DEATH OF A MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY: POPULISM, DISFRANCHISEMENT AND THE CONSERVATIVE COUP IN TEXAS, 1880-1904

A Dissertation

by

STEPHEN DENIS DELEAR

Submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Chair of Committee,	Walter Buenger
Co-Chair of Committee,	Carlos Blanton
Committee Members,	April Hatfield
	Walter Kamphoefner
	Sarah Gatson
Head of Department,	David Vaught

May 2018

Major Subject: History

ABSTRACT

Texas Populists were ahead of their time. The borderlands experience in Texas caused farmers to develop economic ideas far in advance of the contemporary economic literature. Faced with Populists' economic demands, the nation's elites panicked. The ultimate result was the political destruction of Populism. A multi-ethnic political society that had developed in Texas since the end of Reconstruction became a casualty in the fall of Populism.

This work explores the ecological and economic conditions leading to the rise of Populism in late nineteenth century Texas. Attention is paid to the role of organized labor as well as the ethnic and racial matrix in which the movement formed. The Texas borderland experience is suggested as a pivotal influencer of Populist economic policy. The movement is further contextualized within the Anglo, Hispanic and African American racial trinary found in Texas and the impact of German and other Central and Eastern European immigrant groups is explored.

The role of elites in bringing an end to Populism comprises the second part of this work. Elites response to Populism was governed by a mix of status anxiety and economic self-interest. In order to suppress the political upstarts, elites in the south turned to both race baiting and formal disfranchisement schemes. In Texas, a wave of violence would largely silence the People's Party. Changes to the state's voting laws then institutionalized the white supremacist revolution.

DEDICATION

02/14/2018 – 17.[1]

[1] The date of the Parkland shooting and the number of students killed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee co-chairs, Dr. Walter Buenger and Dr, Carlos Blanton, and my committee members, Dr. April Hatfield, Dr. Walter Kamphoefner and Dr. Sarah Gatson.

Thanks also go to my friends and colleagues and the history department faculty and staff for making my time at Texas A&M University a great experience.

Finally, thanks to Sandra Smith, Virginia Kay Delear, Michael and Ruthanne Delear, T.C. Langford, Dr. Marianne Arnold, Dr. Paul Sandul and Dr. Scott Sosebee.

CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES

This work was supervised by a dissertation committee consisting of Professor Walter Buenger and Carlos Blanton as Co-Chairs, and Professors April Hatfield and Walter Kamphoefner of the Department of History and Professor Sarah Gatson of the Department of Sociology.

Graduate study was supported by a fellowship from Texas A&M University and a dissertation research by the Ron Stone Dissertation Fellowship.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Texas Populists were ahead of their time. The borderlands experience in Texas caused farmers to develop economic ideas far in advance of the contemporary economic literature. Faced with Populists' economic demands, the nation's elites panicked. The ultimate result was the political destruction of Populism. A multi-ethnic political society that had developed in Texas since the end of Reconstruction became a casualty in the fall of Populism.

Marked contrasts exited between white farmers and African Americans which formed the core of Texas Populism and the state's elites. Farmers lived an existence both local and global. For much of America, life in the late nineteenth century was still tied inexorably to the land. The rise of the Farmers' Alliance in Texas, the precursor organization to the People's Party, was fueled in large part by the state's political establishments botched reaction to a severe drought. The most central of agricultural concerns, rainfall, roiled Texas politics. While influenced by the land, Texas farmers also existed in a global world.

Cotton, the main agricultural crop of Texas, traded on a global market. Farmers found themselves battered by two forces. Monopolistic railroads charged the highest prices they could to shippers without other options for getting their crops to market. At the same time, agricultural prices were in a downward spiral. The United States' resumption of the gold standard meant that a system of fixed exchange rates, based on gold, existed between the world's major economic powers. A shortage of gold caused widespread deflation and plummeting agricultural commodity prices.

