, shipbuilder, and railroad president, Arthur Sewall. Instead they nominated a noted agrarian radical, Tom Watson of Georgia. The resulting confusion on both the ballot and the issues allowed the election of the conservative Republican candidate, William McKinley of Ohio. Although Bryan's 6,468,000 votes were more than

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29. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, p. 322.

any candidate had previously received, and more than any Democrat would get for the next twenty years, the election of McKinley meant the continuation of Cleveland's fiscal policy. It also meant the end of any hope for meaningful agrarian reform. Bryan would try again but he would find the agrarian issues were dead.

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30. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, pp. 323-26. For a more detailed discussion of events after 1892 see Paul W. Glad, McKinley, Bryan, and the People (New York, J.B. Lippencott Co., 1964), and Robert F. Durden, The Climax of Populism (Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, 1966).

## CHAPTER III

### Agriculture and Agrarian Discontent in Illinois

Even though the People's Party showed very little strength in Illinois in 1892, the state played a major role in the development of American agriculture and in the growth of agrarian discontent. In many respects, events in the state were closely related to western conditions. Increasing land sales indicated that Illinois was one of the biggest population losers in the great migration westward. The original exodus from the state diminished after 1876 but began anew in 1884.<sup>1</sup>

Railroads, big enemy of the western farmer, were similarly perceived by the agrarian element of Illinois. Long haul-short haul abuses were not unique to the trans-Mississippi West, and even though rates declined in the Seventies, Illinois farmers thought transportation charges were still too high. In 1880, for example, it cost eighty-six cents to ship a two hundred pound hog from Chicago to New York, or ten percent of its total value. To send a bushel of wheat over the same route cost twenty cents. But, to ship that wheat only 110 miles from Rock Falls to Chicago cost ten to twelve cents. Furthermore, the Eastern Illinois Railroad charged the same rate for hauling produce from Chicago to East St. Louis as it did from Chicago to Rossville, a distance only one-third as far. As in the West, Illinois railroads "gave poor service,

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1. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, pp. 34, 39.

weighed commodities incorrectly, cooperated with monopolistic elevators, and outraged farmers by refusing to put up fences along the tracks or to pay damages." <sup>2</sup>

Illinois farmers, like their western counterparts, suspected that free railroad passes to officials compromised their integrity and influenced both state legislators and members of the Illinois State Board of Railroad and Warehouse Commissioners. In 1885, the state board obviously favored the railroads at the expense of the farmers.

Equally distasteful to Illinois farmers were trusts and monopolies of all kinds. In particular, they resented local combinations of grain buyers, who united to hold down prices. They held a similar attitude toward terminal elevator operators in Chicago who were constantly accused of undergrading wheat. Livestock growers complained because they were charged double the market price for feed their animals consumed in the Chicago stockyards. Furthermore, the farmers suspected that handlers in the yards deliberately damaged animals so they would not bring full market price. Not only did farmers feel that they were being mistreated as producers, but with good reason believed they were being taken advantage of as consumers also. Most implement manufacturers sold their products only through agents or county dealers who obtained their profit by raising prices twenty-five or thirty percent. <sup>3</sup>

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2. Roy V. Scott, The Agrarian Movement in Illinois 1880-1896, Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, Vol. 52 (Urbana, Ill.: The University of Illinois Press, 1962).

3. Ibid., pp. 16, 17.

A more basic farm grievance was that agrarian interests were under-represented in state government. Although over half Illinois' population in 1880 lived in rural areas, only fourteen of the 369 state legislators were farmers. Farmers felt this lack of representation meant their interests were not being well served. Nowhere was this dissatisfaction more apparent than in the Illinois tax system, under which farmers felt forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden. They suspected that rural property, which was in plain sight, was more often assessed than the hard-to-find stocks, bonds, and safes of urban residents.<sup>4</sup>

After 1881, falling prices accentuated these grievances. Price trends for Illinois produce paralleled those for western crops. The cereal-growing central and south portions of the state were affected as the price for corn, wheat, and oats fell from 1881 levels of 53 cents, \$1.22, and 43 cents to lows of 18 cents, 45 cents, and 15 cents respectively by the mid-1890's. Northern farmers and some central Illinois operators who raised livestock were better off, since prices for farm animals did not decline as rapidly or as much as prices for cereal crops.<sup>5</sup> Unlike the West, Illinois was unaffected by drought and continued through the entire last half of the nineteenth century as a top grain-producing state. The state led the nation in wheat production from 1859 to 1879, and in corn production for every decade between 1860 and 1900 except the Eighties.<sup>6</sup>

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4. Scott, The Agrarian Movement in Illinois 1880-1896, p. 19.

5. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, pp. 296, 297.

6. Ibid., p. 163.

Allan G. Bogue's study of farm mortgages, Money at Interest, helps illustrate the relatively stable circumstances of Illinois agriculture compared to western agrarian conditions.<sup>7</sup> Money at Interest examines the activities of Ira Davenport and Sons, land speculators and money lenders active in Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, the Dakota Territory, and Illinois. In Illinois, the Davenports made loans over a longer period of time, for greater amounts, and with a smaller percentage of foreclosures than they did in any other place they conducted business--Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakota Territory. Only in Nebraska did they make a slightly greater number of loans. But those loans were for significantly smaller amounts, and had a higher percentage of foreclosures, than did Illinois loans.

TABLE 1

## LOANS MADE BY IRA DAVENPORT AND SONS

State	Years in business	Number of loans	Average amount of loan	Percent Foreclosed
Illinois	31	1379	\$1870	1.45
Kansas	25	571	600	6.70
Nebraska	30	1610	700	3.00
Iowa	13	878	631	7.40
Dakota Terr.	3	140	314	23.60

Source: Allan G. Bogue, Money at Interest: the Farm Mortgage on the Middle Border, pp. 13, 29, 61.

7. See footnote 5 in Chapter II for the complete citation.

Table 1 shows the Davenports definitely had more confidence in Illinois agriculture than they did in western agrarian development--and with good reason, for in Illinois their returns were steadiest and greatest. Yet the table above does not tell the entire story.

The Davenports started lending money in Illinois, Iowa and Kansas in the same year, 1868. In Nebraska they started three years later. But their success in these four states varied greatly. In Nebraska they made a large number of loans each year from 1871 to 1899. But the hard times in that state during the drought are obvious since 23 of 48 foreclosures in Nebraska came between 1881 and 1891. The worst single year was 1883, when 13 landholdings were forfeited.<sup>8</sup> In Kansas, there were no foreclosures during the drought, but this was because very few loans were made in that state after 1883. In fact, only 21 of Davenports' 571 Kansas loans were made between 1883 and 1903. A combination of foresight, luck, and loss of confidence in their ability to make money in Kansas was responsible for their good fortune in averting setbacks there.<sup>9</sup>

Dakota investments brought financial disaster to the Davenports. During the three years they loaned money in the Dakota Territory, they financed 140 mortgages. However, in 1880 they were forced to foreclose on 27 of those loans and did no business in the Dakota Territory after that date.<sup>10</sup> The Davenports' experience in Dakota was partly responsible for bringing their

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8. Bogue, Money at Interest, p. 61.

9. Ibid., p. 47, 57, 58.

10. Ibid., p. 29.

business in Iowa to an end. The company made 878 loans in Iowa between 1868 and 1880, with a high but not intolerable foreclosure rate of 7.4 percent. But this high rate coupled with the Dakota disaster, their involvement in a usury suit, and doubts about the honesty and capability of their Iowa agent, caused the Davenports to cease operations in that state after 1880.<sup>11</sup>

In Illinois the picture was entirely different. Illinois investment was by far the most stable for the Davenports--only 20 foreclosures on 1379 loans. Furthermore, conditions in Illinois during the late Eighties were so good that they made no foreclosures whatsoever, although they negotiated 186 loans between 1884 and 1891, 63 during the peak drought years in the West.<sup>12</sup> While no sweeping conclusions can be accurately drawn from the investments of only one company, there is no reason to believe that the Davenports' operation was not representative of most such companies during that period. If the Davenports were typical land speculators and investors, then their dealings indicate that agrarian conditions in Illinois were much more sound and stable than those on the Middle Border.

Another factor differentiating Illinois agriculture from its western counterpart was the state's relatively high rate of tenancy. Between 1880 and 1900, about one of three Illinois farmers was either a sharecropper or a cash tenant. Although the rate of farm tenancy in Illinois was consistently higher than in the five western states, it showed much more stability. Kansas,

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11. Bogue, Money at Interest, pp. 31-43.

12. Ibid., p. 13



Iowa, and South Dakota, in particular, experienced a marked increase in farm tenancy throughout all or part of those twenty years while tenancy conditions in Illinois changed but very little. This discrepancy was probably due to differing conditions in the two regions. In the West where good land was originally plentiful and cheap, low tenancy rates could be expected. Most settlers could afford to own their farms, particularly when sources for loans were plentiful. Illinois was settled much earlier, however, and by 1880 not much good cheap land was available. Poor farmers in Illinois, not able to purchase good land there, were forced into the role of renters. Furthermore, as hard times struck agriculture, compounded in the West by the drought, many over-extended farmers lost their holdings. If they continued to occupy the land, they did so as tenants of their original creditor or of a person who

TABLE 2  
COMPARATIVE FARM TENANCY RATES  
FOR SIX STATES: 1880 - 1900

State	Percentage of Tenants		
	1880	1890	1900
Illinois	31.4	34.0	39.3
Kansas	16.3	28.2	35.2
Nebraska	18.0	24.7	26.9
Iowa	23.8	28.1	34.9
North Dakota	..	7.0	8.5
South Dakota	..	13.2	21.8

Source: Fred A. Shannon, The Farmer's Last Frontier: Agriculture, 1860-1897, p. 418.

purchased the property after the grantor foreclosed. This trend is clearly shown by the increasing tenancy rates in Table 2. In Illinois the agrarian economic situation was more secure, as the Davenport data and Table 2 indicate. The low number of foreclosures in Illinois was reflected in a relatively stable tenancy rate just as the high number of foreclosures in the West, as times grew tough, resulted in increasing farm tenancy, changing farmers who were over-extended from the ranks of owners to the ranks of renters.

In addition to the relative stability of Illinois tenancy rate, it should also be noted that, compared to the western states, Illinois farm tenants showed a greater tendency toward sharecropping instead of cash rental.<sup>13</sup> This fact in itself is significant. Under the typical sharecropping agreement, the landlord allowed the tenant to occupy and work the tract in return for a percentage of the crop when it was harvested. Furthermore, it was not unusual for the landlord to advance money or credit for farm implements, and even for seed and fertilizer, to the tenant. Such an arrangement was an ideal one for the tenant farmer during hard times. Unlike the cash tenant or the mortgagee, who both had fixed expenditures for land, the sharecropper's expenses varied somewhat with his success as a farmer. After poor harvests, while he would not have much to show for his work, neither would his debt be overwhelming since he paid his landlord only a fixed percentage of his crop. Thus, the financial obligations of the sharecropper were always proportional to his earnings. The cash tenant and the landowner, on the other hand, were required

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13. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, p. 418. A good discussion of tenant farming and sharecropping, though slanted toward southern agriculture, is found in Shannon's book, pp. 88-95.

to make a specific money payment to their creditors, no matter how good or how bad their harvests had been. In good years, the cash tenant and landowning farmer could fare much better than the sharecropper whose own profit never exceeded a set percentage of his crop. But in retrospect, given the condition of agriculture after the Civil War, sharecropping seems to have been the best opportunity for a farmer. Also in retrospect, tenant farming in general was advantageous. When hard times struck, the tenant had far less to lose by deserting the tract he was working than did the farmer who was mortgaged to the land and had money invested in it. Farm tenancy thus ameliorated the hardships agricultural depression brought down upon the farmer, and the circumstances of farm tenancy in Illinois can be viewed as further evidence of the relatively satisfactory condition of the state's agrarian economy. Hence, it is difficult to understand why so many organizations spurred by agrarian discontent, and dedicated to agrarian reform, got their start in Illinois. Yet all major organizations dedicated to agrarian reform, whether native to Illinois or not, were exceptionally strong in that state.

The National Grange, although originating in Minnesota, had an especially active organization in Illinois. Not only did the Illinois Grange obtain some unprecedented state railroad legislation in the 1870's, but some Grangers helped establish an autonomous parallel political organization, the Independent Reform Party, which achieved tremendous local successes in 1873. The party's candidates appeared on the ballot in 66 of the state's 102 counties, and carried 53 of them. The Republicans and Democrats were thoroughly defeated, carrying

only 16 and 20 counties respectively, while other independent tickets captured 13. The 1873 successes were repeated in the state election of 1874. Independent Reform candidates captured three of the state's nineteen congressional seats and destroyed Republican control in the state legislature by electing three state senators and twenty-seven representatives. However, the bright future of this party dimmed in the late Seventies when it was absorbed into the Greenback Party.<sup>14</sup>

Two other, later agrarian organizations active in politics were the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association (FMBA) and the National Farmers' Alliance. Both of these organizations were born in Illinois. Milton George, a wealthy Cook County farmer, founded the National Farmers' Alliance, primarily as an offshoot of his successful agrarian newspaper, the Western Rural. However, George was not interested in the future of his paper, already widely-read, so much as he worried about the future of American agriculture. He used his newspaper to communicate this concern to his readers and gradually developed a philosophy which became the cornerstone of Populist thought. In 1879, George's attention focused on the farmers' problems with the railroads and on the need for government regulation. After discussing this issue at length in the Western Rural, George suggested that his readers write to Washington and to their state legislatures requesting such regulation as upheld by the Supreme Court in Munn vs. Illinois. He promoted this suggestion by mailing out thousands

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14. Buck, Granger Movement, pp. 88, 89, 94, 95.

of petitions to his subscribers, to known Grangers, and to farmers' clubs throughout the Middle West. When response was slow, George sensed that some organized effort was needed and, again through the Western Rural, urged the formulation of farm clubs to promote agrarian interests. Sensitive to the reasons behind the decline of the Grange, George suggested membership not be secret, that the clubs be politically active and openly partisan, and that dues be low enough to be within the means of all farmers. He even went so far as to print a model constitution in his paper--a document which was ultimately adopted and used by the Alliance throughout its existence.<sup>15</sup>

Farmers' reaction to George's idea was not spontaneous, and they called on him to provide them with an example. Consequently he agreed to establish a local organization in Cook County and called a meeting for that purpose in April, 1880. When only one farmer appeared for the meeting, George recruited two staff workers from the newspaper. Each of the four individuals became an officer, and the Cook County Alliance was born in the office of the Western Rural, where the entire movement was to be headquartered for the next seven years.<sup>16</sup>

Until there were enough local alliances to justify the creation of the national body, the Cook County group issued charters to farmers who were willing to organize themselves under George's published constitution. The first group so inclined lived near Filly, Nebraska, and by August, 1880, local alliances

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15. Scott, Agrarian Movement in Illinois, pp. 22-26.

16. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

were scattered throughout Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois. At this point George called a national convention.

On October 14, 1880, 623 delegates from thirteen states met in Chicago to consider action against the railroads. When this meeting adjourned, about half remained to form the National Farmers' Alliance. Although state organizations were at first difficult to establish, the number of local alliances grew rapidly. From 200 locals in November, 1880, the number grew to over 500 two months later and to 940 by the following October, despite vicious attacks by farm papers competing with the Western Rural--attacks which continued until control of the national organization was wrested from George in 1887.<sup>17</sup>

Unlike the National Farmers' Alliance, the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association was not the work of one man. In 1883, a group of Johnson County farmers discovered their local grain dealer uncooperative at harvest time. When he declined to purchase their crop, they contacted the market in St. Louis, hired their own railroad car, and disposed of it directly. To their great surprise they found that elimination of the middleman increased their profit. Word of this success quickly spread throughout the county and their neighbors began to join in the selling effort. Out of this union emerged a secret organization named the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association.

The FMBA grew slowly, partly from design. Its leaders hoped to avoid the rapid expansion and loose central organization which they felt had

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17. Scott, Agrarian Movement in Illinois, pp. 28-31.

weakened George's National Farmers' Alliance. Nevertheless, by 1887 the FMBA counted over two thousand members in small local clubs scattered throughout southern Illinois. Fred G. Blood of Jefferson County was appointed to lead a central organization empowered to establish locals anywhere in the United States.<sup>18</sup> However, Blood soon fell out of favor with the membership and was replaced by John P. Stelle of Hamilton County.

Under Stelle's able direction, the FMBA continued to grow. Deteriorating agrarian conditions prompted its rapid expansion into neighboring states. In October, 1887, the organization had 389 local lodges. A year later the number rose to 942. By November, 1890, Stelle reported a total of 2,181 lodges and by the following November counted almost 90 percent of this figure lived in Illinois or Indiana.<sup>19</sup>

Within Illinois the growth of the FMBA was equally spectacular. In 1886 the group's strength was limited to six counties. By the end of the following year it occupied most of southern Illinois, absorbing independent agrarian organizations in Marion, Clinton, and Washington counties. By 1889, the FMBA was successfully competing with the National Farmers' Alliance in central Illinois and established strong locals in Clark, Cumberland, and Shelby counties. A year later it moved into the western section of the state, mainly along the lower Illinois River, in Madison, Jersey, and Macoupin counties.<sup>20</sup>

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18. Scott, Agrarian Movement in Illinois, pp. 45, 46.

