

10-2008

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Shelton, Robert S. (2008) ""Built by the Irishman, the Negro and the Mule:" Labor Militancy across the Color Line in Post-Reconstruction Texas," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 46 : Iss. 2 , Article 7.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj/vol46/iss2/7>

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**“BUILT BY THE IRISHMAN, THE NEGRO AND THE MULE:”
LABOR MILITANCY ACROSS THE COLOR LINE
IN POST-RECONSTRUCTION TEXAS**

By Robert S. Shelton

As the great strike of 1877 spread along the country's railroad network in late July, engulfing virtually the entire nation in what some worried was the beginning of a social revolution in America to match those that had haunted Europe, the middle and upper classes in the Texas port city of Galveston watched in fearful anxiety. On July 27, five days after angry trainmen in Martinsburg, West Virginia walked off the job and precipitated the largest nationwide labor uprising in American history to the time, Galveston's elite believed their fears had come true when workers in their city launched a series of spontaneous protests. Hundreds of black and white working men and women walked off their jobs and marched through the city, demanding higher wages, closing down businesses, and cajoling and threatening workers who refused to join in their protest. "It has arrived!" the editor of the conservative *Galveston Daily News* declared, referring to what he feared was America's version of the Paris Commune and predicting anarchy, bloodbath, and the end of the city's commercial prosperity.¹ As disturbing as worker militancy was to the paper's editor and to city leaders, even more unsettling was the biracial nature of the protests. During the series of strikes in Galveston over the next few days, black and white workers vowed mutual support, refused employers' offers to take each other's jobs, and proclaimed the equality of working people regardless of color or ethnicity.²

Accounts of the relationships of black and white workers and their unions have dominated the field of U.S. labor history during the last twenty years. Two main threads have run through much of this scholarship. One follows the interpretations of historians such as David Roediger, which emphasizes the creation of white identities by wage workers, mostly in the free states during the antebellum period, as crucial to the formation of working class consciousness and the strengthening and perpetuation of white supremacy. Workers seized their "whiteness" to distinguish themselves from black men and women who performed the most menial tasks and represented to whites the nadir of dependence, submissiveness, and powerlessness. By asserting their "whiteness," white northern workers, who were themselves often mired in lifelong, dependent wage work, claimed the Republican heritage of equality with capitalist employers and the emerging middle class. According to such an interpretation, working-class consciousness in the United States was built upon the foundation of racial identity. Along this thread, other scholars have focused on the relationships between black and white workers and their unions on the post-Civil War South. Following the work of historians such as Herbert Hill, scholars such as Ernest Obadele-Starks contend that white workers and their unions "imposed their own version of racial oppression" on African-

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Americans.³ By excluding black men from membership in their organizations and access to all but the most menial and low-paying jobs, white unions served as a bulwark for white supremacy. As these scholars and those of the “whiteness” school make abundantly clear, race was central to how American workers thought of themselves and their organizations in the nineteenth century.⁴

Another thread of historical scholarship diverges from “whiteness” interpretations that see little but enmity and competition across the working-class color line. Such scholars, most notably Eric Arnesen, have argued that despite the indisputable importance and persistence of race, white and black workers could, when self-interest and circumstances warranted it, modify their racial perspectives and offer mutual support in their struggles against employers. These employers, historian Brian Kelly has argued, stopped at nothing to prevent any demonstrations of biracial cooperation, calling on the police, judicial, and military powers of the state, inveigling black and white men to replace striking workers, and depicting conflicts as dangerous radical assaults on order and peace. Employers, more than the workers themselves, benefited from and desired a racially divided and therefore more tractable workforce. The strikes that erupted in Galveston in the summer of 1877 illustrate such arguments, demonstrating that both inside and outside of the institutional framework of organized labor, black and white workers did indeed cross the color line to extend mutual support and that in the emerging free labor market of the post-war South not all immigrant workers reflexively seized upon “whiteness” and white supremacy as the speediest routes to assimilation and acceptance by the dominant society. Finally, the strikes reveal the role of employers and their conservative allies – white and black – in the post-Reconstruction South in attempting to use race as a wedge to enlarge divisions between black and white workers.⁵