In Texas, the borderland experience caused farmers to question the wisdom of gold. Prior to the resumption of redemption in gold, Texas used greenbacks not backed by anything

but the full faith and credit of the United States government. By contrast, Mexico used a coined piece of silver as its main currency. Texas farmers watched as the value of the Greenback, a currency backed by nothing, rose against the silver coin. As the United States moved to a complex hybrid currency, based primarily on gold, border residents noticed an interesting phenomenon. Paying for goods in Mexico with an American silver dollar often resulted in receiving change in Mexican silver of greater weight and purity than the original American coin. Farmers wondered if deflation could be cured simply by moving off gold and issuing more currency.

The growing strength of the agrarian movement alarmed national elites. If Farmers lived in a world that often seemed local but turned out to be global is scope, elites existed in a world that seemed global but was often far more local. Social capital, the status that came with being elite, offered access both to credit and opportunity. Populist ideas threatened the basis of the social safety net that supported elites in a time of economic upheaval. The resulting status panic brought with it a press to defeat Populism by whatever means necessary.[2]

The multi-ethnic political society that had existed in Texas paid the price. Entering into the Populist period, Texas politics represented a complex, multi-factional, system. No faction could risk completely alienating an ethnic group – and losing votes to other factions. In doing so, politics acted as a restraining factor. Parties and factions were forced to seek an ethnic

2 New extraction processes and new gold finds would end deflation for a period of time. Recent estimates by the federal reserve shows that inflation only returned in 1902, with prices essentially flat after the deflation of 1894-1895. A pattern of sustained inflation would not emerge until 1910. The return of inflation postdates all but the last pushes for disfranchisement in Texas. The cycle of steady prices followed by deflation extends back into the 1880s. While an additional influx of gold may have helped the push for disfranchisement, the end of Populism does not correspond to a clear change in the pattern of inflation and deflation. See, "Consumer Price Index (Estimate) 1800- | Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis," accessed March 6, 2018, https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/financial-and-economic-education/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800.

middle ground to remain politically viable. The push to end Populism removed this restraining factor.

What resulted was a concerted attack on Populism. Race proved justification for attacks on the People's Party in the South. As the Party was successfully suppressed, leaders sought to legitimize the white supremacist revolution through legislation. The result, in Texas, was the enactment of both a poll tax and new election rules that shut many out of the political process.

Examining the intersection of Populism and ethnicity requires navigating three schools of historical thought. One, exemplified by Lawrence Goodwyn in numerous works, saw Texas Populists as a model for improved race relations. By contrast, Richard Hofstadter, most notably in *The Age of Reform* and working primarily with midwestern Populism, emphasized the role of anti-Semitism in the farmers' movement. Charles Postel's *The Populist Vision* focused on racism against African-Americans by Southern Populists. While Postel did not originate the racial view of populism, authors such as Perman and Gaither pre-date Postel, *The Populist Vision* has become the most widely known work in the school. These views are, perhaps surprisingly, not irreconcilable.[3]

Outside of regional variation time and resources explains the wide variation in views of Populism. Si Khan, one of the more experienced field organizers on the American political left, describes the conundrum facing community organizers when they first enter an area.

---

3 Lawrence Goodwyn, Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). Lawrence Goodwyn, The Populist Moment : A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America (Oxford University Press, USA, 1978). Lawrence C. Goodwyn, "Populist Dreams and Negro Rights: East Texas as a Case Study," The American Historical Review 76, no. 5 (December 1, 1971): 1435–56, https://doi.org/10.2307/1870515. Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011). Charles Postel, The Populist Vision (New York: Oxfored University Press, 2007). Michael Perman, Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1908 (Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 2001); Gerald H. Gaither, Blacks and the Populist Movement: Ballots and Bigotry in the New South (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005).

> No matter how much some group or how much any group, any constituency, is confronted with a common problem that unites its members in some ways, they will be divided in others. If they are of the same race, they may still be split by class, gender, religion, sexual orientation – any of the many different ways in which people can divide themselves into artificial "kinds" and away from each other. .. [I]n real life and campaigns for justice, the people are always partly united, partly divided. It's up to the organizers working with them to understand that this will always be the case and to do whatever we can to reinforce the unity and compensate for the divisions among the people with whom we work.