19. Ibid., pp. 49, 50.

20. Ibid.

However, the FMBA never was very successful in the counties between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. Its failure in the area was due mainly to the work of Blood. After his removal as head of the FMBA, Blood became associated with the Southern Alliance and successfully organized the inter-river counties for that group. The Southern Alliance, or National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union, was organized by Charles W. Macune of the Texas State Alliance after it broke with George in 1887 over the willingness of the National Farmers' Alliance to admit Negro members. A year later the Southern Alliance merged with the Arkansas Agricultural Wheel, while the FMBA rejected a similar offer of consolidation. After the rejection, Southern Alliance organizers, including Blood, appeared in Illinois and Indiana and undermined FMBA strength in both states. By 1890, southern leaders had established a state alliance. After the state organization was perfected in 1891, the Southern Alliance enjoyed considerable success in Illinois' western counties, dominating the area between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers south of Rock Island, as well as a band of counties on the east bank of the Illinois River. By the end of 1891, the organization was established in twenty-six counties, and claimed a membership of over twelve thousand.<sup>21</sup>

In northern Illinois the dominant agrarian organization was the Grange which, due to the hard times of the late 1880's, began a recovery from its drastic decline in the latter Seventies. A fifth association, also showing strength

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21. Scott, Agrarian Movement in Illinois, pp. 50-56.



in the northern part of the state, was the Patrons of Industry. However the backbone of agrarian reform in Illinois was the alliance movement. By December, 1890, it included over 2,000 local clubs with approximately 62,000 members, an average of one member to every four farms in the state. With almost half-again as many locals as the Grange had at its height in 1875, organized farmers were a power to be reckoned with in Illinois.<sup>22</sup>

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22. Scott, Agrarian Movement in Illinois, p. 61, and Buck, Granger Movement, p. 64. Membership totals in the various farm organizations in 1890 are as follows: The National Farmers' Alliance had 150 locals and 7000 members, the FMBA claimed 1650 lodges and 43,175, members; the Southern Alliance had 160 locals and 3400 members; and the Grange, with 196 local bodies, recorded 7500 members.

## CHAPTER IV

### The People's Party in Illinois

The Populists did not do well in Illinois in the election of 1892, despite the state's proclivity to farm organizations. The party's national ticket polled a mere 2.54 percent of the vote in Illinois, ranking the state thirty-first in Populist strength in 1892. In only twelve states did the ticket do worse, and in the Mid-West, only Ohio gave Weaver less support than he got in Illinois. On the state level, the Populist gubernatorial candidate polled four thousand votes less than the Prohibition candidate, and none of the Populist nominees for Congress or the state legislature were elected. In fact, independent strength in Illinois was less than in the mid-term elections of 1890. In the forty-third senatorial district a Populist congressional candidate won 11,940 votes in 1890; two years later third party strength declined to 6,916. Populist nominees in other districts did even worse. In the forty-second district, once a center of FMBA strength, the People's candidate polled a pitiful 297 votes.<sup>1</sup>

The failure of the Populist Party in Illinois may be attributed to several events and trends of the late 1880's and early 1890's. Foremost among these reasons, and central to most of the others, was the great variety of farm organizations in the state. The same factors which made Illinois the nucleus of the agrarian reform movement also served to undermine the strength of the

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1. Hicks, Populist Revolt, p. 263 and Scott, Agrarian Movement in Illinois, pp. 133-34.

only political party dedicated to meeting farmers' needs. The major farm organizations were fiercely independent and they jealously protected their autonomy. In a state completely divided among them by the mid-Eighties, expansion of one group came at the expense of another. A major cause for concern developed by the end of the decade as the Southern Alliance began to make inroads into the strength of the National Farmers' Alliance and the FMBA. Not only did this challenge weaken these two organizations, but the close ties between the Southern Alliance and third party politics brought to Illinois a commitment to action which many farmers were not willing to accept.

The idea of independent political action by Illinois farmers originated in 1886, when the National Farmers' Alliance organized a lobby in the state legislature. Two years later, the Grange followed suit. But going one step further, the Grange developed a list of state legislators opposing needed farm measures and urged that these individuals be defeated. Both the FMBA and the Northern Alliance closely questioned each candidate about his stand on farm issues and rejected those who took unsatisfactory positions. The FMBA bluntly warned the old parties about the possibility of independent political action if the farmers were not placated.

But earlier third party movements had met with little success in Illinois. Name changes of the leading third party throughout the 1870's and 1880's illustrated a swing away from serving farmers' needs. Changes from National Greenback to Greenback Labor to Anti-Monopoly showed the increasing commitment of third party leadership to the labor movement rather than to

agrarian reform. The convention which formed the Anti-Monopoly Party in Chicago in 1883 ignored the Farmers' Alliance completely. But formation of another new party in 1887 quickly restored the farmers' voice in politics.

Although the name National Union Labor Party gave the appearance of labor control, former Greenbackers and other rural elements dominated from the outset. While its entire slate was spectacularly unsuccessful in 1888, the spectre of agrarian political action motivated both major parties to be more receptive to farmers' demands.<sup>2</sup>

In such areas as Champaign County, where the Republicans were supreme, the Democrats hoped for aid from the Alliance, and in southern Illinois both parties attempted to placate discontented groups by naming candidates who were identified as being favorable to agriculture. In the nineteenth district, the Republicans selected an FMBA member as their nominee, while in the twentieth district the Democrats endorsed the candidate of the Union Labor party. . . . But when the votes were counted, it was found that not only had no independent been elected but the candidates endorsed by an old party in an effort to upset a favorite had similarly failed. When victories on the local level also failed to materialize, the Union Labor party ceased to exist as a political entity.<sup>3</sup>

The failure of the third party movement in Illinois during the Eighties may be attributed partly to the relatively good condition of Illinois agriculture, compared to states where radical parties had more success. Added to the reluctance of farmers to cooperate with labor representatives, and to the inability of fiercely competitive rival agrarian groups to unite, this factor doomed the

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2. Scott, Agrarian Movement in Illinois, pp. 84-87.

3. Ibid., p. 87.

future of any independent political action in Illinois.<sup>4</sup> The crushing blow to third party politics in the state was delivered by the election of 1890 and its aftermath. Rural voters sent three independent legislators to the general assembly in that year. These three held the balance of power between the major parties in a protracted struggle over the election of a U.S. Senator. The two candidates for this office were Alson J. Streeter, noted agrarian liberal and presidential candidate of the Union Labor Party in 1888, and John M. Palmer, long-time attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad. When two of these independent legislators deserted Streeter and, under very suspicious circumstances, threw their support to the railroad man, the third party movement in Illinois was completely discredited. This disaster, coupled with the loss of state Populist leader Herman E. Taubeneck who went to Washington, D. C. as the party's national chairman, and the dismissal of the radical editor of the Farmers' Voice, published by Montgomery Ward and Company, deprived agrarian radicals of badly needed leadership and sealed the fate of the People's Party in Illinois.<sup>5</sup>

Though the Populists could not claim real success anywhere in Illinois in 1892, they did relatively well in twelve counties, polling between ten and seventeen percent of the votes cast in each county.<sup>6</sup> These areas of Populist strength were well dispersed throughout the state: Stark County is located in

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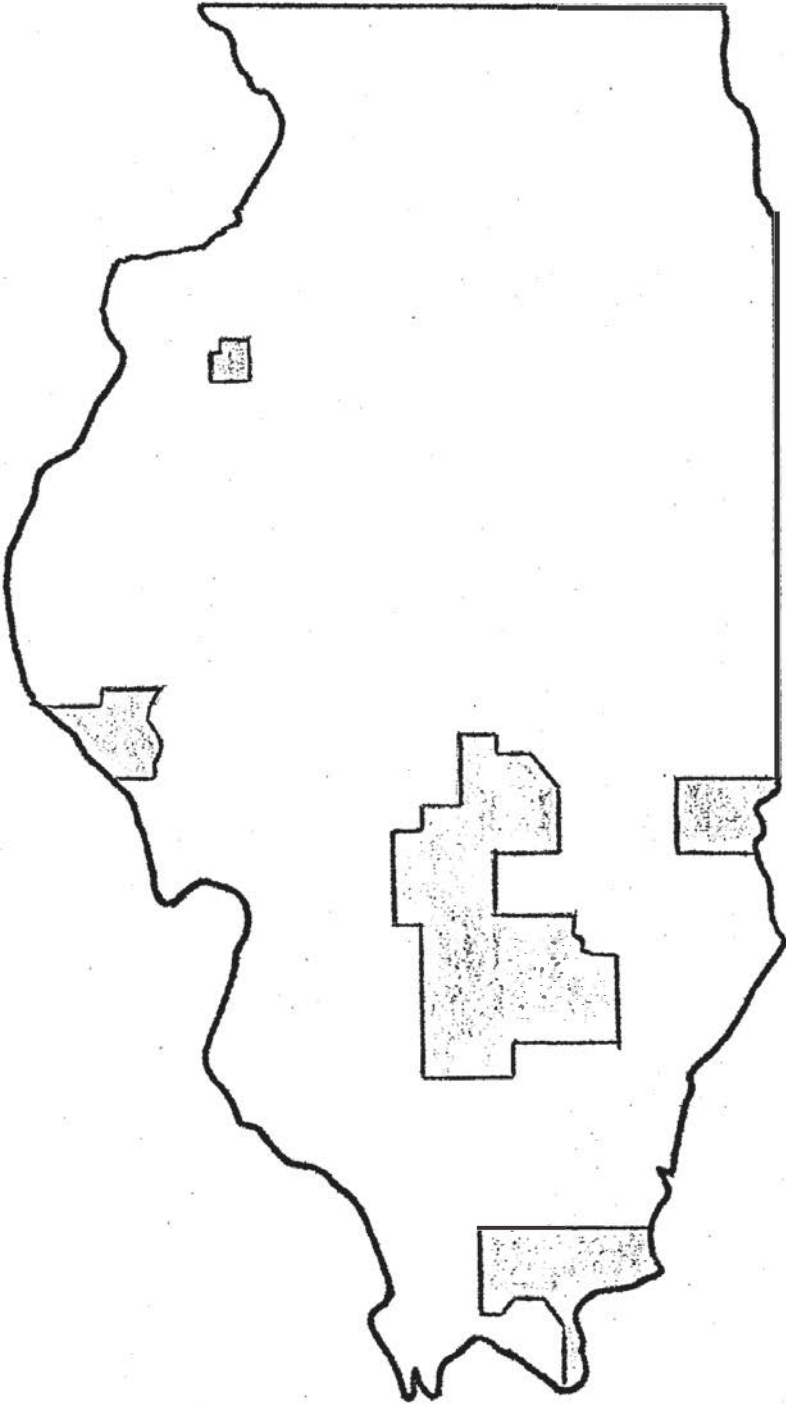
4. Charles McArthur Destler, "Consumation of a Labor-Populist Alliance in Illinois, 1894," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXVII (March 1941), pp. 593-94.

5. Ibid.

6. Shelby County, in east central Illinois was the most radical county, with 17.2 percent of the vote there going to the third party. Shelby's closest rival was Fayette County, where 15.4 percent of the electorate cast radical votes. Surprisingly, Marion County was the exception in the group supporting the

FIGURE 1

MAP OF ILLINOIS SHOWING  
COUNTIES BEING STUDIED



north-central Illinois; Pike County is situated between the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers; Clark County is on the Wabash River at the eastern border; west of Clark is a large band of counties reaching south from the state's center--Shelby, Fayette, Jefferson, Marion, Clay, and Wayne counties; at the southern tip of Illinois is another group of three counties--Johnson, Pope, and Hardin.<sup>7</sup> However, examination of several economic and demographic characteristics which most of these counties shared in the Eighties and Ninties shows nothing unique to them alone, nothing which was not common to any other counties giving the Populists no significant support in 1892.

Population trends and characteristics do not by themselves explain the incidence of Populism in the twelve counties providing third party support. Like Illinois at large, the population in most of these counties was increasing between 1880 and 1890--albeit several of them, like Marion, Clay, Pope and Shelby, were growing at substantially slower paces than the state's 26.6 percent growth rate. Indeed, three of the counties in question--Clark, Clay and Fayette--showed no growth at all over the decade, and Pike and Stark counties actually lost people during the Eighties. However, 31 of Illinois' 90 non-Populist

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Populist; only 9.1 percent of Marion's votes went to the People's Party. In Pike, the figure was a healthier 13.6 percent. For 1892 vote totals in all 102 Illinois counties see the Appendix at the conclusion of this paper.

7. Throughout the remainder of the text, counties and townships where the People's Party did well--as defined by criteria outlined in Chapter 1, p. 7--often will be referred to as "Populist counties" or "Populist townships," and the others identified as "non-Populist" areas. These labels are for syntax' sake only. They are not meant necessarily to imply absolute comparative relationships in the voting strengths of the three parties.

counties also showed wither a population loss or no growth during that decade; so that factor alone obviously was not an important one in bringing out the radical vote. In fact, the rapid jump in the state's population in between 1880 and 1890 mainly was due to tremendous growth in only 13 counties, while 46 showed just moderate increases during that period.<sup>8</sup>

One demographic characteristic which does help to distinguish the twelve Populist counties from those with more conservative voting patterns, is the ethnic factor. The number of foreign-born in Illinois in 1890 was almost 850 thousand, up over fifty percent from the 1880 figure. But in all twelve Populist counties the trend was reversed, and the foreign population became smaller as time passed. Although the number of foreign-born also was falling in 53 other counties, the twelve with radical political leanings are still unique because they illustrated highly nativistic qualities. The whole state was 21.5 percent foreign in 1890. But, with the exception of Stark, no county where the People's Party ran well contained more than a 5.5 percent foreign population. In fact, seven of the twelve had foreign populations under three percent, and a third of the twelve under two percent. Although 16 other counties also fell into this range, over half of the Populist counties ranked in the bottom third of the 38 least foreign counties in the state.<sup>9</sup> All these highly native counties, Populist and non-Populist, also were highly agricultural.

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8. U.S. Census Office, Census Reports, Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900, Vol. I, Population, Part I, pp. 16, 17.

9. U.S. Census Office, Compendium of the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part I -- Population, pp. 482, 483.



Obviously the number of farms a county contained, and their average size, gives some indication of its agrarian economic strength. In a county having no large cities to provide an industrial or commercial base--and all twelve counties fit this mold--such a figure assumes paramount importance. Farms in Illinois averaged 127 acres in 1890. Farms in ten counties showing some Populist strength in 1892 were considerably smaller, ranging between 90 and 113 acres. Only Pike and Stark, the two northernmost counties did not fit this pattern, averaging 135 and 154 acres respectively. However, farms in 22 other counties not supporting the Populists also averaged between 90 and 113 acres, or were smaller.<sup>10</sup> Thus while all but two of the twelve ranked in the lower third of the state's 102 counties according to farm size, other factors must be considered to explain the presence of third party strength.

The same is true of farm values in the Populist and non-Populist counties. With per capita values of \$164 to \$403, farms in the twelve counties showing Populist sympathies ranked in the lowest quarter of the state.<sup>11</sup> However, farms in sixteen other counties also fell in this value range. Nine of the twelve discontented counties--Pike, Stark, and Marion excepted--had per acre values ranging between \$10.68 and \$20.46.<sup>12</sup> In this case, only five non-Populist counties had per acre values equally low; however, all five came from the sixteen conservative

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10. U.S. Census Office, Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, pp. 134-37.

11. Again, Pike and Stark counties are the exception. Their average farm values were considerably higher.

12. The per acre values for Marion, Pike, and Stark counties were \$23.47, \$32.39, and \$52.05, respectively.

counties sharing low per capita farm values with the Populist counties.

Furthermore, all five also were among the 22 non-Populist counties suffering from smaller than average farm size.<sup>13</sup>

These three characteristics--farm size, per capita farm value, and value per acre--provide some general idea about economic conditions in these Illinois counties in the 1880's. The size of a farm imposes limitations on how much can be produced and, to a lesser extent, on what can be produced profitably. Such factors in turn determine the income which can be derived from a farm each year, and hence the living standard possible for the farmer and his family. "Per capita farm value" considers not only the general quality, improvement, and size of farms in a county, but also the number of people those farms must support. This consideration is an important one, for the size of a county's population can mitigate the economic strain of small or poor or unproductive farms, if that population is small, or make the problem more severe, if the population is large. The average value of an acre reflects both the degree of land improvement in a county and the productivity of its working acreage.

Low values for any or all of these three characteristics indicate poor conditions and economic problems in a county. Thus, based on farm size, per capita farm value, and per acre land values, the twelve counties showing Populist strength in 1892 were poor agricultural areas. They ranked in the lowest

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13. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 134-37 and U.S. Census Office, Report on Wealth, Debt, and Taxation at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part II: Valuation and Taxation, pp. 24-26.

quarter of Illinois counties in each of the measurements. But eight of the 22 other counties sharing the problem of small farm size also shared either the problem of low per capita farm values or low per acre values, and five of the eight had all three problems in common with the more radical areas. Thus, while these three characteristics alone do not explain the degree to which twelve Illinois counties leaned toward third party politics, the increasing weight of a combination of adverse conditions obviously was a factor in their voting behavior. Of 32 counties containing abnormally small farms, only ten provided significant support for the People's Party in 1892. Of 18 counties with small farms and either low farm values or below average values per acre, ten had Populist sympathies. Finally, of 14 counties suffering from problems in all three areas, nine--a full 84 percent--showed Populist strength.<sup>14</sup>

Illinois in the late nineteenth century was corn country. Like the rest of the state, the twelve counties giving support to the People's Party all planted well over half their improved acreage in corn. While in general land in the Populist counties was not as productive as the state average of 36.8 bushels per acre, no great production gap existed except for Clay, Fayette and Marion counties, which averaged 24.9, 23.1, and 26.4 bushels per acre, respectively. One Populist county even had a production rate well above the state average; Stark County farms produced 42.7 bushels of corn per acre. The same situation exists for wheat and oats, Illinois' other major cereal crops. Although the Populist counties showed less inclination to plant wheat than did most other

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<sup>14</sup>. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 134-37 and U.S. Census Office,

counties in Illinois, and although their wheat and oat production was not as good as in many other areas, several non-Populist counties exhibited the same characteristics.<sup>15</sup>

If other counties were comprised of equally small, poor, unproductive farms--if other counties had the same general demographic make-up--how can the existence of Populism in these twelve counties be explained? A possible answer might be the one already suggested--that no one or two demographic or economic conditions by themselves motivated a large Populist vote in 1892. The twelve Populist counties consistently ranked at or near the bottom in several critical measurements; a combination of unfavorable circumstances--each shared with some non-Populist counties, but with substantially different ones each time--marked these twelve as uniquely unfortunate areas. A few non-Populist counties exhibited the same combination of characteristics as the Populist ones. However, each time another unfavorable circumstance was added to those already affecting the group of depressed Illinois counties, more non-Populist counties were eliminated from the list of those areas suffering from that totality of conditions. But in the end, at least five non-Populist counties remained, in the same general economic circumstances as the counties showing significant support for the third party in 1892.