During the last week of July workers on the Texas and Pacific Railroad, inspired by spontaneous eruption of railroad strikes that had raced around the country that month, successfully struck for higher wages comparable to those paid on other railroads in the state. Although this conflict no doubt influenced the Galveston longshoremen and casual laborers whose demands for higher wages worried news editors, perhaps of more immediate impact was the Colored Men’s State Convention that was just concluding as the strikes began. One of several conventions to meet that summer throughout the United States, the Galveston meeting attracted delegates from across the state. Unlike a national convention meeting simultaneously in St. Louis, according to *The New York Times*, the Texas delegates focused less on theoretical discussions of the place of African Americans in American life and politics and devoted their full attention to civil rights. The *New York Times* editorialist applauded the delegates for clearly stating that their demands for civil rights did not include demands for “social equality,” and suggested that such minimal aspirations should not be resisted by white America.⁶ However, when African Americans “insist that they must, as negroes, maintain a compact solidarity,” the *Times* cautioned, they gave greater credibility to those who argued such assimilation was “not only impossible, but that its attempt would be unnatural.”⁷ The presence of black delegates debating and demanding civil rights and public equal-

ity certainly created a stir among Galveston's African American population. As would become clear in the labor conflicts that erupted over the next week, however, assimilation and solidarity meant different things to Galvestonians depending on their race and their class.

On the morning of August 27, Morgan's Wharf came "alive with strikers," demanding their wages be raised ten cents per hour. A crowd of "white men and colored, thickly interspersed with police officers, was seen moving in and out of the warehouse used by the Morgan steamers for storing freight," preventing the unloading of a steamer by the company's African American longshoremen. The police attempted to clear a way through the mass of men in the warehouse for the two or three laborers who continued to move freight, but the crowd moved from one gangway to the other to block any effort to work by those who had not joined their ranks.⁸

Captain Charles Fowler, the Galveston agent of the Morgan Steamship Line went aboard the ship and was told by the African American hands inside the hold that they were ready to work but "that some white men were endeavoring to terrify the colored men employed by the Morgan line, so as to prevent them from working."⁹ The chief of police promised to protect the men if they wanted to work. At this moment John Morrison, the white stevedore who contracted to load and unload vessels for the Morgan Steamship Line at the Central Wharf, ordered the black men to begin work. They began unloading cargo for about ten minutes, but then a cheer went up from the biracial crowd in the warehouse signaling a new effort to block the gangways. The workers then moved to the agent's office at the foot of the wharf, where Fowler told them that he would meet their demands, raising their wages from thirty cents to forty cents per hour.¹⁰

According to the *Galveston Daily News*, rumors circulated that white men who worked on some of the city's other wharves were responsible for inducing the Morgan hands to strike. However, the president of the white Longshoremen's Benevolent Association "stated emphatically" that they had nothing whatever to do with the strike among the African Americans but were on the wharf simply as spectators. He insisted that white union men were not interested in taking the work of the black longshoremen and supported their demands for higher wages, contending that thirty cents an hour was not reasonable compensation for the sort of work required of the black men. Since white longshoremen earned forty cents an hour, he said, they thought it just that African-American laborers should receive the same. The affair lasted only about an hour, and when the wages were raised the men went back to work and "everything assumed the appearance that prevailed before strikes became the order of the day."¹¹

The short stoppage illustrates two important points about labor in the post-Reconstruction South. First, African American longshoremen who demanded wages equal to those earned by white workers sought a tangible, material equality that was as important to them as a means of survival and a marker of equality as the civil rights that represented equality and assimilation

to the delegates at the Colored Men's State Convention. Second, the incident demonstrated that white workers frequently supported African Americans efforts to obtain equal wages, even if they did so only out of self interest rather than class solidarity. Although they may have not instigated the strike – the rumor that they did so perhaps reflected more the prevailing notions about the inertness of black people than the reality of the situation – the white long-shoremen benefited from having black workers receive equal pay since wage equality provided a floor for their own wages and thus eliminated potential competition from African Americans.