The Farmers' Alliance originated in Texas and spread throughout rural America. Texas had the longest period of Alliance and Populist organizers working in the state. If Texas Populism seems less racial and ethnically divided than in other regions, it likely results from the additional time and resources possessed by agrarian organizers in the state. Coupled with a Texas political system that incentivized cross-ethnic and cross-racial alliances, the situation in Texas would have differed from other regions where organizers lacked the same resources and incentives.[4]

Exploration of Texas Populism is complicated by linguistic drift. The defeat of populism was so thorough and complete that even the meaning of the term was, eventually, co-opted by its opponents. Modern usage of the term Populism often serves as a euphemism for a form of authoritarianism. One influential definition of authoritarianism is that that it rejects democratic norms, denies the legitimacy of political opponents, tolerates or encourages violence and curtails the civil liberties of opponents. Authoritarianism often becomes equated with Populism when an autocrat seeks to capitalize on racial, ethnic, or occasionally class divisions in order to bolster their rule. Modern Populists are seen as proposing quick and unworkable solutions to economic problems. A cynical person might observe that a Populist is any foreign autocrat which the

4 Angela Davis and Si Kahn, Creative Community Organizing: A Guide for Rabble-Rousers, Activists, and Quiet Lovers of Justice (San Fansisco: Berrett-Koehlar Publishers, Inc, 2011), 17–18.

American financial industry does not like. While nineteenth-century American Populism was extremely disliked by the financial powers of the day, it lacked the authoritarian aspects associated with the modern term.[5]

Populism has become a dirty word in the twenty-first century. The irony of Populism is that its enemies fit the modern definition of the term much more than the People's Party. Populists were American citizens who turned to the democratic process to effect change. The speeches of the Farmers' Alliance's sometimes president and chief economic thinker Charles Macune, replete with economic data and statistics, seem more akin to something found in an economics conference rather than an attempt to inflame passions. In Texas, it is the opponents of Populism who resorted to race-baiting, violence and eventually legal disfranchisement. Defense of the gold standard, the central concern of Populist's opponents, is now an issue so marginal and fringe as to have almost no place in American political life. Disfranchisement and the American ordeal of segregation have roots in elites' defense of a monetary doctrine today seen as essentially nonsense.[6]

Linguistic drift also haunts other aspects of the study of Populism. Writing in the late 1940s, political scientist V.O. Key. Jr. famously coined the term Bourbon Coup for the rise of disfranchisement in the former Confederate states. To Key, the drop off in voter participation in the Southern states formed such a stark and immediate break that it resembled a coup. C. Vann

---

5 Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, How Democracies Die (New York: Crown/Archetype, 2018), 23–24.
6 For an example of the view that elites reacting to gold were largely responsible for segregation see C. Vann Woodward, Origins of the New South, 1877-1913 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971). For a concurrence based on legal history see, Gerard N. Magliocca, The Tragedy of William Jennings Bryan: Constitutional Law and the Politics of Backlash (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). However, for the idea that segregation began from the bottom up see C. Vann Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). Woodward's evolution seems to be based on experiences with the Civil Rights Movement

Woodward and other midcentury writers would use the term. Key almost certainly meant the term coup to refer to events which Americans of his day would have been intimately familiar, the rise of European fascism in the 1930s. The Enabling Act, a piece of legislation giving Hitler near complete power in Germany, represented one of the turning points in fascism's rise. Notably, Nazi Germany represented a legislative coup in which an elected parliament willingly abrogated democracy, handing complete power to a single party. Similar legislative coups took place in other fascist countries. As the Cold War progressed, this form of legislative coup would take a back seat to more flashy and immediate military takeovers. As understandings of a coup changed, the usefulness of the term Bourbon Coup declined.[7]

The idea that democracies can fall from within is central to Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt's popularly received book *How Democracies Die*. In the context of linguistic shift *How Democracies Die* exemplifies how ingrained the notion of military overthrow has become in American society. The book points toward decline from within, the result of leaders taking technically legal actions that nevertheless establish an authoritarian regime, as the central threat to modern Democracy. This threat would not have been a new discovery to Key's generation of political scientists – who witnessed firsthand many of the examples given in Levistsky and Ziblatt's work.[8]

Despite some chilling similarities, this dissertation is not a metaphor for modern politics. In the late nineteenth century, fear caused American elites to abandon social norms. For many in power, protecting the currency was so important that social norms could be sacrificed to do so.