Report on Wealth, Debt, and Taxation at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part II: Valuation and Taxation, pp. 24-26, and Official Vote of the State of Illinois in 1892, pp. 1, 2.

15. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 362, 363.

A better explanation for Populist strength might be that no extreme county-wide discrepancy in conditions or circumstances existed as a reason for third party voting. A county is so large a civil unit that it might mask great internal variations. Within two counties appearing to be demographically and economically similar, an area or areas might be substantially different from others in the same county, or from areas in the second county. Thus internal differences might explain why the People's Party did well in one county in 1892, but not in another county with seemingly identical characteristics.

Perhaps Marion and Pike counties, the subjects of the next two chapters, are the best examples of how examination of only county-level characteristics can hide internal conditions. If the 1892 election results were not available for Pike County, one would hardly expect to group it with the other counties showing Populist strength. Pike was the exception to the rule for almost every condition the Populist counties had in common. Its farms were larger than the state average. Its land was as productive as its per acre and per capita values were high. By all these measures, 13.6 percent of Pike County males should not have cast third party votes in 1892. However, closer examination of conditions in Pike shows that not all townships within the county were uniformly blessed by prosperity. Nor was the Populist vote evenly distributed throughout the county. Support for the People's Party came from six townships; residents of the other eighteen did not vote the Populist ticket to nearly the same degree. Thus, the general conditions in Pike County are deceiving. An enclave of

hard-core radicalism existed in the southeastern townships, and study must descend to the township level to uncover it.<sup>16</sup>

Marion County was the exact opposite of Pike. While Pike farms were larger than the state average, Marion farms were smaller. While Pike land was productive, Marion County land was not. Indeed, while Pike County generally was the exception to the conditions the Populist counties seemingly had in common, Marion typified them. Poor, unproductive and highly native, Marion fit well with Fayette, Clark, Clay, Jefferson, and all the other counties where the Populists did relatively well in 1892. But strangely, the People's Party there showed less vitality than it did in untypical Pike County. The Populists in Marion polled less than the ten percent minimum established to categorize an area as a "Populist" county.<sup>17</sup> Yet it had to be included in this study because it was one of only three counties in Illinois where the Populists actually carried townships. Thus, in this case also, differences in internal conditions seem to distinguish one county from another appearing in the same general circumstances. Otherwise, how does one explain the existence of Populist townships in Marion County but not in Edwards County, for example, where the People's Party won just 2.4 percent of the vote? Point for point, Edwards County equals Marion County in the general conditions identified as common to the Populist counties--farm size, per capita farm values, land values per acre, ethnicity of population, and others. Why did

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16. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 134, 135, 205, and 363; Wealth , Debt, and Taxation: 1890, p. 25; and Pike County Democrat, November 16, 1892.

17. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 134, 135, 205, and 363; Wealth ,

some counties give over ten percent of their votes to the People's Party in 1892 while other counties exhibiting similar circumstances did not? Why did some townships in Marion County go into the third party column in 1892, while those in nine of the other Populist counties did not? Why did some areas in Marion County vote for the Populists while other townships in the same county give them no support? If an attempt is to be made to answer these questions, a township-level study is needed.

The following two chapters provide a grassroots study of two of the three counties where the Populists carried townships in 1892.<sup>18</sup> Both chapters examine conditions in the most politically partisan townships where each party achieved its greatest percentage of the votes.<sup>19</sup> For simplicity and clarity sake they are identified here: In Marion County the Populists carried only one township, Raccoon, and ran ahead of a major party in another, Meacham. Haines Township as also studied as an area of Populist strength because the radicals fell only three votes short of equaling the Republican total. Carrigan is the most Republican township, and Tonti the most Democratic. In Pike County the Populist townships are Pearl, Hardin, and Montezuma; but strong Populist undercurrents existed in Newburg and Spring Creek. Detroit is the Democratic township and Martinsburg the Republican one.

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Debt, and Taxation: 1890, p. 25; and Marion County Democrat, November 18, 1892.

18. As noted in Chapter 1, a study of the third county, Shelby, is not possible because the necessary tax records have been destroyed.

19. The process for selecting the subject townships is detailed in Chapter 1, pp. 6, 7.

## CHAPTER V

### Agrarian Discontent in Marion County, Illinois

Marion County is a flat area in the heart of southern Illinois. Twenty-four miles square, the county is composed of sixteen townships, each containing 23,040 acres. Marion was originally the northern part of Jefferson County, but in 1823 it was granted autonomy and named after the Revolutionary War hero, Francis Marion.<sup>1</sup>

The first settler in what became Marion County arrived with his son from Shawneetown, Illinois in 1813. They were joined a year later by a settler from Tennessee, and subsequently by others from Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia. Despite this promising beginning, only 1040 of the county's 368,640 acres were in private hands by 1824, although some squatters existed on the public domain. In 1825, a special census showed just 527 persons living in Marion County; but the economic direction of the area already was established. Of 117 adult males, 116 were farmers and one was a blacksmith.<sup>2</sup> The county grew quickly after obtaining autonomy. By the 1830 census the population quadrupled to 2125. It doubled to 4,742 during the next ten years. Between 1850 and 1860 it doubled to 4,720 to 12,739.<sup>3</sup>

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1. See map on p. 50 to locate Marion County.

2. J. H. G. Brinkerhoff, Brinkerhoff's History of Marion County, Illinois (Indianapolis: B. F. Bowen and Co., 1909), pp. 40, 41.

3. Twelfth Census, Population, Part I, p. 16.



A significant event in the county's growth occurred in 1852, when land was granted to the Illinois Central Railroad. The railroad's arrival precipitated a scramble for landholdings in Marion County. When the railroad grants were made, only 105,000 acres, less than one-third of the county's total, were privately owned. However, by 1865 all public land in Marion County had vanished. Thus, while the population of the county was doubling, the amount of private landholding increased threefold.<sup>4</sup>

Marion County gave little support to the nation's war efforts in the mid-nineteenth century. Only 41 men responded to a call for troops to fight the Blackhawk War in 1832. This lack of public support probably was because the people of Marion County were not intimidated by a military threat so far to the north. During the Civil War the county sent 1516 men to fight, although unlike the larger and more populous Pike County, they raised no local regiment. Also, it is noteworthy that less than ten percent of Civil War veterans from Marion County were volunteers.<sup>5</sup>

After the war Marion County veterans returned to farming, although not on what could be called a spectacular scale. In fact, agricultural statistics for the county help explain the agrarian unrest there during the Eighties and Nineties. In 1890, only 37 of Illinois 102 counties had more farms than did Marion County. Yet 63 of them possessed a greater number of improved acres. Furthermore,

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4. Brinkerhoff, History of Marion County, pp. 54, 55.

5. Ibid., p. 51.

although local farmers spent \$3,672 on fertilizer in that year, the fourth highest amount in the state, the county ranked eighteenth from the bottom in farm production.<sup>6</sup>

The major crop in Marion County was corn, the premier crop in Illinois in 1890. Yet fertilization notwithstanding, the county's corn production was dismally low. The 50,070 acres of Marion County planted in corn in 1890 produced an average of 26.4 bushels per acre. Not only was this figure well under the state average of 38.1 bushels, but only five counties experienced poorer corn production; in fact, eight Illinois counties planted fewer acres of corn but had a higher total yield than did Marion. The same is true of oats, Illinois' second important crop. State production averaged 36.5 bushels per acre. But with a rate of 24.8 bushels per acre, Marion County was also one of the poorest oat-producing areas in the state. Since corn and oats were the two major crops in Marion County too, economic conditions there were highly unsatisfactory.<sup>7</sup>

Certainly many Marion County farmers must have felt the same way about the condition of agriculture as did the county's most famous product, William Jennings Bryan. Born in Salem in 1860, Bryan remained in Marion County until 1874, when he moved north to Jacksonville, Illinois. Furthermore, by living in Jacksonville until 1887, Bryan was well able to keep in touch with relatives in Marion County and as conditions deteriorated there, and around Jacksonville, Bryan's political philosophy likely was established.<sup>8</sup>

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6. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 204-06.

7. Ibid., pp. 362, 363.

8. Brinkerhoff, History of Marion County, pp. 215, 216.

In 1890 and 1891, western Marion County was plagued by a series of barn burnings ultimately traced to a Sandoval farmer named McKibbon. The press characterized this individual as a bright but misguided man influenced by radical literature. Brooding over the unequal distribution of wealth in the county, he finally acted to bring equality. McKibbon gathered together a group of young men holding similar views and over several months spread havoc and terror throughout the county. He was eventually betrayed by one of his followers and captured in the process of blowing up a store. Brought to trial, McKibbon was convicted and fined five hundred dollars. He remained in jail until his fine was paid by relatives, whereupon he was released and left the county for good.<sup>9</sup>

Although McKibbon stood trial and was punished for only his criminal acts, the social ideas he espoused also were unpopular in Marion County, at least among its more prosperous citizens. In Salem, the local press of both major parties seemed to sense the potential grassroots strength of a radical political movement in the area. At first they ignored the third party, but as Populist support grew in the outlying townships, both the Republican and Democratic newspapers abandoned this tactic and lashed out at the radicals. The Republicans confined their attack to Populist vice-presidential candidate James Field, reporting he regretted not having killed more Union soldiers during the Civil War.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps fearing they had more to lose, the Democrats' attack on the radicals was vigorous and continual. The party's press reported that Populists were of two types,

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9. Brinkerhoff, History of Marion County, p. 187.

10. Marion County Republican, September 8, 1892.

"broken-down, dissappointed, discouraged, old men . . . [and] young men, who are below the average of intellegence and of no standing in their communities." Faithful Democrats were warned that Populist sentiments were generally not praiseworthy and that the entire movement bordered on being revolutionary.<sup>11</sup>

The course of the general election in Marion County was established by the township contests held in April, 1892. In the majority of the townships, Democratic candidates were successful. But in Carrigan Towship, where both an independent slate and a "people's" ticket also were on the ballot, the independent candidates were elected. The only other local contest involving a Populist effort was in Raccoon Township where the FMBA backed a victorious third party slate.<sup>12</sup> As local radicals began to formulate a county slate for the general election, Marion Democrats increasingly became concerned a split in their ranks would ultimately help the Republicans and they commenced an active campaign in the press against this threat. The party organ in the county admonished potential deserters by stating:

It seems to us very much out of place for certain Democrats (?) to assert that they will not vote for certain individuals should they succeed in obtaining the Democratic nominations. . . after the majority of Democrats after the nomination have been made, [will] heartily support the ticket. We know no other Democracy.<sup>13</sup>

Fearing the Populist movement would hurt their entire candidate slate, Democrats struck hard at the dangers of defecting from the ticket:

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11. Marion County Democrat, July 8, 1892.

12. Ibid., April 9, 1892, and Marion County Republican, March 10, 1892.

13. Marion County Democrat, April 18, 1892.

Our Republican friends, of this County, are hoping that there will be sufficient dissensions among the Democrats, enough bolters to enable them to defeat a portion of the Democratic ticket. Their hopes are in vain, for, with but few exceptions, individual Democrats of this County will present a solid and united front.<sup>14</sup>

However, these fears proved unjustified and grandiose rhetoric was unnecessary. Although the Populists fielded a county ticket in June, they had no central committee nor any county-wide organization. Their county convention attracted only about forty persons. Furthermore, the results of the general election, held November 8, 1892, were not altered by the presence of a third party on the ballot. The entire Democratic county slate was elected, although the Populists carried Raccoon Township and made significant inroads in Haines Township. In Meacham Township the Populists finished second to the Democrats but ahead of the Republican candidates. In Carrigan Township the Populists ran poorly but lured away enough Democratic votes to deliver the township to the Republicans.<sup>15</sup> Table 3 shows the vote distribution for the townships being studied in the presidential election of 1892. Since straight-ticket voting was common during that period, the totals for state and county candidates of each party varied only slightly, if at all, from the votes cast for the presidential contenders.

Figure 2 illustrates that the third party vote in Marion County did not come from any enclave of hard-core discontented, agrarian radicals. Instead, the areas showing significant Populist strength were well-dispersed throughout

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14. Marion County Democrat, May 6, 1892.

15. Ibid., November 18, 1892.

TABLE 3

PRESIDENTIAL VOTES CAST IN 1892 IN SELECTED  
TOWNSHIPS OF MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS \*

Township	Republican	Democrat	People's
Carrigan	76	73	17
Haines	57	106	54
Meacham	32	70	59
Raccoon	70	48	90
Tonti	66	143	20

Source: Marion County Democrat, November 18, 1892.

\* The Prohibition Party also had a candidate on the ballot, but his vote totals are not shown here.

the county. Raccoon and Haines townships are located in the south-central portion of Marion County, and Meacham is in the extreme northeast corner. Not surprisingly, the radical activities of McKibbin in 1890 and 1891 likely contributed to the poor Populist showing in the western townships.

Voting patterns in the five Marion County townships generally seem to verify the hypothesis advanced earlier that tenant farmers might be less susceptible to radical agrarian movements than landowners because they had fewer roots and were less likely to stand and fight against unfavorable conditions.<sup>16</sup> According to the theory, during depression the proportion of landowners in areas showing tendencies toward radical politics might be higher than in more politically stable ones, where high tenancy rates would be expected. Although the relationship

16. See Chapter III, pp. 38, 39.

FIGURE 2  
 MAP OF MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS SHOWING  
 TOWNSHIPS BEING STUDIED

			MEACHAM
CARRIGAN	TONTI		
	Salem ☒		
Centralia ☒	RACCOON	HAINES	

Source: Plat Book of Marion County Illinois

between land ownership and political unrest is not a perfect one, Table 4 shows a strong general association between these two variables. In the three strong Populist townships--Meacham, Raccoon, and Haines--the landholding rates were relatively high, since almost half the residents owned the land they farmed. Furthermore, in stable Carrigan Township, where the People's Party polled only seventeen of the 166 votes cast in the general election, the ownership rate was a very low 34.1 percent, while 65.9 percent of the family heads were tenants.

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF LANDOWNING RESIDENTS COMPARED TO  
THE PERCENTAGE OF LAND THEY OWNED IN SELECTED  
TOWNSHIPS OF MARION, COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN 1892

Township	Residents Owning Land	Land Owned by Residents
Carrigan	34.1	40.2
Haines	42.2	54.7
Meacham	46.9	44.2
Raccoon	46.1	51.2
Tonti	42.8	42.5

Source: Assessor's Books for Carrigan, Haines, Meacham, and Tonti townships for 1892, and Raccoon Township for 1891.

However, while general tenancy trends in Marion County support the theory of correlation between landholding and radical agrarian politics, in Tonti Township, where the Populists fared most poorly in 1892, the percentage of landowning residents was about the same as in Haines, where the party came within three votes of equalling the Republicans. Thus, although ranking the townships by amount of resident land ownership and by degree of Populist strength produces fairly positive relationships, the association between landownership and political behavior is not strong enough to equate radical politics to that factor alone. Obviously, additional forces also motivated farmers in some townships to cast large numbers of votes for Populist candidates, while in others the residents were not similarly affected.

Another factor weakening the potential value of any strong positive association between Populism and landowning is the probability that not all



persons seeming to be without real property actually were tenant farmers. From available information, the total number of tenants in a township must be determined by subtracting the people owning both land and personal property, as recorded in the county tax books, from its entire list of personal property holders. However, if this remainder was all tenant farmers, the tenancy rates for the townships studied would vary between 53.1 and 65.9 percent, figures unbelievably high when compared to the county average of 25 percent.<sup>17</sup> Most likely, some persons who might otherwise be classed as tenant farmers in a township actually owned and worked land in neighboring townships. Such instances would be particularly expected in cases where those residents lived near township borders. Other tenants may not have been farmers at all, but instead farm laborers or persons engaged in agriculturally-related occupations. Thus, determining the number of tenant farmers in a township is a high speculative operation, but one which affects calculation of the percentage of resident landowners--from which the theory equating landownership and radical politics is drawn.

While a direct link cannot be drawn between real estate and support for the Peoples' Party in the various townships, the figures in Table 4 and their attendant interpretation problems do not affect the actual distribution of property within each township. Again a general tendency exists, but certainly not a perfect association. The table shows that in two of the Populist townships, Haines and Raccoon, landowning residents possessed more than their arithmetic

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17. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 134, 135.

equal share of the acreage and crowded the tenants, a majority of the electorate in each case, onto a disproportionately small amount of land. However, in Carrigan Township, where Populist candidates ran poorly, the identical situation existed because only 34 percent of the citizens owned 40 percent of the land. In the Populist stronghold of Meacham most of the property was held by absentee owners. Thus, McKibbon's activities notwithstanding, the hypothesis that inequality in the distribution of property might have bred discontent at the polls meets the same fate as the theory that equates radical politics and landowning; the relationship is not strong enough to stand alone as an explanation for Populist electoral fortunes.