The following week, however, a strike by casual laborers – men hired to work menial jobs on a daily basis – demonstrated that even in the post-War South there existed class consciousness and solidarity that transcended racial boundaries and narrow self-interest. The strike also revealed class divisions among African Americans and the determination by southern elites to counter biracial labor cooperation. On Monday, July 30, 1877, fifty African American day laborers repairing Market Street walked off the job and marched through the city, trailed by police and exhorting day laborers to stop work until city contractors and other employers raised wages to \$2 per day. During the depression of 1873, the city, contractors, and private employers had reduced the pay for casual labor from \$2.50 to \$1.50 per day. As the city began to recover from the effects of the depression, workers sought to recover the pay cuts to compensate for rising prices. By the late summer of 1877, a Galveston worker told a reporter for the *Galveston Daily News*, food, wood for fuel, medicine, and basic sundries cost approximately \$38 per month; a man who finds work everyday – an uncertain proposition for day laborers – and earns \$1.50 per day brought home \$39 per month. Such a wage meant that women and children frequently had to work to earn money, the worker stated, to provide for clothing and stave off starvation in the event of illness or unforeseen expenses.¹²

As the working men marched through the city, the crowd grew. After visits to various building construction sites, the narrow-gauge railway linking the city's wharves with the railroad trunk lines, the Stump & Lewis lumber mill, the terminal yard of the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson railroad, and the Texas Cotton Press Company, the crowd numbered close to three hundred men. Following draymen who refused to join them (the draymen were employed by Mr. George Lee, who operated a dray stables and did not pay \$2 per hour) to the Cotton Factor's Press on Avenue F, the strikers flooded the company's loading yard, demanding that the draymen and cotton handlers cease work. The superintendent of the press, A.P. Lufkin, ordered the protesters to leave, saying that he had already agreed to pay such a wage to his men.¹¹ The crowd refused. Lufkin then jumped aboard a dray and called to his drivers and other employees to follow him. Although Lufkin and several of the cotton press workers made it out of the loading yard, the strikers seized the reins of the remaining six drays, demanding that the reluctant drivers and cotton handlers get down and stop work. Two policemen then waded in with clubs, bludgeoning their way toward the men restraining the dray horses. Before the policemen had gone far, however, the enraged crowd turned on

them, pulling them to the ground and beating them. At this moment nine more police arrived, followed by armed citizens whose numbers quickly reached nearly eight hundred. Confronted by a larger and armed force, the strikers left the cotton press and headed for the courthouse for a hastily called meeting of the city's laborers, followed by the white civilians and police. The two policemen were not seriously injured; the only other injury was a welt on Lufkin's scalp where a dray stick had struck him as he attempted to lead the draymen out of the yard.¹⁴

At the courthouse, strikers spilled out of the courthouse into the street. The workers inside called for a speech from Michael Burns, a part-time longshoreman and screwman who had been temporarily expelled from the Screwmen's Benevolent Association earlier in the year for repeatedly breaking the association's working rules.¹⁵ Burns claimed that Galveston labor leaders had forsaken the city's unskilled workers and praised the strikers for keeping true to the principles of unionism. He urged the workers to avoid violence, but assured them that he and other white workers sympathized with their demands. A black day laborer, Gilbert Baker, then introduced four resolutions. The first renounced the use of violence by workers. The second declared that the strike was "but the popular manner of expressing our condemnation of the oppressions to which we have been subjected in the reduction of the prices paid for our labor."¹⁶ The third reiterated the intention of the strikers to obey the law and exhaust all "peaceable means to vindicate their claims for wages sufficient to meet the ordinary wants of life" and called for the appointment of a committee of five workers to ask municipal authorities "not only for their advice but their aid" in obtaining a "fairer schedule in the price of honest labor." The fourth resolution declared that "so long as the price of rents ... and the cost of the necessary elements of subsistence" remained at their current level, \$2 per day for manual labor was a rate affordable to business and fair to workers.¹⁷