---

7 Valdimer Orlando Key and Alexander Heard, Southern Politics in State and Nation (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1949), 533–55. Woodward, Origins of the New South, 321–50.
8 Levitsky and Ziblatt, How Democracies Die.

Disfranchisement, segregation and horrific outbreaks of racial violence soon followed. In the modern case, elites allowed a raw desire to win to blind them to the consequences of their political actions. While there are similarities between the end of Gilded Age and modern politics, these derive from similar underlying conditions.

This work is divided into six chapters:

Chapter 1: Shows the impact of environmental and economic forces in the formation of the Farmers' Alliance, the precursor organization to the Populist Party. Both drought and economic insecurity caused farmers to organize and eventually enter into the political arena.

Chapter 2: Deals with the place of the Farmers' Alliance within the multi-ethnic matrix of nineteenth-century Texas. The need to appeal to different ethnic groups affected the spread, leadership, and transformation of the group.

Chapter 3: Focuses on the economic demands of Populism. The borderlands experience would prove critical in the development of Populist economic theories. These experiences allowed the development of monetary ideas that were well ahead of their time. At the same time, Populist idea**s**, focusing on concepts such as inflation that was not fully understood at the time, would alarm national leaders. The suppression of Populism became necessary to abate the perceived threat to the US economy.

Chapter 4: Examines the political and economic motivations behind the outburst of racial violence that marked the end of the Populist era. Not only was violence political in nature, but it targeted key Populist campaign workers and positions. Lack of campaign personal caused the Populist movement to collapse from the inside. The push to end Populism also empowered the most militant white supremacist voices in the region.

Chapter 5: Looks at the legitimization and legalization of the white supremacist revolution that brought about the downfall of Populism. Elites sought to transform the revolution so as to take power back from militants. Militants disarmed in return for the disfranchisement of political opponents and further racial segregation.

Chapter 6: Examines the implementation of the poll tax in Texas. Passage of the tax resulted from a vote with multiple indications of fraud. Subsequent legal maneuvers alleviated the need for fraud by constructing a system in which one party, and one faction of that party, enjoyed an almost unassailable structural advantage.

If this book is not a metaphor it should serve as a warning. The fall of Populism is the process through which democracy died for a vast number of Americans. Unusual events brought about a rapidly changing political climate. Instead of dealing with the underlying problems, elites chose to protect their positions. Violence became a tool for hollowing out the support personnel needed for Populism to exist as a functioning political party. Once effective opposition ceased, legal measures were used to ensure that the party in power would remain in power. This is what it looks like when democracy dies.

CHAPTER II

CLIMATE CHANGE

Disfranchisement reflected tensions within the Texas Democratic Party. The late nineteenth century saw the Texas Democratic Party rapidly grow into a large and ponderous entity. The party found it difficult to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. The onset of both an economic downturn and a major drought in the mid-1880s pushed the state party past its ability to cope. Faced with the failure of established political institutions a new group, the Farmers Alliance, rose rapidly onto the political scene. With a history of alienation from the Democratic Party, the Alliance would form a powerful and organized group outside of the control of established party leaders. Experience with the Alliance in the 1880s would help convince Democratic Party leaders that restricting the franchise, and limiting the number of unruly farmers that needed to be placated, represented a political imperative.

Factional Politics

The Texas Democratic Party in the 1880s split into three factions. Agrarian interests, represented by the Grange, formed one grouping. Reformers, most often prohibitionists linked with growth in town and urban centers, another. Conservatives, defined by support for a late 1880s version of white supremacy, formed the third and largest combination. These factions would prove unstable and unable to cope with rapid change. Failure to address a climate based emergency, a major drought, provided the opening for the rapid growth or a new organization, the Farmers Alliance, to sweep into politics in doing so establishing the basis for the formation of the Populist Party.