Other variables in man-land relationships in the townships studied are detailed in Table 5. The table indicates that no good relationship exists between resident farm size or improved acreage and Populist strength in the five townships. Resident landowners in Carrigan and Tonti, where the People's Party did most poorly in 1892, had the largest and the second-smallest farms, respectively, the largest and smallest number of improved acres, and the greatest and smallest percentage of improved land. However, Table 5 does illustrate a strong and clear-cut relationship between Populism and agrarian conditions in Marion County. A direct association exists between Populist strength and land values on the township level. Even though the farms of Tonti landowners were the second-smallest of the townships studied, their values were the second-highest. Furthermore, although the average Tonti resident's farm was the least improved, the per acre value for all his land, improved and

TABLE 5

AVERAGE SIZE, ACRES IN PRODUCTION, AND VALUE OF FARMS OWNED BY RESIDENTS OF SELECTED TOWNSHIPS IN MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN 1892.

Township	Farm Size	Improved Acres	Percent Improved	Farm Value	Value Per Acre
Carrigan	132.5	110.3	83.3	\$757	\$5.70
Haines	115.5	80.2	69.5	467	4.04
Meacham	104.5	79.7	76.3	533	5.08
Raccoon	88.0	63.9	72.6	390	4.49
Tonti	95.1	63.7	66.9	552	5.78

Source: Assessor's Books for Carrigan, Haines, Meacham, and Tonti townships for 1892 and Raccoon Township for 1891.

unimproved, was the highest of all five townships. Carrigan farms did have a higher percentage of improved acreage than farms in the Populist townships. But this advantage does not completely account for the higher land values in Carrigan. For example, although Carrigan farms were seven percent more improved than those in Meacham Township, land on Carrigan farms was worth eleven percent per acre more than Meacham land. Thus only two-thirds of their difference in value can be attributed to the higher percentage of improved acreage on Carrigan farms; the other four percent difference was due to the higher quality of improved land in Carrigan Township. These facts mean that even though landowning farmers in the three Populist Townships generally worked a greater number and percentage of improved acres, their farms were worth less than farms in the two townships where the People's Party did poorly in the 1892 elections.

The relationship between land worth and Populism is further illustrated by Table 6, which details the value of land held by nonresident landowners and worked by tenants. At first glance, the figures listed below might give the

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE OF LAND IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS OF MARION COUNTY OWNED BY NON-RESIDENTS, PERCENTAGE OF THEIR LAND WHICH WAS IMPROVED, AND ITS VALUE IN 1892.

Township	Land owned by Absentees	Land Improved	Value Per Acre
Carrigan	59.8	68.2	\$5.02
Haines	45.3	62.6	4.03
Meacham	55.8	71.2	5.07
Raccoon	48.8	61.2	3.87
Tonti	57.5	63.7	4.88

Source: Assessor's Books for Carrigan, Haines, Meacham, and Tonti townships in 1892, and for Raccoon Township in 1891.

impression that Meacham Township, an area of Populist strength, does not fit the general pattern established by Table 5 for equating land values and radical politics. However, as in Carrigan Township in the previous table, the high per acre value of Meacham's nonresident real estate is due more to a disproportionate amount of improved land than to its quality. If the same correction factor just used for Carrigan Township in the previous table is applied to Meacham land values, the worth of nonresident landholdings there drops from \$5.07 to \$4.42 per acre, well below land values in townships where the Populists showed no strength. Thus Meacham Township also fits the relationship established between the value of both resident and nonresident, or tenant, landholdings

and radical agrarian politics. A ranking of all acreage by worth in the townships being studied shows the nonradical Carrigan and Tonti townships at the top of the list with equally high land values of \$5.28 per acre. Well below those two townships, the three acres of Populist strength--Haines, Meacham, and Raccoon townships--had average per acre values of \$4.07, \$5.07 and \$4.28 respectively.

Tables 5 and 6, and the explanatory material accompanying them, establish on township level the same general relationship between Populist strength and low agricultural production cited earlier in this chapter for all Marion County.<sup>18</sup> The only plausible explanation why land in townships having a high percentage of improved acres would be worth less than real estate in nearby townships with a lower percentage of working acreage is that the improved land in the former townships was poor, and hence probably less productive, than land in the latter ones. Not only did the Populists show strength in Marion County, one of the poorest producing areas in the state of Illinois, but within the county the strong Populist townships also very likely were areas of low production, a factor which drove down their land values. On the other hand, the townships with higher average land values, and with sometimes fewer but more fertile acres in production, gave almost no support to the People's Party in the 1892 election. Thus a strong connection may be established between low production and poor land, and radical agrarian politics, at least in Marion County. No matter whether their farms were larger or smaller than farms of

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18. See pp. 61, 62.

other townships, no matter whether a greater or lesser proportion of their farms were actively in production, in the townships showing Populist strength, farmers worked poorer and less productive lands than did their more prosperous and fortunate neighbors. This inequity in production well could have made farmers in the three disadvantaged townships extra-sensitive to agrarian conditions-- a sensitivity manifested at the polls in November, 1892, by large numbers of votes for a radical agrarian party.

The low agricultural productivity in Haines, Meacham, and Raccoon townships, all areas where the Populists did well in the general election, was due to rudimentary farming techniques. Indeed, the relative degree of mechanization in the five townships was analogous to the fertilizer situation in the entire county. Just as Marion County was among the most heavily fertilized but poorly productive areas in the state, within the county the poorly productive Populist townships tended to be more highly mechanized than those townships where the third party did not do well. Table 7 details this trend by showing a markedly higher degree of farm mechanization in the townships providing support for the Populists in the election of 1892.<sup>19</sup>

In Carrigan and Tonti townships, where the Populists had no electoral success, the average value of machinery on each farm was significantly less

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19. The terms "machinery" and "mechanization" are used advisedly in this context. They refer to a wide variety of implements and devices. Some of the more sophisticated and modern machines developed in the Seventies and Eighties and commonly in use in 1892 include: drills and broadcast seeders to mechanize planting, cultivators and fertilizing machines, and harvesting devices such as reapers, binders, threshers, and rakes. A concise yet excellent discussion of agricultural mechanization during the late nineteenth century is

TABLE 7

DEGREE OF AGRICULTURAL MECHANIZATION AMONG  
LANDOWNING FARMERS IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS OF  
MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1892.

Township	Value of Agricultural Implements & Machinery	Number of Land-owning Farmers	Reporting no machinery	Per Capita Value
Carrigan	\$204	66	15	\$3.09
Haines	472	106	19	4.44
Meacham	807	93	7	8.68
Raccoon	594	132	23	4.48
Tonti	268	96	43	2.80

Source: Assessor's Books for Carrigan, Haines, Meacham, and Tonti Townships in 1892, and for Raccoon Township in 1891.

than in those townships giving support to the third party movement. Furthermore, almost one-fourth to one-half of the farmers in the non-Populist townships reported no machinery at all on their farms. Among the more radical townships, only Raccoon, where a sixth of the farms had no machinery, even approaches this level of unmechanized agriculture.

It must be noted at this point that Table 7 only concerns machinery possessed by resident landowning farmers. No accurate method exists for determining how many of the townships' tenants actually farmed--although it probably was a high percentage. But if the hypothesis that a strong positive relationship exists between farm ownership and radical agrarian politics is found in Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, pp. 125-46.

a correct one, then measurement of mechanization on tenants' farms is of less importance anyway. Indeed, analysis of mechanization using all adult males --tenants and landowners both--in the five townships as the subject population, produces nearly the same results as Table 7. Although the differences between the townships' mechanization levels are less marked, only Carrigan Township, where two-thirds of the residents were tenants--the highest tenancy rate in the five townships--fails to fit the pattern of high mechanization and radical politics established in Table 7. This relationship is elaborated by Table 8, which takes into account the average size of each township's landholdings in determining its relative degree of mechanization. Introduction of the farm size variable makes even greater the difference between mechanization in the politically moderate townships and in the radical ones.

TABLE 8

VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND IMPLEMENTS PER IMPROVED ACRE OF LAND OWNED AND FARMED BY RESIDENTS IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS OF MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN 1892.

Township	Average Farm Size	Improved Acreage	Average Value of Farm Implements	Value Per Improved Acre
Carrigan	132.5	110.3	\$3.09	\$0.028
Haines	115.5	80.2	4.44	.055
Meacham	104.5	79.7	8.68	.109
Raccoon	88.0	63.9	4.48	.070
Tonti	95.1	63.7	2.80	.047

Source: Assessor's Books for Carrigan, Haines, Meacham and Tonti townships for 1892, and Raccoon Township for 1891.



Not only was land in the three Populist townships considerably inferior to working acreage in Carrigan and Tonti townships, where the Populists did poorly in the 1892 election, but Tables 7 and 8 shows the discontented areas were much more highly mechanized. That their land did not produce well, despite the use of costly implements, must have been an additional irritant to the discontented farmers of Haines, Meacham, and Raccoon townships.

Although strong relationships may be drawn between radical agrarian politics, unfertile and poorly productive land, and high levels of mechanization, no such association exists with the personal property wealth of the five townships, as Table 9 illustrates. Personal property includes all livestock, farm implements,

TABLE 9  
PERSONAL PROPERTY HOLDINGS IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS  
OF MARION COUNTY FOR 1892

Township	Total Value of Personal Property	Number of Adult Males	Average Value of Personal Property	Having no Personal Property
Carrigan	\$21, 229	194	\$109	48
Haines	31, 324	251	125	18
Meacham	22, 938	198	115	10
Raccoon	24, 718	284	87	30
Tonti	25, 804	225	115	10

Source: Assessor's Books for Carrigan, Haines, Meacham, and Tonti townships for 1892, and for Raccoon Township for 1891, and "Aggregate Population By Minor Civil Divisions," Compendium of the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part I--Population, p. 122.

money, stocks and credits, merchandise or grain inventories, and household furnishings; it is the best available indicator of the general living standard in an area. The table shows that, with the notable exception of Raccoon, all townships were about equal according to this measurement. The case of Raccoon Township is unique because of the three Populist areas being studied, it is the only one where Populist strength actually exceeded the popularity of both major parties. The general poverty of this township well may have been the additional factor needed to push a poorly productive, yet highly mechanized and highly discontented area into the People's Party column in the election of 1892.

Populist historians, mainly studying the western phase of the movement, claim the most fruitful areas for the radical agrarian movement were those places hardest hit by declining agricultural conditions in the 1880's.<sup>20</sup>

Table 10 shows that for Marion County, Illinois at least, this theory must be modified. A general decline indeed did occur in the five townships, in several economic areas during the Eighties. But in none of the categories detailed in the table were declines in Populist townships significantly more marked than in the more politically moderate townships.<sup>21</sup> However, support for the theory that areas suffering the greatest agricultural collapse were also of strongest political radicalism can be found in the first column of the table.

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20. Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 31-35, 254-64.

21. The percentages in this table were calculated by using the 1879 figures as the basis, and by measuring the amount of growth or decline, over time, from that point. The change was then recorded as a percent of the 1879 base figure.

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGE OF CHANGE IN REAL ESTATE AND PERSONAL  
PROPERTY HOLDINGS FOR SELECTED TOWNSHIPS IN  
MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS 1879-92

Township	Changes in Number		Changes in Value			
	Improved Acreage	Livestock	Machinery	Livestock	Furnishings	Total Value
Carrigan	+11.5	- 8.6	-50.8	-24.9	-44.0	-28.0
Haines	+19.6	+ 1.6	-64.0	-26.2	-74.5	-28.7
Meacham	+13.1	- 5.9	-34.2	-41.1	-33.6	-35.2
Raccoon	+18.0	- 5.1	-63.5	-26.4	-48.3	-37.1
Tonti	+ 2.4	+28.4	-83.3	-21.4	-22.4	-29.6

Source: Assessor's Books for Carrigan, Meacham, Raccoon, and Tonti townships for 1879 and Haines Township for 1878; and Carrigan, Haines, Meacham, and Tonti townships for 1892, and Raccoon Township for 1891.

Although economic conditions were on the decline, Marion County agriculture was in the midst of a period of expansion--most rapidly in the three Populist townships. Agricultural expansion usually was done on borrowed money. Thus expanding areas, especially where growth may not be practical or wise, were most sensitive to an economic contraction. The financial activities of the Davenports during this period--along with their foreclosures as hard times struck--clearly illustrate this principle.<sup>22</sup> Since crop prices were steadily falling, farmers had difficulty not only in making loan payments,

22. See Chapter III, pp. 35, 36.

but even in recovering their production costs. This situation required that they often borrow money to meet the daily expenses of farming. As conditions got worse after 1887, sources of conventional loans dried up and farmers were forced to resort to high interest chattel mortgages on farm implements and home furnishings to acquire operating capital or to obtain money for expansion.<sup>23</sup> This financial arrangement especially was likely in a heavily-settled area such as Marion County, where expansion seldom meant acquisition of new land, but more often placing property already owned into production. Unless the farmer with a mind to expand acquired his new land from a neighbor's unimproved acreage, or unless he had paid off his own farm to a point where a second mortgage was possible, a chattel mortgage was the only answer, except for a loan against his crop. The tenant farmer, with only his crop or his personal property as collateral, had even fewer alternatives. But in any case, if the land did not produce well, or if agricultural prices fell sharply, or both, the heavily indebted farmer suffered severely. Such events well may explain the sharp drops in personal property holdings shown by Table 10.

For the farmers of Haines, Meacham, and Raccoon townships the outlook must have been especially discouraging. Faced with the twin problems of poor land and low prices for their crops, they tried to keep their heads above water financially by placing more acreage into production and by investing in farm machinery to a greater extent than their neighbors. More frequently actual owners of the land they worked than were their compatriots in nearby

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23. Farmer, "Economic Background of Frontier Populism," p. 419.

townships, they were less able to pick up stakes and move on when hard times hit. Their expansion plans were borne of desperation. Their backs were to the wall. Circumstances had to be changed; conditions had to get better. Otherwise, these farmers would fall continually deeper into debt. Such farmers had a greater than normal interest in altering the status quo--economically, socially, and politically--even to the point of supporting radical proposals.

Thus, as in the West, radical agrarian discontent in Marion County grew strongest in areas of marginal agricultural value, and where farmers were caught in unsound expansion when agriculture collapsed in the mid-Eighties. The Populists of Marion County lived in townships where poor soil meant low productivity, despite the farmers' attempts to change their situation. These factors, coupled with the collapse of the rural economy while they were in the process of expanding to increase production--and with what must have been mounting frustration about the distant and impersonal forces that undermined and negated their continuing efforts at self-help--proved catalytic, and long-smouldering discontent about agrarian conditions changed into open and concerted political protest in the election of 1892.

## CHAPTER VI

### Radical Politics in Pike County, Illinois

The People's Party showed considerably more strength in Pike County than it did in Marion. The 13.9 percent of the Pike vote captured by the Populists was much better than their 9.1 percent success in the southern county. In addition, while the Populists made a significant showing in only three Marion County townships, they did well in seven townships of Pike County. However, these were not the only differences between the two counties; they differed in several other ways.<sup>1</sup> Containing sixteen incorporated towns and thirty-one villages, Pike County in 1892 was considerably larger and more developed than its southern counterpart. Pike's twenty-four townships numbered half-again as many as in Marion, and the county's 756 square miles gave it a total land area 31 percent larger.<sup>2</sup>

Located on Illinois' western border about a hundred miles due north of St. Louis, Pike is a river county; more than a fifth of its total area is in the fertile valley formed by the Mississippi River, which marks its western boundary. Pike's other side is extremely poor, hilly, and broken country, culminating in a high bluff running the length of its eastern border, the Illinois River.<sup>3</sup> The geographic features of the county played a significant role in its development.

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1. Official Vote of the State of Illinois in 1892, pp. 1, 2.

2. M.D. Massie, Past and Present of Pike County, Illinois (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1966), p. 34.

3. Ibid.

The area was considerably less isolated than Marion County. Its river borders provided easy access for moving people and produce north to Chicago or south to St. Louis. However, the geography of the county also presented some drawbacks. The presence of good, fertile bottomland in its western townships and of rugged, heavily-timbered countryside on its eastern border, created a discrepancy in conditions which registered quite graphically in the election of 1892.

Most of Pike County pioneers established residence in the more promising western sections of the county. But despite the fertile land that area had to offer, permanent settlement in the county occurred relatively late. The first families arrived from Massachusetts in 1820 and settled in what became Atlas Township, in the southwest section of the present county. As the southwest quickly filled, later arrivals chose more central locations. This shift in settlement patterns was recognized in 1833 when the county seat moved from Atlas to Pittsfield, the fastest growing village in the area.<sup>4</sup>

Pike County originally was tremendous in size. Established in 1821 as a Military Tract for veterans of the War of 1812, the county at first extended eastward along the Kankakee River to the Indiana line, and so far north that when the county's first election was held, the thirty-five votes cast included "those of the French at Chicago." But large portions of land were cut off by the Illinois legislature in 1823 and again in 1825. Eventually, fifty counties

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4. M. D. Massie, Past and Present of Pike County, Illinois, p. 51, and History of Pike County, Illinois (Chicago: Charles C. Chapman and Company, 1880), pp. 265-69.

were organized from the land separated from Pike. Bitter controversy dominated Pike County in 1847, when the Illinois Constitution called for township organization. But an election held in 1849 approved an organization plan, and in 1850 the county adopted the civil structure it has today.<sup>5</sup>

Like its southern counterpart, Pike County was named after a noted historical figure--the famous explorer, Captain Zebulon Pike. At first, life in Pike was much more uncertain than in Marion County. Indian troubles dominated the county's early history, but the military origins of Pike's citizens gave them the means to establish peace and security. In 1830, the county's citizens banded together in an unofficial militia to drive out fifty or sixty Sac and Fox Indians who were squatting on the land and raiding local farmers' livestock. Two years later a company was raised in Atlas Township to fight the Blackhawk War, a short distance to the north. Prospective volunteers were summoned to a grand meeting and were encouraged by martial music and buckets of whiskey to take the fateful step forward. By the time the buckets had passed round three times, a hundred men had enlisted.<sup>6</sup>

The county's contribution to the Civil War was much more significant; over half the electorate enlisted in the Union cause. Not only did residents of the county supply companies to various Union regiments, but in 1862 nine hundred Pike County men formed their own regiment, the 99th Infantry. This unit saw sixty-two days of action between 1863 and 1865; its most important

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5. History of Pike County, pp. 196, 246, and Past and Present of Pike County, pp. 34, 44, 45, 51, 79, 80.