Alderman George P. Finlay then spoke, urging the workers to obey the law. He told them that they had the right to strike for higher wages, but that they could not prevent anyone else from working for less. He also admonished the workers to stop their marches and protests because all over the city "women and children were suffering all the terrors of intense fear over the demonstrations of the day, and which Galveston had witnessed for the first time in its history." He told them that their demonstration was wrong, and instead of resulting in higher wages it was likely to cause the strikers to "come out with the little end of the horn." Strikes, he said, had never resulted in any good for the strikers, employers, or society. He concluded by assuring the men that "the white people were taking no part in the strike, and did not intend to do so, and that the best thing they could do would be to emulate the example set them by the white laborers of the city, and return to peaceful avocations."¹⁸ Burns addressed the crowd again, assuring the workers that Galveston's white laborers "would never go back on the movement." William Ferrier, a white laborer, mounted the courthouse steps and also assured the striking black men of the support of whites. Burns then nominated a biracial committee, which the strikers approved by acclamation, to meet with the city's board

of aldermen. The strikers also appointed a committee to visit the homes of workers throughout the city to urge them to stay at home until wages were increased.¹⁹ The meeting then broke up.

The next morning, July 31, 1877, about sixty black men and a dozen white men gathered at the county courthouse. The police chief, on crutches from the confrontation at the cotton press on Monday, told them they must refrain from "such demonstrations" as had occurred the day before. He vowed to preserve the order and peace of the city and reminded them that it was a violation of the law for men to band together and parade through the streets. He further stated that he would use every man in the city to protect workers who refused to strike, if need be. The workers then debated the propriety of including in their strike "colored women," who were then engaged in their own protest against laundries that employed Chinese laundresses in Galveston. The washerwomen strike, as historian Tera Hunter has ably chronicled, resulted in the closure of several "Chinese" laundries and demonstrated their own determination to assert themselves in the period after the Civil War.²⁰ The striking men finally agreed that they would support the women's demand that the city fix the wages paid washers at \$2 per day and for cooks, at \$20 per month. Finally, Burns rose to speak again, arguing that committees should be appointed to visit contractors and employers of the city to demand that they set wages at \$2 per day. He told the men that "soldiers had been engaged all night with guns on their shoulders, guarding property" and patrolling the city. A voice from the crowd exclaimed, "D - n their guns! We can whip them and their guns, too, soon enough when we start for them." Burns then urged the men to go quietly to their homes and turn out again at 7:00 P.M. to hear the results.

At 5:30 P.M., the unrest burst into violence. After an altercation on Market Street, police arrested a white man for assaulting an African American male, and on the way to the station were followed by a crowd of black men who demanded the police turn the prisoner over to them for a lynching. The crowd surged forward, and the police fired at them. A black man named Beauregard was hit in the leg; three others were arrested. The police then asserted that Beauregard had fired on the chief of police the day before. During the unrest, the bells of the Episcopal Church rang out to call the city's militia companies. More than 200 men, including a number of former Confederate "Colonels" and a special squad of deputized citizens, turned out at Artillery Hall.²¹

About 250 strikers, mostly African American men, met that night in front of the courthouse. A few white men were scattered through the crowd. Men in the crowd expressed their indignation over the shooting of the black man, and several calls went up to seize the shooter and take revenge. Burns then mounted the steps and spoke. He said he regretted that one of the strikers had been shot and "deplored the fact that one of those who are entrusted with authority and charged with the protection of the public peace, had been the aggressor."²² He argued that policemen were appointed not to club honest men on the head and to shoot them simply because they were trying to get their rights. He said that this country belonged to the citizens, and that the citizens of the country came from every habitable part of the globe. "This country had been built up

by the Irishman, the negro and the mule," and all working men deserved a fair wage. Although Burns explicitly excluded Native Americans and Chinese from those who deserved a fair wage, his declaration of racial equality was startling for immediate post-Reconstruction Galveston. Burns then told the crowd that he had called on various men who contracted for city work and asked them if they would pay \$2 per day. Most said that they could not pay more than paid under their current contracts but that they would consider it in the future.²³