The three faction model of Texas politics comes in large part from the works of historian

Walter Buenger, In order to explain the state's politics post-1900, Buenger posited a political scene dominated by conservative, progressives and radical former Populists. By 1900, these factions were well established and coincided with elements on the national political scene. The late eighteenth century saw the factional system still in its infancy. Politicians and voters underwent a sorting process as state politics evolved from a two-party system – Republicans and Democrats – during Reconstruction to a single party divided into multiple factions. The process of realignment left the political scene subject to rapid change.[9]

The Texas Democratic Party faced serious structural challenges at the end of Reconstruction. The state's post-Reconstruct constitution, enacted in 1876, increased the number of state senators from sixteen to thirty-one. The Party used state senate districts to define the number of members of party committees – a practice that continues to the modern days. With the expansion of the state Senate, the party's platform committee increased from sixteen to thirty-one. The increase in committee membership, coupled with a rise in factionalism, slowed the ability of the party to adapt to changing circumstances. [10]

Evidence of frustration with the Democratic Party's increased sluggishness mounted rapidly. From 1876 to 1882 the Texas State Grange produced an alternative political for Grange

---

9 For the three faction model of Texas politics see, Walter L. Buenger, *The Path to a Modern South: Northeast Texas between Reconstruction and the Great Depression* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 12–18. Buenger notes the importance of prohibition as a political issue during this timeframe. The Alliance endorsed prohibition at its August 1885 meeting. Thereafter, the *Rural Citizen*, the organizations official newspaper at the time, fell almost silent on the subject. In early 1886 the Greenback Party of Texas called a joint convention of Prohibitionists, the Patrons of Husbandry, Knights of Labor and Farmers Alliance. Not only did none of the invited organizations attend but leading prohibitionists let it be known that "Prohibitionists of Texas are not in sympathy with the contemplated amalgamation of the odds and ends of all the disgruntled soreheads and disappointed office seekers in the state." While the Alliance endorsed prohibition, it proved a weak advocate for banning alcohol. "Prairie Chapel Alliance," *The Rural Citizen*, September 10, 1885. (Local Alliance with resolution approving larger bodies stance on Prohibition). "The State Press," *Dallas Morning News*, February 27, 1886.

10 Ernest William Winkler, *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1916), 124,208.

backed candidates – still nominal members of the Democratic Party – to adhere to. Other groups – most notably the People's tickets covered in chapter two – would take a similar tact at the local level. The results were a series of proto-factions, never completely defined even by their members, floating in a nebulous status between regular members of the party, interest groups, and third-party opposition. [11]

The unsettled nature of Texas politics proved particularly challenging for Conservatives. The largest of the party' factions, Conservatives found themselves in transition. Previously Conservative meant Redeemer – the group of Confederate linked politicians that presided over the end of Reconstruction and the marked diminution of African-American political power. A new and rising group of Conservative leaders sought to define the faction as friends of big business. Doing so marked a break with the group's prior beliefs. Business conservatives held little in common, outside of support for white supremacy, with aging Confederates. The resulting political infighting did little to enhance the responsiveness of the Texas political establishment.[12]

Infighting and structural changes made the Texas Democratic Party a slow and ponderous beast. While Texas politicians could confront challenges, it remained best if those challenges arose with ample warning and time for discussion beforehand. Sudden economic and environmental emergencies opened the way for the rise of the Farmers' Alliance, a more nimble and focused group, to explode onto the political scene.

---

11 Winkler, 124,208.

12 For more on the ideology of each group *see* Alwyn Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform: Texas Politics, 1876-1906* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 2000). For Conservatives in particular *see*, Patrick G. Williams, *Beyond Redemption: Texas Democrats After Reconstruction* (Texas A&M University Press, 2007).

Origins

From its inception, the Alliance found itself substantially alienated from the Democratic Party. During Reconstruction, conservatives turned a blind eye to the depredations of numerous outlaw gangs as long as they combined outlawry with harassment of African-Americans and federal officials. Between 1870 and 1890, Texas grew from a population of 800,000 to over two million. Newcomers cared less about what conservatives did during Reconstruction than about current threats. The Alliance formed at the end of Reconstruction to clean up a local outbreak of banditry and grew into a major political force. Farmers who joined the Alliance joined an organization with a history of opposition to Conservative interests.[13]