6. Past and Present of Pike County, pp. 34, 52-54.



engagement came at Vicksburg. In addition, the Henderson Home Guard, 130 strong, was formed in 1861, probably as a defense against any proslavery activity from across the river in Missouri.<sup>7</sup>

After the war citizens of Pike County returned to farming and to the status quo. Ideas for change promoted by the war were resisted by the county during the post-war era. Plans for bringing the railroad to Pike County, begun in 1863, suffered a setback in 1867 when the voters narrowly defeated a bond issue to finance construction. It started again in 1869 when a group of citizens raised \$32,000 and several townships assessed themselves \$150,000 to provide the necessary funds. But not until 1872 did county officials finally get approval from the voters to issue railroad bonds, thereby guaranteeing Pike County an alternative to river transportation--the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railway Company, Incorporated.<sup>8</sup>

The direction of Pike County politics might have been predicted by the conditions of agriculture in the county. In general, farming in the county was good. As in Marion County, corn was the major crop. But unlike her sister county, Pike had 72 percent more land in corn production, and the yield was less than a half bushel below the state average of 38.1 bushels per acre. While oats were Marion's secondary crop, in Pike County that position was accorded wheat. Here also the county's production average of 15.8 bushels per acre approximated the state average of 16.3 bushels. Even in oat production Pike bested Marion County. Although only a tertiary crop in Pike

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7. Past and Present of Pike County, pp. 70-72, and History of Pike County, pp. 373-82.

8. Past and Present of Pike County, pp. 107-09.

County, oat yields averaged 28.3 bushels per acre compared to 24.8 bushels in Marion. Overall, although Pike County was only 31 percent larger than Marion County, Pike farmers had over twice as much land in cereal production. In terms of total improved acreage, the discrepancy was not as great; Pike County contained only 67.5 percent more improved acreage. Thus, agriculture was considerably more advanced in Pike County than in Marion, their size differences notwithstanding.<sup>9</sup>

However, it is very likely not all shared in the agricultural wealth of the Pike County. The county's eastern townships were reported to consist of mostly broken land--very rough, and suitable only for livestock production--not the fertile, well-watered, well-cultivated prairie and bottom land described in the central and western townships.<sup>10</sup> The relationship between political discontent and the topography of the seven townships selected for study is shown by Table 11. It is worth noting that all the politically dissident townships, where the Populists out-pollled one or both major parties, are located together in the southern quarter of the county.<sup>11</sup> Figure 3 illustrates this grouping.

Yet the relative success of the People's Party in Pike County is surprising in two respects. First, the attitude of the local press showed a general lack of concern about the third party movement. Even the few editorial attacks launched against the Populists conveyed supreme confidence. Commenting on the physical

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9. Statistics of Agriculture: 1890, pp. 205, 363.

10. History of Pike County, pp. 404-868, passim.

11. The single exception was Ross Township in the extreme southwest of the county. Tax records were unavailable for this township, so it could not be included in the study.

PRESIDENTIAL VOTES CAST IN 1892 IN SELECTED  
TOWNSHIPS OF PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS \*

Township	Republican	Democratic	People's
Detroit	74	105	32
Hardin	58	65	93
Martinsburg	129	111	55
Montezuma	90	100	140
Newburg	95	60	91
Pearl	38	71	118
Spring Creek	90	125	113

Source: Pike County Democrat, November 16, 1892

\* A Prohibition Party candidate also was on the ballot but his vote, unrecorded here, was insignificant.

qualities of a Populist publication he had received, a contributor in the county's major paper noted that "its faded appearance represented its party, which seems to be fading away. . . . Poor little thing. If thou art so easily done for, why was you ever begun for."<sup>12</sup> But more often the Populists merely were ignored and were given little coverage of any kind. Even the president of the local Farmers' Alliance was not a third party man.<sup>13</sup>

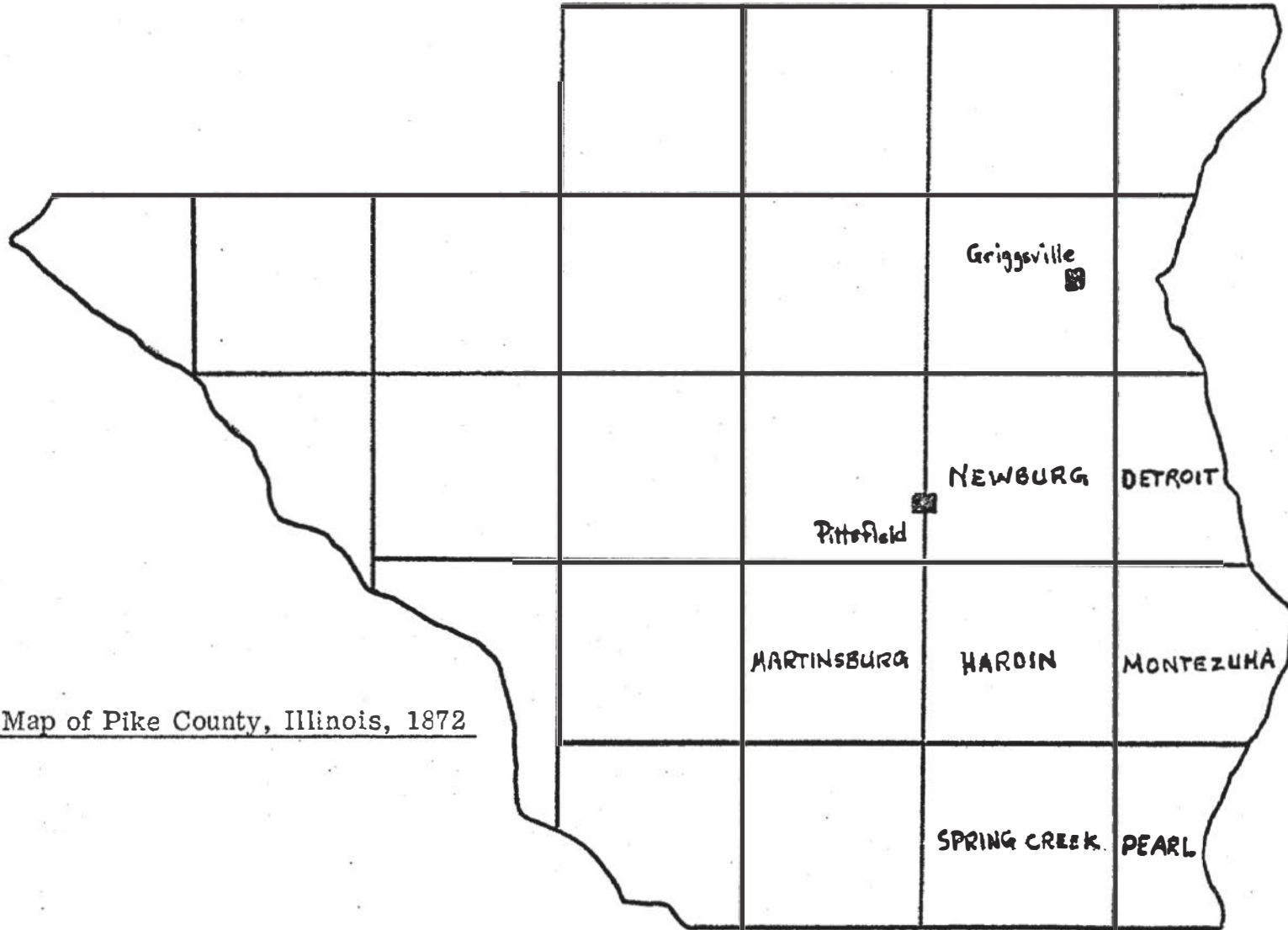
However, the newspapers' neglect of the People's Party may have been a purposeful attempt to help maintain the social and political status quo, a course of action which may distort the third party's actual place in the history of Pike County. In any case, the radicals seem to have achieved a level of disorganization matching Populist efforts in Marion County. Pike County Populists apparently

12. Pike County Democrat, January 12, 1892.

13. Ibid.

FIGURE 3

MAP OF PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS SHOWING  
TOWNSHIPS BEING STUDIED



Source: Atlas Map of Pike County, Illinois, 1872

had no central committee or county organization. The local press did cover the organizational meeting of the People's Party in St. Louis in February 1892, and at least two area men attended it.<sup>14</sup> But if the county's radicals organized the March 26 township meetings and held the April 16 county convention mandated by the St. Louis meeting, Pike County's two newspapers never reported it. In April's township elections the Populists fielded slates in only three of the county's 24 townships. All third party candidates were soundly beaten--in Flint Township by a three to two margin, and in Perry and Griggsville townships by nearly ten to one.<sup>15</sup> That disaster, plus two rallies in the autumn of 1892 mark the extent of the Populist's political activity in Pike County--at least as reported by the press.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, both papers reported indiscriminately the numerous activities of each major party and seemed neutral in the election, especially when compared to the highly vocal political organs in Marion County.

Compared to other areas of Illinois, the People's Party was successful in Pike County despite its lack of organization and activity. The Populists captured Hardin, Montezuma, and Pearl townships outright; in Pearl the third party received more votes than the Republicans and Democrats, combined. In Newburg and Spring Creek townships the Populists ran second to the Republicans and to the Democrats, respectively. Yet, adjacent to this block

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14. Independent Press, February 24 and March 2, 1892.

15. Ibid., April 6, 1892.

16. Ibid., September 14 and October 5, 1892.

of radical support, the two major parties carried Detroit and Martinsburg townships by the largest margins in Pike County. After examining data concerning the condition of agriculture in all seven of these townships, one is hard-pressed to explain the existence of Populist strength in some locales but not in others. However, some relationships do exist between township characteristics and third party strength in Pike County. The fact that those associations are more hidden and subtle than in Marion County underscores the greater complexity of political behavior in Pike.

Although in Marion County a generally positive relationship existed between landowning and Populism,<sup>17</sup> in Pike County it did not. Not only were all seven Pike County townships filled with tenants, but as Table 12 details, the Populist townships had the highest and the lowest incidence of resident landowners. Interspersed among the Populist areas in the table are Martinsburg, with second highest percentage of resident landholders, and Detroit, which falls exactly in the middle, with two radical townships showing a greater proportion of landowning farmers, and three Populist ones having less. Neither Martinsburg nor Detroit gave any significant support to the third party in 1892.

While fewer residents of Pike County townships actually owned the land they farmed, those who did own it controlled at least as much of their township's resources as Marion landowners did. Carrigan Township, with

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17. Chapter 5, pp. 66-68.

TABLE 12

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS OWNING LAND AND  
 PERCENTAGE OF TOWNSHIP LAND THEY OWNED  
 IN PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS IN 1892.

Township	Residents owning land	Land owned by Residents	Index of Inequality
Detroit	26.1	53.3	26.2
Hardin	19.6	51.7	32.1
Martinsburg	31.8	57.3	25.5
Montezuma	28.7	59.3	30.6
Newburg	38.2	53.8	25.6
Pearl	22.3	50.1	27.8
Spring Creek	22.6	51.9	29.3

Source: Assessor's Books for Detroit, Hardin, Martinsburg, Newburg, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships for 1892, and for Montezuma Township for 1891; and "Aggregate Population By Minor Civil Divisions," Compendium of the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part I--Population, pp. 123-124.

the highest tenancy rate in Marion County, shows about the same percent of resident landowners as does Newburg Township, the Pike County Township with the lowest tenancy rate. But the 38.2 percent of Newburg's residents who owned land, possessed 53.8 percent of the township's real estate. In Carrigan 34.1 percent of the people owned only 40.2 percent of the land.<sup>18</sup>

The difference between the percent of residents owning property and the percentage of the property they own is an important one.<sup>19</sup> It provides some idea about the comparative degree of equality, or inequality, in the distribution

18. See Table 4, p. 68.

19. See pp. 69, 70.

of property in the various townships. Theoretically, if resources are divided equally, thirty percent of the people occupy thirty percent of the land, seventy percent of the people seventy percent of the land, and so on. Land distribution in Marion County was relatively equal in all five townships, and it does not seem a factor explaining radical political behavior there. However in Pike County, not only was property distribution greatly unequal in all seven townships, but the degree of inequality varied among them in such a way that it creates a strong though not perfect relationship with Populist strength.

As Table 12 shows, not only was the incidence of landownership much lower in Pike townships than in Marion, but in Pike it also fluctuated much more from township to township--ranging from 19.6 percent of the people in Hardin controlling 51.7 percent of the land, to 28.7 percent in Montezuma controlling 59.3 percent of the land, to 31.8 percent in Martinsburg controlling 57.3 percent of the land. Subtracting the percent of "residents owning land" from the percent of "land owned by residents" provides an index of "inequality." By itself this figure has no real meaning, but compared to the index of inequality for other townships it provides a measurement of relative inequality in land distribution among each township's residents. The larger the index figure the greater the inequality of distribution. For example, in Hardin, which has an index figure of 32.1, land was less equally distributed among the residents than in Martinsburg Township, which had an index figure of 25.5. Table 12 shows the four townships where inequality in distribution of resources was greatest were strong Populist areas in 1892. Of the three townships where the



inequality was least, two--Martinsburg and Detroit--gave almost no support to the third party in the election. Furthermore, in Hardin and Montezuma townships, where the inequality was most acute, the Populists won an absolute majority of the vote s.

Unfortunately, no such strong relationship exists when comparing radical politics to farm size, farm value, and degree of improvement, as illustrated by Table 13.<sup>20</sup> Populist townships in Pike County contained both the largest

TABLE 13

AVERAGE SIZE, ACRES IN PRODUCTION, AND VALUE OF  
FARMS OWNED BY RESIDENTS OF SELECTED TOWNSHIPS  
IN PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN 1892

Township	Farm Size	Improved Acres	Percent Improved	Farm Value	Value Per Acre
Detroit	143.0 Acres	90.6	63.3	\$1133	\$ 7.92
Hardin	213.0	150.5	70.7	1366	6.42
Martinsburg	135.7	104.9	77.5	1230	6.62
Montezuma	116.9	77.3	66.3	1015	8.69
Newburg	115.2	90.5	78.3	1310	11.43
Pearl	98.8	38.9	39.4	410	4.17
Spring Creek	110.6	59.6	53.9	451	4.07

Source: Assessor's Books for Detroit, Hardin, Martinsburg, Newburg, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships for 1892, and Montezuma Township for 1891.

and the smallest farms, as in Hardin and Pearl, and the largest and smallest number of improved acres on them. Furthermore, with the exception of Pearl

20. The data in this table must be interpreted with the same methodological qualifications as used for Table 5 for Marion County in Chapter 5. These qualifications are outlined in Chapter 5 on pp. 68, 69.

and Spring Creek townships, no consistently significant differences in degree of improvement exists between farms in the politically radical areas and farms in the more moderate ones. The same lack of association is also shown by considering average farm values in the various townships. In this case, farms in two of the Populist townships were worth the least and second least; but in two other Populist townships they had the highest and second highest values of the areas studied. Centrally located in the measurement of farm values were two non-Populist and one Populist township--Detroit, Martinsburg, and Montezuma, respectively.

Average land values further reflect the lack of any relationship between the agricultural conditions shown in Table 13 and radical voting behavior.

Real property in some Populist townships, like Newburg and Montezuma, was of high value per acre. In other radical areas, such as Pearl and Spring Creek, the land was poor--probably in both value and quality--and land in Hardin, the remaining Populist township, differed little in value from Martinsburg, where the third party found no significant support in 1892.

Table 14 specifies this lack of relationship by showing values by land classification, thus removing the differences in degree of improvement as a factor affecting the values in Table 13. It also considers all land in the various townships, and therefore it is a more comprehensive measurement than Table 13, which only deals with land owned by the townships' residents.

Note that once the differences in degree of improvement are removed, the lack of relationship between land values and Populism becomes even more

TABLE 14

COMPARATIVE LAND VALUES IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS  
 OF PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN 1892

Township	Land Improved	Value Per Acre		
		Improved Land	Unimproved Land	All Land
Detroit	61.6%	\$12.63	\$3.41	\$ 9.08
Hardin	68.5	8.12	2.97	6.37
Martinsburg	73.5	8.52	2.77	7.00
Montezuma	60.2	12.44	1.90	8.26
Newburg	78.6	12.38	3.71	10.01
Pearl	36.5	7.87	2.32	4.36
Spring Creek	49.4	6.15	1.41	3.75

Source: Assessors' Books for Detroit, Hardin, Martinsburg, Newburg, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships in 1892, and Montezuma Township for 1891.

apparent. Since it has already been suggested the value of improved acreage is a function of land quality, fertility, and productivity,<sup>21</sup> one can say that while the working acreage in some Populist townships was poor, it was no worse than farm in some non-Populist areas. Furthermore, the same kind of statement also is true for Pike County's good land. The most valuable acreage in the townships studied was found in two Populist and one non-Populist areas-- Montezuma, Newburg, and Detroit townships, respectively. Thus, unlike in Marion County, no relationship between radical politics and land values, quality, or productivity existed in Pike.