Louis Griffin, a black railroad worker, spoke to the crowd next, advising the men not to do anything that was contrary to law but insisting that they had the right to a living wage. He proposed that a committee of five be appointed to wait on the chief of police and see that the policeman who had shot the innocent black man on Market Street be arrested for the offense. At this point, black political leader Norris Wright Cuney spoke. Cuney, president of the Galveston Union League, was the son of a prominent antebellum plantation owner and the slaveholder's black mistress. He had been freed before the Civil War and sent north to be educated. Returning after the war, he established ties with the business community in Galveston and was trusted and respected by the city's white leaders. Cuney warned the men against vigilante violence directed toward the policeman and against continuing their demonstrations. He said that if a warrant was issued for the arrest of the officer, it would be executed and that justice would be fairly and impartially measured out. For the past forty-eight hours, he continued, the strikers "had been parading the streets of the city, creating all sorts of discord and stirring up all sorts of bad blood, which had culminated in the shooting affair on Market street." He further noted that the strikers had never mustered more than three hundred men out of the fifteen hundred laborers in the city and that without the support of more of the laboring class, the strikers would accomplish nothing "except riots and bloodshed, and the destruction of their own best interests." He then warned them that there were "over 700 armed men – trained soldiers in the city, who would annihilate them all in an hour: and if they could not ... in the city of Houston there were 1000 men under arms who could be brought to this city in two hours to accomplish that bloody work."²⁴

Cuney argued that the black strikers were not supported by white men, "nor by the full strength of their own color." They certainly were not supported by him. He stated that the strikers would be "sufferers in the end for the foolishness of which they had already been guilty in a vain attempt to revolutionize the industrial interests of the city." He then urged them to disperse and to return to work and negotiate peacefully with their employers for higher wages. Conservative economically, Cuney's views on labor conflict reflected those of many middle- and upper-class Americans. He believed that workers and employers shared a commonality of interests in working for prosperity and that confrontations were thus not only futile but also harmful. In the case of African Americans in a southern community such as Galveston, demonstrations and confrontations could also prove fatal.²⁵ Although Cuney later won renown as a champion of the state's African Americans, on this day he drew nothing but contempt from the crowd. His support for the moderate

Democratic People's Party in the previous year's municipal elections led many African Americans to suspect him of cozying up to Galveston's business interests, and many in the crowd now jeered him, calling him a traitor to his race and his class and dismissing his warnings.²⁶

Cuney was followed by Anthony Perryman, a black laborer, who insisted that \$1.50 a day cheated laboring men. Echoing the Irishman Burns but exceeding him in his inclusiveness, Perryman declared that the striking men sought justice for "Colored ... Irish, Dutch, Chinese, and all who earned for rich men, who when spring time came, dressed their families up fine and ... rode to the Hot Springs, where they had good times, leaving us here sweating. ... If we will stand up for our rights we will get them. ... United we stand, divided we fall."²⁷

Galveston, like many southern port cities, had a much larger immigrant population than rural areas of the region. During the antebellum period, the immigrant population at its largest constituted as much as one-half of the city's white population and nearly ninety percent of the free unskilled, casual labor force. By 1870, the number of foreign-born residents had declined in the city, but still constituted between twenty-two percent of the total population and thirty-two percent of the white population.²⁸ The percentage of immigrants employed as casual laborers had fallen by 1870 to about thirty-five percent of those so employed, owing to the growth of the population of the city as whole, from the fact that many native-born Galvestonians were by the 1870s second generation residents, and to the growing number of African Americans employed as casual laborers. The population of African Americans in Galveston had grown from sixteen percent to twenty-two percent of the population from 1860 to 1870 as city life and the protective penumbra of the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands drew more black people to Galveston. Once in the city, however, black workers found themselves with few options but to labor at menial tasks that had previously fallen to immigrants. By 1870, black men and women constituted forty percent of the casual laborers in the city. Taken together, then, immigrants and African Americans comprised three-quarters of the casual laborers in the city. It was not then surprising that Perryman and Burns would appeal to the unity of immigrants and African Americans or that such an appeal struck a cord with the wage workers gathered on Galveston's streets that evening. Finally, after several more speakers, including other black leaders who urged the men to go home and return to work the next day, the crowd broke up.