The Alliance formed in Lampasas County in 1875 as the Farmers' Club. After the Civil War, Lampasas stood divided. As a frontier area, Lampasas relied on federal troops for protection against Native-American raids. Before the war, a substantial minority – over forty percent – of the county's population voted against secession. After the war, federal troops returned to the county. From 1867 to 1870 a detachment of soldiers from the 26th infantry and 4th cavalry – based out of a temporary fortification known as Post Lampasas – battled both pro-confederate outlaws and Native-Americans. As the Indian Wars progressed, both the Army and the threat of outside raiders receded. The outlaws remained.[14]

---

13 For census data see *University of Virginia Historical Census Browser,* http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/. The browser includes data from general population, agricultural, manufacturing as well as slave census'. The site offers data at the national, state and county, level.

14 Walter L. Buenger, *Secession and the Union in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013), 176. Richard Jones, "POST OF LAMPASAS: FORGOTTEN RECONSTRUCTION ERA U.S. ARMY POST (1867-1870)," *Journal of Texas Archaeology and History* 1, accessed October 18, 2015, http://jtah.org/2014/11/13/post-of-lampasas-forgotten-reconstruction-era-u-s-army-post-1867-1870/. For name of the early organization as Farmers' Clubs see F. G. Blood, *Handbook and History of the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union* (Washington D.C.: National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union, 1893), 35. Confusingly, the Farmers' Club was also the name of a British Farmers organization that appears to have inspired the formation of a number of Texas clubs by the same name in 1873. This would help explain the later name change from Farmers' Club to Farmers' Alliance.

Bandits operating in Texas during Reconstruction straddled the line between outlaws and insurgents. In Northeast Texas, the Baker, Bickerstaff and Lee gangs possessed the highest profile. Members of the three gangs attacked federal commissary wagons and attempted to interdict the movement of supplies to federal forts on the frontier. The Bickerstaff gang proved particularly notable in ambushing patrols of federal troops. By seeking out conflict with federal troops, gang members placed themselves in the role of guerrilla fighters.[15]

The economics of terrorism gave rise to the confusion between banditry and insurgency. Postwar insurgents followed a well-defined business plan. Declare support for the Confederacy. Secure the support of local leaders. Terrorize the surrounding African-American population and possibly shoot at Union troops. In order to fund their actions, insurgents engaged in livestock rustling. Where on the spectrum between insurgency and outlawry a particular gang fell depended on the amount of effort put in at shooting at undesirables compared to the time spent raising funds through livestock rustling. Overall, the business model proved highly successful with terrorist groups known to exist in at least sixty Texas counties.[16]

The Farmers' Alliance, the secret anti-insurgent organization, formed in 1874 appears to have been an outgrowth of attempts to organize Farmers' Clubs in 1873. For presence of the Farmers' Club in Texas see: "Singular Coincidences," *Weekly Democratic Statesman*, December 4, 1873. (Report of unrelated incident involving individual on Farmers' Club business). J. C. Chew, "Texas News," *The Houston Telegraph*, July 31, 1873. (Report of Farmers' Club forming in Panola County). J. C. Chew, "Untitled Announcement Page 3," *The Houston Telegraph*, June 26, 1873. (Formation of a Farmers' Club in Dallas County).

15 Kenneth Wayne Howell and James Smallwood, eds., "When the Klan Rode," in *Still the Arena of Civil War: Violence and Turmoil in Reconstruction Texas, 1865-1874* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2012), 214–15. James Smallwood, Barry A. Crouch, and Larry Peacock, *Murder and Mayhem: The War of Reconstruction in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 73–76.

16 Howell and Smallwood, "When the Klan Rode," 214–15. The author of this work notes a marked contrast between the extreme violence of Reconstruction era outlaws and the attempts by later groups, such as the Sam Bass Gang, to minimize casualties. Unlike Reconstruction era gangs, the Bass gang funded itself by interdicting currency shipments by rail and stage. These shipments took place due to the need to ship currency as the country moved back toward the gold standard. The failure of most Southern banks at the end of the Civil War deprived Texas of the currency to make this business model viable until the advent of substantial gold strikes in the west in the 1870s. To put it another way, brutal Texas outlaws are more likely to be found in the period leading up to 1874 and their more romantic, and less violent, successors after that point.