The only possible correlation between farm characteristics and Populist electoral strength in Pike County is found by employing a rather indirect and

21. See Chapter 5, p. 73.

sophisticated statistical measurement method. Farms in Pike County averaged 135.0 acres in 1892; of that amount 103.0 acres was improved land. Although, as Table 13 already has established, no relationship exists between Populism and farm size or number of acres producing crops, comparing each township's deviation from the county norm uncovers the fact that Populist townships were farther from the county average than were non-Populist ones. Farms in conservative political areas were close to the county norms for size and for number of improved acres. Farms in Populist townships were more distant from county averages in these two measurements; they either were much larger or much smaller than the arithmetic mean for Pike County farms. This discovery produces strong Spearman Coefficient of Correlation values of 0.789 and 0.859 when comparing the amount of Populism in each township to its variation with mean farm size and number of improved acres on Pike County farms; but the result is only a statistical curiosity.<sup>22</sup> The Spearman value statistically "proves" the bigger or the smaller a radical township farm was-- or the greater or lesser amount of improved acres the farmer was working-- the stronger Populist sentiment was in that locale. An explanation may be found to account for the lack of radical political behavior in the non-Populist townships; conditions there were average for Pike County, and the residents therefore had no reason to exhibit a high degree of discontent. But what factors do townships with farms much larger than average have in common with areas where farms are much smaller than normal, which would explain their tendency to support

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22. See the Appendix for an explanation of the Spearman Coefficient of Correlation as a statistical tool.

a third party ticket in 1892? No reasonable interpretive judgement can be attached to this relationship.

However, as in Marion County, Populism in Pike was closely associated with the degree to which local agriculture had been mechanized. Table 15 shows

TABLE 15

DEGREE OF AGRICULTURAL MECHANIZATION AMONG  
LANDOWNING FARMERS IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS OF  
PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1892

Township	Number of Resident Landowners	Value of their Farm Machinery	Reporting No Machinery	Average Value
Detroit	58	\$ 381	27	\$ 6.51
Hardin	55	358	15	6.50
Martinsburg	101	488	39	4.84
Montezuma	104	740	42	7.12
Newburg	108	1135	35	10.50
Pearl	75	384	28	5.12
Spring Creek	99	701	25	7.08

Source: Assessors' Books for Detroit, Hardin, Martinsburg, Newburg, Spring Creek and Pearl townships for 1892, and Montezuma Township for 1891.

this relationship. The average value of implements on each farm is obviously not associated with radical politics since the townships with the highest and lowest average values both were Populist areas. But, this measurement is affected by the number of farmers working landholdings using only rudimentary farming techniques and by the great variation in degree of land improvement among the seven townships, illustrated by Table 13. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that a generally higher percentage of farmers in non-Populist townships

reported no farm machinery than did in areas where the third party was strong. Table 16 takes into account this factor and also the variance in percentage of improved acreage on farms in the townships studied. It standardizes the difference in degree of improvement by providing not an absolute value for agricultural mechanization but instead a value per improved acre.

TABLE 16

VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND IMPLEMENTS  
PER IMPROVED ACRE OF LAND IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS  
OF PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN 1892

Township	Value Per Improved Acre	
	Owned by Residents	All Improved Land
Detroit	\$0.072	\$0.079
Hardin	.043	.042
Martinsburg	.046	.043
Montezuma	.092	.109
Newburg	.116	.100
Pearl	.132	.139
Spring Creek	.119	.112

Source: Assessors' Books for Detroit, Hardin, Martinsburg, Newburg, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships for 1892, and Montezuma Township for 1891.

A quick look at this table shows the average improved acre in the Populist townships had more machinery available to work on it than in the non-Populist townships. The only exception to this relationship was Hardin Township, which the People's Party carried. But everywhere else it is apparent the Populist townships were much more highly mechanized. Although this characteristic

cannot be also tied to land values, as it could in Marion County, Pike Populists must have been frustrated too, because their investment in farm machinery had not paid off in more productivity than their unmechanized neighbors enjoyed.

Table 17 established that, as in Marion County, no correlation existed between personal property values and radical voting behavior. Although the

TABLE 17

PERSONAL PROPERTY HOLDINGS IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS  
OF PIKE COUNTY FOR 1892

Township	Total Value of Personal Property	Number of Adult Males	Average Value of Personal Property	Having no Personal Property
Detroit	\$22,819	222	\$103	42
Hardin	34,986	280	125	97
Martinsburg	37,247	317	117	107
Montezuma	52,227	363	144	45
Newburg	54,964	283	194	82
Pearl	20,873	336	62	97
Spring Creek	24,370	424	57	116

Source: Assessors' Books for Detroit, Hardin, Martinsburg, Newburg, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships for 1892, and Montezuma for 1892; and "Aggregate Population by Minor Civil Divisions," Compendium of the Eleventh Census, 1890, Part I--Population, pp. 123-124.

amount of personal property--including livestock, farm implements, stocks and bonds, and furniture--varied more among the townships of Pike than it did in Marion, no definite pattern proves residents of Populist areas were consistently richer or poorer than their non-Populist neighbors. Nor was the incidence of propertyless residents any greater or less in the Populist townships.

Comparing the data in Table 13 with the information provided by Table 16 gives a good picture of the conditions in Pike County prompting support of a radical third party in 1892. Close examination of both tables reveals a significant point; the townships where farms had the fewest number of acres in production were the most highly mechanized. Those with the largest number of improved acres were the least mechanized. If all the townships are ranked in order according to the increasing number of improved acres on their farms and also by the decreasing value of their machinery, the results are identical. Since its farms were the most highly mechanized and had the smallest amount of improved land, Pearl Township ranks number one in both categories, followed in order by Spring Creek, Montezuma, and Newburg--all Populist townships in 1892. The politically moderate townships, Detroit and Martinsburg, rank fifth and sixth on both the farm size and mechanization lists. Only the third party stronghold of Hardin, which was least mechanized and had the largest number of improved acres per farm, broke the pattern by ranking last. But with the exception of Hardin Township, there exists a strong and explainable relationship between Populism, land in production, and mechanization of agriculture.

As in Marion County, farmers in the Populist townships of Pike were making an effort to improve their agricultural situation by using machinery. In this way they attempted to compensate for the small size of their farms by increasing their efficiency and, hopefully, their incomes. Though their land was no poorer or less productive than their politically moderate neighbors, the Populist farmers of Pike's rugged eastern townships had less of it. Furthermore,



their small amount of productive acreage largely was owned by the people who farmed it. With money tied up in the land and also in machinery to work it, residents of the Populist townships had a double incentive to stay on and fight to improve their situation. But the continued decline in agriculture, despite a heavy financial investment in land and machinery, ultimately had the same effect in Pike County township as it did in Marion County in 1892; it brought out the intensely frustrated farmers to vote for the People's Party.

## CHAPTER VII

### Demographic Trends in Marion and Pike Counties

Any attempt to study political behavior ultimately must deal with people--not necessarily as individuals, but people as the masses. More specifically, population trends sometimes help assess the general economic condition of an area. The degree of movement in or out of an area, like a city or township, or even a state, provides some hints about the opportunities there, at least from the residents' point of view. The most notable manifestation of this phenomenon is the almost complete depopulation of areas in Kansas and Nebraska after the collapse of agriculture in the mid-Eighties.<sup>1</sup> The tremendous flood of immigrants to the United States starting in the 1840's provides an example of people drawn to an area because they perceived it offered great opportunity.

But any large, rapid movement of people to or from a place is both socially and economically unsettling to its residents. The social aspect of rapid population change might include such manifestations as weakened institutions--churches, fraternal and occupational associations, and local political groups--due to constant fluctuations of membership caused by people entering or leaving the area. Friendship patterns and social structure would be disrupted. The economic consequences would be reflected most in property values and in

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1. Farmer, "Economic Background of Frontier Populism," pp. 420-22, and Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, pp. 307, 308.

the labor market. The latter consequence would not be especially pronounced in family farming areas like Marion and Pike counties, but large numbers of persons moving in or out of these counties, or of particular townships, certainly would affect the real estate market for farmland; to a great extent, the law of supply and demand would determine the price per acre asked, and the price realized. Also, rapid population movements put a strain on public institutions, due to overcrowding on the one hand or to loss of tax support on the other. Examples might be schools, township or county roads, and public charity for paupers--both Marion and Pike counties had poor farms for indigent persons, and each township had a poor fund for outdoor relief. It is not unlikely that such social and economic upheavals would have political manifestations on election day.

Thus a population study can be of value to an analysis of voting behavior, if only to prove the null hypothesis--that no relationship exists between the demographic characteristics of a political unit and its voting patterns. Such seems to be the case in both Marion and Pike counties. No significant associations between population trends or characteristics and political behavior can be established. At first glance, a significant difference in population trends seems to exist in the two counties, as shown in Table 18. While the population of Marion County showed an overall growth rate of 28.3 percent between 1870 and 1890, the population of Pike County remained fairly constant. However, some conceptual dangers are hidden in these general figures. The increase in Marion County was neither steady nor widespread. In fact, the greatest

TABLE 18

POPULATION GROWTH OF SELECTED TOWNSHIPS IN  
MARION COUNTY AND PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS,  
1870-1900

Civil Unit	1870	1880	1890	1900
Marion County	20,622	23,686	24,341	30,446
Carrigan Township	X	875	774	891
Haines Township	X	1,129	1,003	1,427
Meacham Township	835	927	790	1,073
Raccoon Township	1,139	1,181	1,137	1,215
Tonti Township	X	900	954	918
Pike County	30,768	33,751	31,000	31,595
Detroit Township	1,056	1,008	833	847
Hardin Township	1,468	1,410	1,051	896
Martinsburg Township	1,466	1,353	1,186	1,157
Montezuma Township	1,498	1,478	1,360	1,420
Newburg Township	1,540	1,243	1,060	1,127
Pearl Township	628	845	1,256	1,518
Spring Creek Township	1,009	1,365	1,590	1,557

Source: "Population of Civil Divisions Less than Counties," Ninth Census, Vol. 1, The Statistics of Population of the United States, pp. 116, 118 and "Aggregate Population by Minor Civil Division," Compendium of the Eleventh Census, 1890 Part I -- Population, pp. 122, 124, 125; "Population of States and Territories by Minor Civil Divisions: 1890 and 1900," Census Reports, Vol. 1, Twelfth Census of the United States, Taken in the Year 1900, Part 1--Population, pp. 126, 128.

surge in the county's growth came in the years after the election of 1892; before 1890, the growth of Marion County was only slightly more rapid than the population increase in Pike . Furthermore, the very small rise in Pike County population in general conceals great variation and fluctuation at the township level.

In both Marion and Pike counties, most of the townships studied suffered some population loss during the 1880's. Exceptions to this trend were Tonti Township in Marion County, and Spring Creek and Pearl townships in Pike County, all of which showed varying degrees of growth during the decade. Two of the Marion townships experiencing marked population losses, Haines and Meacham, exhibited strong Populist undercurrents in 1892. However, Carrigan Township also suffered a large loss but gave almost no support to the Populist ticket; and Raccoon Township, the only one of the People's Party carried in the election experienced the smallest loss of all. In Pike County comparisons of voting trends to demographic trends are equally inconclusive. Populist townships in Pike showed the only gains and the biggest loss in population. But other Populist townships had gains or losses not significantly different from townships where the radical party had no strength at all. Table 19 specifies these relationships by outlining population trends in the several townships in Marion and Pike counties during the two decades prior to the election of 1892.

The reason for this mass exodus during the Eighties is a matter for some speculation, and is of more than a little concern to this study of agrarian

POPULATION CHANGE IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS IN  
PIKE COUNTY AND MARION COUNTY, 1870-1900

	1870-80	1880-90	1870-90
Marion County	+15%	+ 3%	+23%
Carrigan	X	-12	X
Haines	X	-11	X
Meacham	+11	-17	- 5
Raccoon	+ 4	- 4	0
Tonti	X	+ 6	X
Pike County	+10%	- 8%	+ 1%
Detroit	- 5	-17	-26
Hardin	- 4	-25	-28
Martinsburg	- 8	-12	-19
Montezuma	- 1	- 8	- 9
Newburg	-19	-15	-31
Pearl	+35	+49	+100
Spring Creek	+35	+17	+ 58

Source: "Population of Civil Divisions Less than Counties," Ninth Census, Vol. 1, The Statistics of Population of the United States, pp. 116, 118 and "Aggregate Population by Minor Civil Division," Compendium of the Eleventh Census, 1890 Part I -- Population, pp. 122, 124, 125.

conditions and radical politics. While no good way exists to ascertain whether outmigrants merely moved from one township to another, or whether they left the county, or even the state of Illinois, it is not unrealistic to claim that such drastic population movements indicate to some degree the discontent within the effected townships. Happy, contented, and prosperous people obviously are less likely to pull up stakes and leave than are persons who face economic hardships. Yet from the data available, the movement of large numbers of

people in and out of the several townships between 1870 and 1890 cannot be validly and directly associated with expression of political discontent in the election of 1892. Nor can it directly be related to economic conditions in those townships.

As Table 19 shows, not all townships undergoing extreme population changes between 1870 and 1890 showed Populist strength in 1892. In Marion County, as already mentioned, Carrigan, a non-Populist township showed a greater population loss in the Eighties than did the Populist enclaves of Haines and Raccoon, but less than the third Populist township of Meacham. Similarly, in Pike County, the non-Populist townships of Detroit and Martinsburg suffered greater losses in population from 1870 to 1890 than did the Populist Montezuma Township--but less than Hardin and Newburg townships, which were both areas of third party strength. The two Populist townships of Pearl and Spring Creek reversed the traditional pattern and experienced tremendous growth during that same period. The lack of any relationship between population trends and voting behavior can be statistically shown by Yule's Q, an easily figured, easily interpreted measurement of association between two factors.<sup>2</sup> The value of Yule's Q varies between +1.000, for a perfect positive correlation between the two variables, to a -1.000 for a perfect negative or reverse relationship. A value near or at zero shows no association between the two variables; in the case where the two variables are population growth or loss, and radical

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2. For an explanation of Yule's Q as a statistical measure, see the Appendix.

or traditional politics, Yule's Q is zero, statistically verifying the lack of correlation between the two factors. Table 20 shows the calculations; the townships are categorized according to the last table.

TABLE 20

CORRELATION BETWEEN POPULATION CHANGE AND  
VOTING BEHAVIOR IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS OF  
MARION AND PIKE COUNTIES, ILLINOIS IN 1892

	Populist	Non-Populist	
Population Gain	2 township	1 township	$Q = (ad - bc)(ad + bc)$ $Q = (2 \times 3 - 6 \times 1)(2 \times 3 + 6 \times 1)$ $Q = (6 - 6)(6 + 6)$ $Q = 0$
Population Loss	6 township	3 township	

But other methodological problems also are inherent in relating voting behavior to the population data shown above in Table 19. The percentages shown in that table represent not changes only. The actual movement of people through the townships of the two counties could be much higher in many or all cases. For example, although census figures for Montezuma Township in Pike County show only a nine percent population loss between 1870 and 1890, very likely substantially more than nine percent of the township's population actually moved during these twenty years. The figure in Table 19 does not



necessarily mean the same people lived there throughout the period. Such could be the case, but if the number of people leaving a township during a decade was equalled by the number of people moving in, the net change in population would be zero, and the township would seem demographically static. The nine percent figure for Montezuma shows only that nine percent more people left the township than entered it between 1870 and 1890. Theoretically, it is possible that no person living in Raccoon Township in Marion County in 1870 was still there by 1890, and that they all had been replaced by new people. Under such circumstances, Raccoon would be the least stable township in Marion County, not the most stable, as Table 19 shows. All reason and evidence point to an actual gross population change much greater than the net figures used in the table. In fact, a planned chapter on political leaders in the townships of Marion County had to be abandoned when only 18 of 55 men so identified could be found in the manuscript census schedules for 1880. This unfortunate development further illustrated the high population mobility in all townships studied, and probably in those not studied too. Doubtlessly, the actual movement of people in and out of Marion County townships was much higher than the net figures in the table indicate.

Any relationship between population trends and voting patterns is equally elusive when the economic factor of agricultural growth is also considered. Table 21 specifies the relationship, or more accurately the lack of relationship, between population and voting when an economic variable is introduced. The table below considers population growth in the light of agricultural expansion;

TABLE 21

CHANGE IN PER CAPITA LAND BASE FOR SELECTED  
TOWNSHIPS IN PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1870 TO 1890,  
AND IN MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1880 TO 1890

	Per Capita Acres 1880	Per Capita Acres 1890	Net Change
Marion County	9.6	9.1	-0.5 Acres
Carrigan	16.3	20.8	+4.5
Haines	10.5	14.7	+4.2
Meacham	15.7	20.8	+5.1
Raccoon	10.5	12.9	+2.9
Tonti	15.1	14.6	-0.5
	1870	1890	Net Change
Pike County	10.6	10.4	-0.2 Acres
Detroit	3.2	11.4	+8.2
Hardin	9.1	14.7	+5.6
Martinsburg	9.4	13.9	+4.5
Montezuma	8.8	8.8	0
Newburg	9.9	18.3	+8.4
Pearl	--	4.3	--
Spring Creek	6.7	6.9	+0.2

Source: Assessors' Books for Carrigan, Meacham, and Tonti townships for 1879 and 1892, for Haines Township for 1878 and 1892, and for Raccoon Township for 1879 and 1891; Assessors' Books for Hardin, Newburg, and Spring Creek townships for 1873 and 1892; for Detroit and Martinsburg townships for 1874 and 1892, for Montezuma Township for 1874 and 1891, and for Pearl Township for 1891; "Farm Areas and Farm Values," Compendium on the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880), Part I, pp. 697-698; "Number, Acreage, and Valuation of Farms and Products, with Cost of Fertilizers, by Counties: Census of 1890," Statistics of Agriculture, 1890.

it tests the hypothesis that the effect of population changes in the various townships was mitigated, or else made more severe, by developmental trends in local agriculture. Dividing the figures for each township's improved acreage by its population, the table provides a per capita acreage value which, when comparisons are made over time, weighs economic development by the population factor. In other words, it standardizes all townships by population and thus removes that factor as a variable to be considered in explaining the growth or decline of agriculture in the townships being studied. However, once again, the only hypothesis proved by this examination is the null hypothesis. Population trends and the conditions which they might have caused apparently were not instrumental in shaping political attitudes.