The next morning, after another night during which the police and armed white citizens patrolled the city, the authorities made sure that the strike would not resume. Special "police representatives" visited Freedmen's Hall and other places "usually frequented by the colored people." Through persuasion and threats, they elicited promises that the strikers would refrain from further demonstrations of "a violent and revolutionary character" and would return to work as soon as they could find any. The police also urged African Americans to cease parading in the streets or following "fanatical leaders" and to hence-

forth depend upon the goodwill of the employers to pay a wage they can live on. The police patrolled the city throughout the day; wherever they encountered groups of black people they ordered them to disperse on pain of arrest. The intimidation worked, and no further protests by black workers occurred.²⁹

Two days later, however, a group of about thirty day laborers engaged in repaving Strand Street walked off their jobs when told they would only be paid \$1.50 per day. The contractor had taken over the work when his subcontractor for the paving job quit, having failed to make money paying \$2 per day, according to the contractor. Once assuming the job, the contractor lowered wages to \$1.50 per day, and the employees – mostly white men but with a handful of African Americans in the crowd – walked off the job. Refusing to leave the worksite, the workmen were visited by the mayor, who insisted that the city, which had originally let the contract, could not interfere in the private negotiations between the contractor and his employees but reminded them that he was obligated to “protect the city and all citizens in their rights.” Later that day at a meeting of the mayor, several city councilmen, representatives from the workers, and the contractor the men reiterated their demand for the higher wages but insisted that they did not “desire to revolutionize anything, but to secure for ourselves, by peaceable means, and by peaceable means alone, such compensation for our labor as will justify us in feeling that we can provide for the wants of ourselves and our families.” After continued negotiations the men returned to work the next day for \$2 per day.³⁰ The rate hike proved temporary, however. By October, the city council once again was paying workers employed by the city \$1.50 per day. Repeated petitions by street workers for a restoration of the \$2 per day wage – later lowered to \$1.75 per day – prompted the city council not only to reject pay increases but also to discharge one-third of the street-repair employees.³¹ The relatively quick, but temporary, acquiescence to the demand by the street pavers for \$2 per day, following the threats and intimidations used to thwart the efforts of black casual laborers for the same wage, is suggestive. The demonstrations by mostly black workers had drawn the support of blacks and whites proclaiming the unity of laborers across the color line. Since most of the protesters were black men and women, Galveston’s black and white business leaders could portray the affair in racial terms, exemplified by Cuney’s insistence that the black men were acting without support from most white workers and his threats that white military force would be brought to bear on the strikers if they persisted in their demonstrations. In the case of the mostly white striking street pavers the most effective means of isolating the strikers proved to be by giving in to their demands temporarily. Had the city’s leaders resisted the demands, they risked reigniting citywide demonstrations, this time with more white participants who would make manifest the radical biracial rhetoric of the previous week’s labor agitators. Furthermore, giving in to the white workers’ demands not only banished the specter of cooperation across the color line, but it also injected the wedge of pay discrepancy – a symbol of equality for African Americans – between the white casual laborers and those black workers whose demands had been extinguished through the threats of violence and arrest.

The strikes by the longshoremen and day laborers demonstrated the possibilities and limitations that still existed for African Americans in Texas even after Democrats defeated the Republican Reconstruction governments in 1873 and began the slow erosion of black freedom. The conflicts in Galveston illustrated that biracial support proved crucial in the success of unions and unorganized workers in confrontations with employers. The refusal of white longshoremen to break the strike by black dockworkers on the Morgan wharf helped the strikers secure higher wages. The demonstrations by black casual laborers to increase their wages and the ringing denunciations of employers' attempts to divide workers along racial lines elicited condemnation from black and white business conservatives and led to a militant response in the form of militia company patrols and police threats to subdue worker protest. Intimidation and divisiveness, as demonstrated by the relative quick capitulation to white laborers' demands for higher wages denied black workers, set a pattern for the response of elites to cooperation across the color line that persisted well into the twentieth century. The conflicts also demonstrated that black workers were coming to define freedom in the post-emancipation world in ways that were often at odds with the black elites' definitions. Despite the admonishments from Norris Wright Cuney and the *Galveston Daily News* that black workers should "vote, not riot, to solve their problems," black longshoremen and casual laborers saw freedom and equality not only in terms of civil rights but also in terms of equal pay for equal work.³³ The limited success they achieved in 1877 presaged continuing but ultimately futile efforts to obtain such equality as the century closed and the American apartheid system relegated black elites and workers alike to second-class citizenship.

NOTES

¹*Galveston Daily News*, July 28, 1877.

²For a recent survey of the labor movement in Texas see George N. Green, "The Texas Labor Movement, 1870-1920" *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 108 (No. 1) 2004, pp. 1-25; for labor agitation and African Americans in Galveston and Southeast Texas. The most recent overview of the Galveston strikes of 1877, which focuses mostly on black washerwomen, can be found in Tera W. Hunter, *Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 77-82. Race and class and interracial cooperation is dealt with in Robert Stuart Shelton, "Waterfront Workers of Galveston, Texas, 1838-1920" (Ph.D. diss., Rice University, 2001); Clifford Farrington, "Biracial Unions on Galveston's Waterfront, 1865-1925" (University of Texas, 2003); Theresa Case, "Free Labor on the Southwestern Railroads: The 1885-1886 Gould System Strikes" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2002); Steven A. Reich, "The Making of a Southern Sawmill World: Race, Class, and Rural Transformation in the Piney Woods of East Texas, 1830-1930," (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1998); "Struggle in the Piney Woods: Land, Labor, and Working-Class Formation in Southeast Texas," *Texas Gulf Historical & Biographical Record* 32 (1996); Ernest Obadele-Starks, *Black Unionism in the Industrial South*, 1st ed., *Texas A&M Southwestern Studies* no. 11 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000); for biracial cooperation in the 1920 longshoreman strike see James Maroney, "The Galveston Longshoremen's Strike of 1920," *East Texas Historical Journal*, 16 (No. 1, 1978), pp. 34-38, and William D. Angel, Jr., "Controlling the Workers: The Galveston Dock Workers' Strike of 1920 and its Impact on Labor Relations in Texas," *East Texas Historical Journal*, 23 (No. 2, 1985), pp. 14-27.

¹⁰Obadele-Starks, *Black Unionism in the Industrial South*, p. xix.

¹¹The “whiteness” school and its intellectual predecessors include David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race in the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). For the stimulating debate over the extent and meaning of biracial unionism, see Herbert G. Gutman, “The Negro and the United Mine Workers of America: The Career and Letters of Richard L. Davis and Something of their Meaning: 1890-1900,” in *The Negro and the American Labor Movement*, ed. Julius Jacobson (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968). Herbert Hill, “Myth-Making as Labor History: Herbert Gutman and the United Mine Workers of America,” *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 2 (Winter 1988): p. 132; Steven Shulman, Nell Irvin Painter, David Roediger, Martin Glaverman, Francille Rusan Wilson, Stephen Brier, Irving Bernstein, and Albert Fried, “Labor, Race and the Gutman Thesis: Responses to Herbert Hill,” *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 2 (Spring 1989): pp. 361-403.

¹²For criticisms of “whiteness” studies as an interpretive framework, Arnesen, “Whiteness and the Historians’ Imagination,” *International Labor and Working Class History* 60 (Fall 2001), pp. 3-32; and Peter Kolchin, “Whiteness Studies: The New History of Race in America” *Journal of American History* 89 (June 2002), pp. 154-173; Brian Kelly, *Race, Class, and Power in the Alabama Coalfields, 1908-1921* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001), pp. 7-11. For biracialism among waterfront workers in other port cities of the United States, see Eric Arnesen, “‘It Aint Like They Do In New Orleans’: Race Relations, Labor Markets, and Waterfront Labor Movements in the American South, 1880-1923,” in *Racism and the Labour Market: Historical Studies*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Jan Lucassen. (Bern: Peter Lang, 1995), pp. 57-100; Calvin Winslow, ed., *Waterfront Workers: New Perspectives on Race and Class* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press), pp. 19-61.