In effect, Table 21 shows changes in the economic circumstances of the townships being studied. Since they were predominately agricultural, their improved land and its products provided most of the support for each township's population. By measuring the per capita improved acres in each township, comparative economic levels and changes in them over time can be determined. For example, every man, woman, and child in Carrigan Township, Marion County, theoretically was supported economically by 16.3 acres of improved land in 1880. Ten years later, although the township's population had declined 12 percent, the per capita economic land base had risen by 27.6 percent, or by 4.5 acres. Twelve percent of this increase was due to the fewer people, and the other 15.6 percent to the fact that more land was in production. In Pike County's Spring Creek Township, the expansion of farming kept pace with the

township's 58 percent population growth between 1870 and 1890, and the per capita land base remained almost unchanged. The outcome was the same in Montezuma Township, also in Pike county, although the population dropped slightly over the twenty year period, because an equal percentage of land went out of production.

Actually, a person who depended on the same or only a slightly larger amount of producing land to support him in 1890 than he had in 1870 and 1880 probably was in worse shape financially in the Ninties than in the Eighties. The drop in crop prices during the 1880's meant that produce from the same amount of land provided an individual with less money to support himself. How much less cannot be measured here, for that depended on what crop his land was producing and what the local market prices actually were. Besides, Table 21 only establishes each person's theoretical arithmetic share of the working acreage in his township, without regard to whether in reality it was wheat land, or in oats or corn, or whatever.

The important information provided by the table is the comparison it makes between townships in the same county at the same time. The man, woman, or child who was supported by 20.8 acres of cropland was better off than the individual in another township during the same year who only had a 12.9 acre mathematical share of the land for his financial support. Unfortunately for this study, which is searching for a universal element to explain the strength of the People's Party, the Populist townships in both counties were among the highest and also among the lowest in the number of acres mathematically

supporting each member of the township's population. Nor does the amount or direction of change in that support base consistently explain the incidence of Populism in the townships of Marion and Pike counties. The null hypothesis again applies.

No figures exist to show adult male population at the township level. However, enough other demographic information is extant to allow reasonably accurate estimation of the adult male population for each of the townships being studied, and once done, to permit comparison of their levels of political activity. The census tabulations for 1870 to 1900 show, by counties, both the total population and the number of males twenty-one years old and over. A rough ratio of four-to-one exists between the total population of each county and its number of adult males. Specifically the percentages for Pike and Marion counties in 1890 are 26.7 percent and 25.1 percent, respectively. Multiplying the total population of each township by these percentages produces a general idea of the size of the electorate in each township. Comparison of this estimate to the number of votes cast in the 1892 election shows the two figures are generally compatible. Comparing them both to the number of persons reporting personal property to the tax assessor in 1892 provides another check for accuracy.<sup>3</sup> Tables 22 and 23 detail this relationship.

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3. If the estimated adult male population is less than the number of votes cast in the township in 1892 like in Tonti Township in Marion County, or less than the number of persons reporting personal property very likely something is wrong with the estimate. This circumstance probably is an indication that the township contained an unusually large number of older people--perhaps the median age there was higher because of this--and hence the percentage of adult males was higher than in the other townships. Of course, another possibility

TABLE 22  
ESTIMATED ADULT MALE POPULATION FOR SELECTED  
TOWNSHIPS OF MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS, FOR 1890

Township	Total Population	Estimated Adult Males	1892 Votes Cast	1892 Personal Property
Carrigan	774	194	166	146
Haines	1003	251	217	233
Meacham	790	198	164	188
Raccoon	1137	284	234	254
Tonti	954	225	229	215

Source: Assessors' Books for Carrigan, Haines, Meacham and Tonti townships for 1892, and for Raccoon Township for 1891, and "Aggregate Population by Minor Civil Division," Compendium of the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part I--Population, pp. 122, 124, 125, and Centralia Sentinel, November 24, 1892.

Once the number of adult males in each township has been determined, the degree of political involvement in the townships may be established. Earlier chapters have uncovered some strong, though few, relationships between agrarian conditions in the various townships and the amount of third party vote at the polls in 1892. In general, it has been fairly explicitly determined that areas where the Populists did well in the election were townships where an unfortunate combination of conditions made farmers so discontented that large numbers, either in protest or in despair, jumped in 1892 to a radical party offering radical solutions for their economic ills. However, no evidence is vote fraud--"stuffing" the ballot box, or an individual casting more than one vote. Similarly, a large discrepancy between the estimated adult males and the votes cast and/or personal property owners may indicate a relatively young township--younger farmers with large families. Such may be the case with Hardin, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships in Pike County.

TABLE 23  
ESTIMATED ADULT MALE POPULATION FOR SELECTED  
TOWNSHIPS OF PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, FOR 1890

Township	Total Population	Estimated Adult Males	1892 Votes Cast	1892 Personal Property
Detroit	833	222	211	180
Hardin	1051	280	217	183
Martinsburg	1186	317	295	210
Montezuma	1360	363	339	318
Newburg	1060	283	256	201
Pearl	1256	336	236	239
Spring Creek	1590	424	331	308

Source: Assessors' Books for Detroit, Hardin, Martinsburg, Newburg, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships for 1892, and for Montezuma Township for 1891, and "Aggregate Population by Minor Civil Division," Compendium of the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part I --Population, pp. 122, 124, 125, and Pike County Democrat, November 16, 1892.

exists that agrarian discontent politicized the electorate, as Table 24 shows.

While the electorate was extremely active in the election of 1892--as illustrated by the unusually high turnout, by modern standards at the polls--no great groundswell movement developed in the hypersensitive Populist areas. Any expectation, either by the Populists or by the historians who have studied them, that deplorable conditions would stir the usually politically uninvolved into action in 1892 was unrealized, at least in Marion and Pike counties.<sup>4</sup>

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4. No accurate method exists to measure the 1892 turnout against the 1888 vote. Although absolute voting figures are available, of course, any attempt to compare the percent voting in 1892 with the 1888 figure would be highly speculative, at best. Even though the 1890 census is equidistant from the two elections, and even though the general direction of population trends in

TABLE 24  
 VOTES CAST IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 1888 AND  
 1892 IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS OF MARION AND PIKE  
 COUNTIES, ILLINOIS

	1888		1892		Change in Percent Voting
	Votes Cast	Percent Voting*	Votes Cast	Percent Voting	
Marion					
Carrigan	170	87.7	166	85.4	- 2.3
Haines	191	76.2	217	86.4	+10.2
Meacham	162	81.8	164	82.9	+ 1.1
Raccoon	218	77.7	234	82.3	+ 4.6
Tonti	190	84.3	229	--	--
Pike					
Detroit	--	--	211	95.0	--
Hardin	237	84.7	217	77.4	- 7.3
Martinsburg	281	88.7	295	93.3	+ 4.6
Montezuma	331	91.2	339	93.3	+ 2.1
Newburg	260	91.8	256	95.5	+ 3.7
Pearl	279	83.2	236	70.3	-12.9
Spring Creek	308	72.6	331	78.2	+ 5.2

\* See footnote 4 in this chapter, and also Tables 22 and 23

All the townships in Marion County appear equally active and, indeed, in Pike County three of the Populist townships seemed relatively apathetic politically when compared to their other Populist and non-Populist neighbors. Both counties

the various townships between 1880 and 1890 is known, it cannot be assumed the rate at which the population changed in each township was steady, or even that it maintained the same direction throughout the entire decade. Thus a comparison of degree of political participation in the 1888 and 1892 elections, using the 1890 population figures as the basis for calculating the percentage of the electorate voting in each case, is of questionable validity, except as a very, very rough estimate, with all the qualifications already mentioned.



were poor counties in the Eighties and Ninties. The high overall percentage of voters in all the townships well may reflect the generally depressed economic conditions in the area. But no relatively undistressed county has been studied to provide a standard against which to measure the validity of this theory. If the perception of a Populist threat in any of these townships aroused concern among Republicans and Democrats about the success of their political organizations--apparant in Marion County newspapers, but not in the Pike County press--they did not flock to the polls in those townships to prevent it. Indeed, in Hardin, Pearl, and Spring Creek townships, Republicans and Democrats, and maybe even some potential Populists, actually seem to have stayed away from the polls. Thus if the residents of Marion and Pike counties, upset by economic conditians in 1892, were attracted by the presence of a third party proposing radical agrarian ideas, or if they were sickened and repulsed by such a party, they did not show their increased concern at the polls--at least not in most of the Populist townships. Thus, while the People's Party was strong in several townships of both counties, no evidence indicates that persons ordinarily inert politically went to the polls to stop the radical threat or, perhaps upset by conditions, to aid it.

But regardless of whether or not agrarian discontent was reflected by increased voter turnout at township polling places, in general, population factors show no cause and effect relationship with third party strength in the townships studied. Some Populist townships grew between 1870 and 1880 and 1890, others suffered varying degrees of population loss, some remained

the same. Furthermore, non-Populist townships also exhibited these same tendencies to roughly the same degrees. Even when population changes are considered in conjunction with the expansion or contraction of agriculture in the various townships, no clear cut characteristics emerge to define and separate the Populist areas from those where the third party did not run well in the election. The size of the per capita land base providing financial support for each township's residents varied greatly throughout all townships, Populist and non-Populist. So did changes in that economic base over time. Indeed, if a common factor or characteristic can be found to explain the strength of third party politics in some townships of Marion and Pike counties in Illinois, it will not be a population characteristic. This chapter on population has proven the null hypothesis.

## CHAPTER VIII

### The People's Party in Marion and Pike Counties: An Overview and Reassessment

Voting behavior always is difficult to explain and analyze. The average voter seldom really knows why he votes the way he does. He intuitively senses that he likes or dislikes particular candidates or parties, often because he supports or opposes the positions those candidates or parties take on issues which he deems important. But he seldom considers, in a coldly analytical way, just how his environment shapes his own positions on those issues. Indeed, he generally does not realize the conditions which surround him both create the issues vital to him and determine their rank in his hierarchy of importance. Thus when the voter discusses his vote and reveals why he cast it, he is not explaining reasons, but only his reaction to them.

The Pike or Marion County farmer who in 1892 might have explained his vote for the Populists by attacking the inability of the Harrison administration to alleviate the economic situation in his area was stating a manifestation, not a reason. He sensed the poor condition of agriculture, and its continuing economic decline, and reacted against it in support of a political party promising to improve his situation. But the conditions which might have created his economic situation--poor land, not enough land, low productivity, and low crop prices--actually explain his vote, not the situation itself. This is a very subtle point, but also an important one. Farmers in the Populist townships very likely rejected the

moderate parties and embraced the radical one without being more than only very vaguely aware how the condition of agriculture and what they were doing about it differed from their neighbors' situation.

Farm mechanization is the key to explaining Populism in Marion and Pike counties. Almost without exception, in both Marion and Pike, the townships supporting the Populists were highly mechanized, and those which gave no support to the third party were not. The extensive use of machinery in the Populist townships likely indicates a commitment to scientific agriculture not found elsewhere in either county. Furthermore, it illustrates the attempts of some farmers to overcome the adversity imposed by topographic and demographic conditions in their townships. Adoption of mechanized techniques was an effort to compensate for too many people, or poor land, or not enough land, or for a combination of these circumstances. By using machinery to a greater extent than did their neighbors, farmers in the radical political areas hoped to increase the efficiency of operating farms which were too small or too infertile to be productive enough to provide a decent living. More efficiency meant lower production costs and hopefully a higher profit--or at least a profit of some kind.

Repeated estimates have been made of the saving in human labor and money realized by adoption of agricultural machinery in the farming process. For example, wheat production; a good man with a sickle could reap, bind, and shock over half an acre per day. With a cradle scythe he could reap three acres

per day, but to keep that pace his operation required three men to bind for every two cradlers. A mechanical reaper equalled four or five cradlers. A self-raking reaper saved four to five men in cutting a ten to twelve acre field. After his initial investment for the machine was recovered, the farmer began to save on the wages he otherwise would have paid hired hands. If his farm was too small to require a large labor force in the first place--as may well have been the case in some Populist townships of Pike County--he still enjoyed the advantage of being able to sow, and harvest a large number of acres than he and his family could have managed using only rudimentary farming methods. This was an important consideration for cereal crops such as were grown in Pike and Marion counties, especially at harvest time. The harvest for small gains generally lasts about ten days, during which time the grain is ripe enough to cut but not so ripe as to thresh out on the ground during the cutting. For a small farmer this time limitation meant he could only plant 7 1/2 acres for each hand available at harvest time. But with a reaper he could plant 135 acres and harvest it himself, if he desired.<sup>1</sup>

The increased efficiency resulting from mechanization of agriculture in the years after the Civil War saved manpower and time, and therefore money. Fewer men could do the same job in less time. By using disc gang plows, broadcast seeders, five section harrows and self-raking reapers, the work of a man in a wheat field was eighteen times as effective as when the work was done by hand. In the case of cereal crops, the farmer realized a financial

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1. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, pp. 140-44.

savings ranging from 66 percent for corn to 80 percent for wheat over the costs of production using crude methods. This savings could be implemented either by reducing the payroll or by increasing the production of a fixed labor force.<sup>2</sup> Table 25 shows the savings in hours of labor needed to produce one acre of the kinds of crops common to Marion and Pike counties. However, as well illustrated by the non-Populist townships of Marion and Pike counties,

TABLE 25  
COMPARISON OF HOURS NEEDED TO PRODUCE AN ACRE  
OF SELECTED CROPS BY HAND AND BY MACHINE

Crop	Hand		Machine	
	Hours	Minutes	Hours	Minutes
Wheat	61	5.0	3	19.2
Corn	38	45.0	15	7.8
Oats	66	15.0	7	5.8
Hay: loose	21	5.0	3	56.5
Hay: baled	35	30.0	11	34.0

Source: Fred A. Shannon, The Farmer's Last Frontier: Agriculture, 1860-1897, p.143.

many farmers in the 1890's were relatively unmechanized. Partly because of the traditional conservatism of agricultural areas but also because of the expense involved, farmers continued to use highly inefficient production methods. However, that was a luxury farmers in some townships could not afford.

In Marion County, farmers in Haines, Meacham, and Raccoon townships found their land to be inferior to their neighbor's acreage. This difference is

2. Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, p. 143.

reflected in the lower values assigned to it for tax purposes. To compensate for this disadvantage, and to provide a decent standard of living for their families, these farmers undertook a dual program to expand the acreage they had in production and to use machinery to farm their holdings more efficiently. Consequently, they expanded their improved acreage by between thirteen and twenty percent, well above their neighbors' expansion levels and, coupled with modern agricultural methods and a general population loss during the Eighties, increased their per capita economic base between three and five percent.

Some similar trends existed in the two non-Populist townships, but with significant differences. Land in Carrigan and Tonti was more valuable than acreage in Haines, Meacham and Raccoon. By comparison conditions in those two townships were not marginal. In fact, Carrigan Township also experienced expansion in the Eighties. But with better land to start, and with no real financial commitment to machinery, Carrigan farmers were in a much less precarious position. Of course they wanted to improve their condition, but failure to do so held consequences less grim than for the more marginal and heavily indebted farms committed to expansion in Haines, Meacham, and Raccoon. Tonti land was equal to Carrigan in value. But farmers there seemed more concerned about increasing their livestock herds during the Eighties than in putting more acres into production. So they too had no investment in machinery and implements to protect or recover.<sup>3</sup>

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3. The changes noted for Marion County reflect data contained in Tables 5, 10, and 19, pages 71, 79, and 106, respectively. The figures in Table 10, showing a general and varied decline in the value of implements in each townships

The situation in Pike County was strikingly similar. Persons in Montezuma, Newburg, Pearl and Spring Creek townships were faced with a production problem much like the one afflicting Haines, Meacham, and Raccoon townships in Marion County. However the Pike County farmers' problem was not due to poor land in the same sense as in Marion, but rather to a lack of land on which to expand. Farmers in these Pike County townships were working land as good as their neighbors'. They just did not have enough of it. While the answer in Marion County had been a combination of expansion and mechanization to overcome soil infertility by increasing production, farmers in southeastern Pike had fewer alternatives. Placing new land in production just was not feasible in townships where that land was hilly, broken, and heavily timbered. In these Pike County townships mechanization was the only answer, unless the residents wished to maintain the status quo. Modern agricultural techniques promised to lower per acre production costs even if the farmers could not expand onto new acreage.<sup>4</sup>

Farms in Detroit and Martinsburg, which did not support the People's Party in 1892, were considerably larger than those in the Populist townships. Their size, coupled with a significant population loss between 1870 and 1890

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are difficult to interpret because they include such variables and unknowns as age of machinery assessed--depreciation counted in figuring value--the number of repossessions in the Eighties, the number of people leaving the township and taking their machinery, the number and value of new machines purchased during the decade, and the types of machinery and implements found in the various townships.