¹³For a discussion of “social equality” and its role in the relations between black and white workers, see Daniel L. Letwin, “Interracial Unionism, Gender, and ‘Social Equality’ in the Alabama Coalfields, 1878-1908,” *Journal of Southern History*, 61 (August 1995): pp. 519-554; and Daniel L. Letwin, *The Challenge of Interracial Unionism* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

¹⁴*The New York Times*, July 31, 1877.

¹⁵*Galveston Daily News*, July 28, 1877.

¹⁶*Galveston Daily News*, July 28, 1877.; For more on the widespread strikes of 1877, see Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Volume 1: *From Colonial Times to the Founding of the American Federation of Labor* (New York: International Publishers, 1947), pp. 465-474. Also see, Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), pp. 36-71; Jeremy Brecher, *Strike!* (San Francisco: Straight Arrow Books, 1972), pp. 1-24; John R. Commons, et al., *History of Labour in the United States*, Volume 2 (New York: A. M. Kelley, 1966, reprint).

¹⁷*Galveston Daily News*, July 28, 1877.

¹⁸*Galveston Daily News* July 28, 1877.; Directory of the City of Galveston for 1890-91, p. 60.

¹⁹*Galveston Daily News*, August, 4, 1877.

²⁰*Galveston Daily News*, July 28, 1877; Lufkin, a director of the Galveston Wharf Company, founded the Southern Cotton Press and Manufacturing Company in 1859, consolidating it with others in town owned by other directors of the Galveston Wharf Company. The Southern Cotton Press practically monopolized cotton pressing and warehousing in Galveston. Hayes, *Galveston*, II: pp. 920-921.

²¹*Galveston Daily News*, July 31, 1877; *New York Times*, July 31, 1877.

¹⁵Screwmen's Benevolent Association, Minutes, Center for American History, Austin, Texas, November 2, 16, 1866, 1:7-9; International Longshoremen's Association (Screwmen's Benevolent Association), Local 310, 317, and 307, Membership Lists, Special Collections, University of Texas, Arlington, Arlington, Texas, Vol. 1876-77, p. 7.

¹⁶*Galveston Daily News*, July 31, 1877.

¹⁷*Galveston Daily News*, July 31, 1877.

¹⁸*Galveston Daily News*, July 31, 1877; *New York Times*, July 31, 1877.

¹⁹*Galveston Daily News*, July 31, 1877.

²⁰*Galveston Daily News*, July 31, 1877; Hunter, pp. 77-81.

²¹*Galveston Daily News*, August 2, 1877.

²²*Galveston Daily News*, August 2, 1877.

²³*Galveston Daily News*, August 2, 1877.

²⁴*Galveston Daily News*, August 2, 1877.

²⁵Douglas Hales, *A Southern Family in White and Black: The Cuney's of Texas*, *Texas A&M Southwestern Studies*, No. 13. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003); Virginia Neal Hinze, "Norris Wright Cuney," (master's thesis, Rice University, Houston, Texas, 1965), pp. 23-25; Unidentified newspaper clipping, Large Scrapbook, p. 89, p. 53, p. 47, Cuney Papers, Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina.

²⁶*Galveston Daily News*, March 7, 31.; August 2, 1877.

²⁷*Galveston Daily News*, August 2, 1877.

²⁸The total population was approximately 15,000 in 1870; 24,000 in 1880; the white population was approximately 24,000 in 1870; 18,500 in 1880, compiled from the manuscript returns of the Ninth Census, Census of the United States, Schedule I, Population, 1870.

²⁹*Galveston Daily News*, August 2, 1877.

³⁰*Galveston Daily News*, August 2, 4, 1877.

³¹Proceedings of the City Council, Galveston Texas, October 1, 15, 1877.

³²*Galveston Daily News*, August 28, 1877.