4. Pike County statistics relevant to this paragraph are found in Tables 13, 14, and 16, pages 93, 95, and 98, respectively. The inability of the river townships to increase production by expanding is illustrated by the fact that



mitigated the need to bring new land into production or to mechanize to increase production on acreage already planted. Indeed, similar developments in Newburg and Montezuma townships moderated the degree of mechanization there also. Both these areas had relatively flat good land which, except for population losses of 31 and 9 percent between 1870 and 1890, would have been developed. But with little pressure to open new land, and with large farms already, the need to mechanize was moderated. Even in Detroit Township, a population loss of 26 percent lessened the pressure for more efficient production. But Pearl and Spring Creek townships experienced increases of 100 percent and 58 percent, respectively, during those two decades. With no good new land available, people were forced to modernize production as the only alternative to create a better living standard.

Thus, mechanization of agriculture is the key to explaining support for the People's Party in Marion and Pike counties. The people in the Populist townships were attempting to shape their own destinies. They refused to surrender to the adverse economic conditions around them, and they had every reason to hope for a bright future. In Marion County residents of these townships were opening new lands to production in an attempt at self-improvement. In both counties, farmers in these townships were adopting new and improved methods of agriculture. Although these solutions required heavy financial investment and indebtedness, they created a revolution of rising expectations.

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between 1872 and 1892 the biggest jump in improved acres was a 3.2 percent increase in Detroit Township.

These poor farmers were taking a chance which their neighbors were too frightened or too conservative or too apathetic to take. They expected it to pay off; they expected a better return for their efforts in the future than they had been used to in the past. When agricultural prices continued to decline throughout the Eighties, thus cancelling out the potential benefits of their efforts, farmers of these poor but struggling townships became increasingly frustrated. Their failure to improve their situation despite concerted efforts must have been damaging psychologically as well as financially.<sup>5</sup> The climax of this situation came in November 1892, and it took the form of a large protest vote in the polling places of these townships.

The Populist movement provides fertile territory for social historians and for psycho-history. Farmers who readily accepted the agricultural revolution following the Civil War developed a unique mind-set which ultimately found expression in the People's Party in 1892. Such persons were receptive to ideas and they were aggressive. By accepting the mechanization of agriculture they freed themselves from large amounts of spirit-deadening toil. They often devoted the increased leisure time which resulted to social and political activity, as first illustrated by the Granger movement. Thus their aggressiveness and energy was translated into the political arena as early as the 1870's.<sup>6</sup> A great

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5. The financial consequences of the agricultural collapse are noted for highly mechanized areas in Shannon, Farmers' Last Frontier, p. 146.

6. Ibid., p. 145, and Norman Pollack, The Populist Response to Industrial America, Midwestern Populist Thought (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc.), pp. 3, 4.

debate has arisen in Populist historiography in recent years. Men like Norman Pollack and Charles McArthur Destler have challenged the traditional view of Populism first expounded by John Hicks in 1931 and generally accepted thereafter. Hicks considered the Populists to be utopian and reactionary. He saw the Populist farmework as basically retrogressive--an attempt to restore America to a simpler, more rural society. Pollack and Destler contend the movement was highly materialistic and pragmatic.<sup>7</sup>

The evidence gleaned from this study of Illinois Populism at the township level tends to favor the Pollack-Destler point of view. Support for the People's Party in Marion and Pike counties came from areas receptive to adoption of modern farming methods, from areas where farmers seized the initiative and tried to improve their situation. In other townships, farmers continued with business as usual; they made little if any effort to change the condition of agriculture on their farms. In Marion, for example, residents of Carrigan and Tonti townships were content with their high land values and relatively rudimentary farming techniques. They were willing to maintain the status quo, and this desire was reflected in the 1892 election results from those townships.

But residents of Haines, Meacham and Raccoon townships already had rejected the status quo, as had farmers in Montezuma, Newburg, Pearl and Spring Creek townships in Pike County. These people had already launched an aggressive and heavily financed effort to alter their economic situation.

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7. Hicks' interpretation is of course, The Populist Revolt; Pollack is cited above in footnote 6. The other work mentioned is Destler "Consumption of a Labor-Populist Alliance, 1894," and is fully cited in footnote 4, p. 49.

By investing in farm machinery and, in Marion County at least, by expanding production, they confidently looked forward to better times. When those times did not arrive, frustration and discontent set in. When their efforts at self-help proved fruitless, and when their rising expectations were crushed, they began to pay attention to the assertions of radical intellectuals and politicians--assertions about distant forces controlling agriculture and about manipulation of the economy by financial, commercial, and industrial interests. They were not entirely unfamiliar with these charges. The railroads and manufacturers had been targets of similar attacks in the Seventies and Eighties. Like their Grange predecessors, these farmers let their energy, aggressiveness, and pragmatism slip over into politics. Although many had already voted for third party movements in the Eighties,<sup>8</sup> declining conditions made even more farmers receptive to radical agrarian ideologies in the Nineties. In 1892, in a combination of frustration and hope, farmers in these highly mechanized but struggling townships finally in large numbers declared their political independence from their neighbors. While the apathetic, conservative, unreceptive farmers of other townships continued in traditional ways--unmechanized rudimentary farming and Republican or Democratic politics--residents of seven townships in Marion and Pike counties cast votes for People's Party candidates. Mechanization of agriculture is the key which ties these areas together in common. But like the farmer who tries to explain his vote in terms of party policy, mechanization is only the manifestation of a reason. The reason for the high

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8, See the Appendix for voting tables.

incidence of Populism in these townships was the condition of agriculture there, and the attitude of the residents to do something about it.

## APPENDIX

## VOTE FOR PRESIDENT IN ILLINOIS IN 1892

Counties	Cleveland Democrat	Harrison Republican	Bidwell Prohibition	Weaver People's
Adams	7,746	6,081	471	186
Alexander	1,674	2,053	19	61
Bond	1,328	1,659	237	77
Boone	518	1,994	137	52
Brown	1,567	879	85	315
Bureau	3,555	3,924	378	324
Calhoun	840	563	29	146
Carroll	1,444	2,456	170	107
Cass	2,203	1,533	119	81
Champaign	4,502	5,290	544	80
Christian	3,655	2,941	316	419
Clark	2,244	2,181	128	655
Clay	1,604	1,774	85	424
Clinton	2,393	1,361	57	114
Coles	3,611	3,693	203	97
Cook	144,604	111,254	3,858	1,614
Crawford	1,875	1,790	54	220
Cumberland	1,785	1,470	106	209
DeKalb	1,926	3,789	489	36
DeWitt	2,083	2,059	120	86
Douglas	1,999	2,246	134	70
DuPage	2,154	2,478	274	16
Edgar	3,164	3,197	155	195
Edwards	677	1,350	74	56
Effingham	2,744	1,472	125	130
Fayette	2,433	1,980	152	836
Ford	1,359	2,227	207	20
Franklin	1,782	1,631	75	198
Fulton	5,253	4,948	242	379
Gallatin	1,675	1,211	69	203
Greene	3,146	1,967	152	329
Grundy	1,892	2,159	201	44
Hamilton	2,061	1,505	58	157
Hancock	4,132	3,393	292	303
Hardin	700	660	12	159
Henderson	921	1,352	117	27
Henry	2,670	4,265	393	312
Iroquois	3,848	3,936	338	87
Jackson	2,858	3,031	210	361
Jasper	2,217	1,519	163	296

Counties	Cleveland Democrat	Harrison Republican	Bidwell Prohibition	Weaver People's
Jefferson	2,332	1,949	147	806
Jersey	2,011	1,313	115	76
JoDaviess	2,793	2,680	138	129
Johnson	854	1,716	108	419
Kane	5,778	7,977	719	353
Kankakee	2,763	3,577	203	39
Kendall	848	1,619	277	28
Knox	3,073	5,800	384	331
Lake	1,964	2,932	202	31
LaSalle	9,395	7,957	520	191
Lawrence	1,572	1,523	161	106
Lee	2,740	3,513	163	61
Livingston	3,960	3,980	421	184
Logan	3,150	2,619	300	87
Macon	4,303	4,575	551	95
Macoupin	5,051	3,868	337	288
Madison	5,680	5,355	280	354
Marion	2,709	2,324	262	532
Marshall	1,834	1,590	92	18
Mason	2,211	1,614	190	19
Massac	799	1,652	43	148
McDonough	3,237	3,319	304	243
McHenry	2,311	3,205	263	31
McLean	6,487	7,445	769	63
Menard	1,748	1,278	133	115
Mercer	1,975	2,470	135	107
Monroe	1,611	1,153	7	108
Montgomery	3,707	2,935	344	171
Morgan	4,006	3,471	275	195
Moultrie	1,670	1,287	65	264
Ogle	2,244	3,939	283	33
Peoria	8,053	7,266	284	321
Perry	1,980	1,840	156	193
Piatt	1,896	2,138	129	23
Pike	3,494	2,751	225	1,043
Pope	816	1,629	16	324
Pulaski	897	1,662	30	40
Putnam	514	561	55	14
Randolph	2,702	2,425	221	180
Richland	1,542	1,500	121	297
Rock Island	4,034	5,052	340	219
Saline	1,828	2,171	59	293
Sangamon	7,665	6,009	779	181
Schuyler	1,880	1,563	149	209



Counties	Cleveland Democrat	Harrison Republican	Bidwell Prohibition	Weaver People's
Scott	1,282	1,006	30	214
Shelby	3,523	2,304	397	876
Stark	824	1,240	133	246
St. Clair	7,207	6,276	195	356
Stephenson	3,717	3,574	282	70
Tazewell	3,653	3,030	147	115
Union	2,663	1,427	65	47
Vermilion	5,001	6,892	365	174
Wabash	1,428	1,112	149	44
Warren	2,294	2,725	304	53
Washington	1,868	1,956	162	145
Wayne	2,372	2,350	90	559
White	2,954	2,215	101	213
Whiteside	2,779	3,819	379	95
Will	6,434	6,720	307	113
Williamson	2,118	2,504	60	196
Winnebago	2,634	5,854	684	194
Woodford	2,601	1,738	226	63
Totals . . . . .	426,281	399,288	25,871	22,207

Source: Official Vote of the State of Illinois Cast at the General Election Held November 8, 1892 (Springfield, Ill.: H. W. Rokker, State Printer and Binder, 1893), pp. 3, 4.

## PRESIDENTIAL VOTE IN MARION COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1888 AND 1892

Township	1888			1892		
	R	D	O	R	D	O
Centralia 1	281	143	11	217	107	10
2	192	117	10	186	124	13
3	244	143	29	229	170	27
4	X	X	X	128	89	7
5	X	X	X	X	X	X
Central City	67	91	2	49	113	20
Walnut Hill	X	X	X	41	29	20
Alma	61	111	19	79	129	25
Carrigan	76	85	9	76	73	17
Foster	54	118	4	69	108	14
Haines	60	117	14	57	106	54
Kinmundy	116	175	57	133	191	67
Meacham	32	77	50	32	70	62
Iuka	102	125	16	131	140	17
Odin	124	139	15	143	169	18
Sandoval	110	123	45	123	114	41
Omega	62	91	56	64	114	53
Patoka	75	94	8	92	97	23
Vernon	53	75	3	60	82	10
Raccoon	101	88	29	70	48	116
Romine	82	94	32	78	103	34
Salem 1	54	87	54	93	124	36
2	112	191	45	71	162	43
Stevenson	43	90	29	41	104	47
Tonti	64	121	5	66	143	20

Source: Centralia Sentinel, November 22, 1888 and November 24, 1892

## PRESIDENTIAL VOTE IN PIKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS, 1888 AND 1892

Township	1888			1892		
	R	D	O	R	D	O
Atlas	253	159	16	217	202	24
Barry	287	329	31	289	312	48
Chambersburg	37	101	19	55	99	17
Cincinnati	10	43	0	22	73	9
Derry	81	185	7	85	190	18
Detroit	64	118	215?	74	105	32
Fairmount	99	120	3	112	113	10
Flint	40	50	6	27	57	15
Griggsville	258	240	340?	228	230	162
Hadley	125	99	21	109	100	36
Hardin	66	99	72	58	65	94
Kinderhook	134	203	27	147	228	33
Levee	24	42	1	30	72	2
Martinsburg	115	117	49	129	111	55
Montezuma	95	106	130	90	100	149
Newburg	146	85	29	95	60	101
New Salem	123	231	33	123	232	46
Pearl	53	118	108	31	71	120
Perry	195	196	15	183	186	41
Pittsfield	290	406	88	304	415	53
Pleasant Hill	71	180	61	87	160	68
Pleasant Vale	135	185	2	136	167	39
Ross	37	22	5	23	16	20
Spring Creek	82	158	68	90	125	116

Source: Pike County Democrat, November 15, 1888 and November 16, 1892

## AN EXPLANATION OF YULE'S Q

Yule's Q is a means to statistically express the degree of association between two dichotomous variables. Literally, it measures the amount that one characteristic or variable influences the presence or absence of a second characteristic or variable in a population of entities being studied. Q ranges from values of +1.000 to -1.000. In the first case, the figure shows perfect positive association, that the presence of one characteristic is related to the presence of a second characteristic. When Q is at its negative maximum of -1.000, it means the presence of the first characteristic is related to the absence of the second characteristic. The decimal figures ranging between these two boundaries show the degree to which a positive or a negative association between the two variables exists. In this study, the two variables for which Yule's Q was employed were population gain or loss and voting behavior; the subjects were the several townships. In this particular case Q was zero, an indication of no cause and effect relationship or association between the two factors.

A fourfold table such as the one shown on page 108 is used to compute Yule's Q. All subjects exhibiting both characteristics (at pre-determined levels) are tallied in quadrant "a", in the upper left corner of the table. Those showing the first characteristic but not the second are placed in quadrant "b" in the upper right corner. The subjects possessing the second characteristic, but not the first one, are put in section "c", in the lower left quarter, and those subjects possessing neither variable are placed in "d" cell, in the lower right corner on the table. The following diagram shows this placement.

a	b
c	d

By comparing the diagonal cells, one can observe the degree to which possession of one characteristic influences the presence or absence of the second variable. The formula  $Q=(ad-bc)/(ad+bc)$  is used to mathematically make this comparison. If  $Q$  works out to be above a pre-determined absolute value, usually around 0.750 to 0.800, a strong association between the two variables, be it positive or negative, is said to exist.

Another example of Yule's  $Q$ , in addition to the one in Chapter VII, might be as follows: Suppose a comparison was being made between Populist voting in 1892 and the raising of wheat in the subject townships. Let's say that of eleven townships, six had significant wheat crops and five did not. Further suppose five of the six areas growing wheat were Populist townships and that three of the ones growing little wheat were non-Populist in 1892. Using P and NP to signify voting behavior and W and NW for "wheat" and "no wheat" the fourfold table would look like this:

	P	NP
W	5	1
NW	2	3

Substituting the figures from the table's four cells into the formula produces a value of +0.765. Thus, on the basis of Yule's Q one could state a fairly strong relationship exists in this sample case between planting wheat and voting the Populist ticket in 1892. Of course, interpretation of this relationship would depend on the historian's traditional method and insight. Quantitative measures like Yule's Q are meant only to assist in interpretation, not to replace it.

## AN EXPLANATION OF SPEARMAN'S COEFFICIENT OF CORRELATION

The Spearman Coefficient of Correlation, abbreviated  $r_s$ , is a measure of association between two ranked variables. Like Yule's Q its value ranges between +1.000 for perfect positive association to -1.000 for perfect negative or inverse association. Also like Yule's Q, Spearman values at or near zero signify no relationship at all between the two variables.

However, Spearman's Coefficient is a much more sophisticated and sensitive measure than is Q. While Q measures only unranked dichotomous variables,  $r_s$  considers the relative degrees to which the subjects possess those characteristics, and ranks the subjects accordingly. In fact, the coefficient is calculated from the difference in the rankings of each subject on each of the two variables. The formula is  $r_s = 1 - \left[ \frac{6 \sum D^2}{N(N^2 - 1)} \right]$ , where  $\sum D$  is the sum of differences in each subject's rankings for each characteristic, and N is the total number of subjects.

The example of wheat production and Populism used in the explanation of Yule's Q serves not only to illustrate the application of Spearman's Coefficient, but also to distinguish it from Q. Ranking each township according to the percentage of Populist votes cast in 1892, with the township carried most decisively by the People's Party placed first, produces rankings from 1 to 11; the lowest rank is assigned the township where the Populists did worst as a percentage of the total vote cast. Then ranking those same townships according to wheat production, the highest producer ranked first, creates the following situation based on this mythical data.

TOWNSHIP	POPULISM	WHEAT	D	D <sup>2</sup>
A	1	11	10	100
B	2	10	8	64
C	3	6	3	9
D	4	5	1	1
E	5	4	1	1
F	6	3	3	9
G	7	2	5	25
H	8	7	1	1
I	9	9	0	0
J	10	10	0	0
K	11	1	10	100

N=11

 $\sum D^2 = 309$ 

Placing figures into the formula produces a value for  $r_s$  of +0.407, not a strong correlation. Careful examination of these rankings will determine that the frequency of the two variables in the fourfold table of the Yule's Q example has been maintained in the computation of  $r_s$ ; five of the seven Populist townships (A to G) were among the top six wheat producers (from "a" cell of the fourfold table), and three of the non-Populist townships (H to K) were low wheat producers (from "d" cell of the fourfold table). Why then does the Q measurement indicate a strong relationship between the production of wheat and Populism, while the Spearman measure shows no relationship between the same two variables. The answer is found in the fact that Q does not discriminate between different degrees in a variable which may exist between townships occupying the same cell of a fourfold table. The Spearman Coefficient, on the other hand, ranks the townships by each variable and thus is a more sophisticated measure, although slightly more trouble to compute, than is Yule's Q.



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