Local elites' provided aid and encouragement to anti-federal bandits. In one notable incident in Lampasas, prosecutors failed to put on a case against local gang members accused of killing two state police officers – a police force deeply connected with the Reconstruction era government.[17] In Bell County fear that elites would fail to prosecute rustlers led to a major outbreak of violence. On May 26, 1874, a mob lynched nine men, all white, and including eight accused horse thieves in Bell County. The mob, apparently, intended to kill only one man, an accused murderer, but decided to shoot the horse thieves found in the cell with him. The Belton massacre points to an area undergoing substantial unrest along with a deep mistrust of local leaders. The Farmers' Alliance formed as a means to deal with the crime wave without resorting to mob violence.[18]

The Lampasas Farmers' Alliance formed to confront livestock theft in the area. Whether motivated by the end of Reconstruction or the lynching in Bell County, local law enforcement in Lampasas became responsive to reports of theft and intimidation. With increased responsiveness from law enforcement, Lampasas farmers formed a secret society to combat the rustlers. Accustomed to public support during Reconstruction, outlaws often entered isolated homes and demanded shelter for the night. Charles Macune, one of the Farmers' Alliance's major leaders in

---

17 The Texas Rangers replaced the state police when Democrats returned to power in 1874. Ben H. Procter, "TEXAS RANGERS," *Handbook of Texas Online* (**http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/met04**), accessed November 01, 2015. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Modified on August 10, 2015. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

18 Clifford R. Caldwell, *Guns of the Lincoln County War* (Mountain Home: Clifford R. Caldwell, 2009), 2–7. For a first hand account of banditry in Bell County see, Ellis Fry, "Mob Operations in West Bell County," n.d., Bell County Museum. Involvement of local elites can be found in Jim Bowmer and Daurice Bowmer, "The Unknown Bell County" 1980, Bell County Museum. For the 1874 lynching see, "Mob Law," *The Galveston Daily News*, May 28, 1874. "From Waco, The Belton Jail Massacre, Yet Another Account," *The Galveston Daily News*, May 28, 1874. "From the Capital, More About the Belton Jail Massacre, Rumored Hanging of Horse Thieves," *The Galveston Daily News*, June 3, 1874.

the 1880s, described the organization's early history in a stenographically recorded oral history interview:

> It was a secret organization, with passwords, signs and grips. There was a formula of questions and answers to be used in the dark. By use of this code, a man could ride up to a house in the night and call, and an answer would come from within. Then a certain request would be made and a certain answer given. The form of this dialogue appraised the farmer that the caller was an Alliance member and that he had with him a civil officer, and that they desired to arrest a certain man who they believe to be stopping over for the night with this farmer. Then the officer was allowed to come into the room where the man was, the farmer's wife would hold the only light in such a way that it would shine upon the man, and not the officer following her, who would keep in the shadow. This would allow the officer the chance to "get the drop" on the man and arrest him in safety.

Macune's account dovetails with that given by Nelson A. Dunning in 1891, describing the contents of an early organizational pamphlet that has since been lost:

> Cattle and horse thieves infested the country and committed depredations continually, to the great loss and annoyance of the people. A united action against these outlaws was instituted through these organizations [the Farmers' Clubs] and pushed with great vigor. One of the degrees of the Alliance, at the time, consisted of minute description of the methods of capturing a horse-thief."

Dunning also mentions the use of patterned gunshots and horn calls to convey information at a distance. Together these accounts paint a picture of an organization using secrecy to protect members from retaliation. Use of signs, grips, and signals allowed a member to communicate distress. Law enforcement could then be notified without risking the outlaw's associates learning of the hosts' involvement and seeking to retaliate.[19]

---

19 C.W. Macune, The Farmers Alliance, Transcript of Oral Interview, 1920, 3–4, Vertical Files, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin. While Macune's interview may have been dictated and not stenographically recorded, 1920 would be a relatively early date for the law office where the interview was held to have dictation equipment. More likely, Macune simply talked while a court reporter took notes. Nelson A. Dunning, *The Farmers' Alliance History and Agricultural Digest* (Washington D.C.: Alliance Publishing Company, 1891), 10–16.

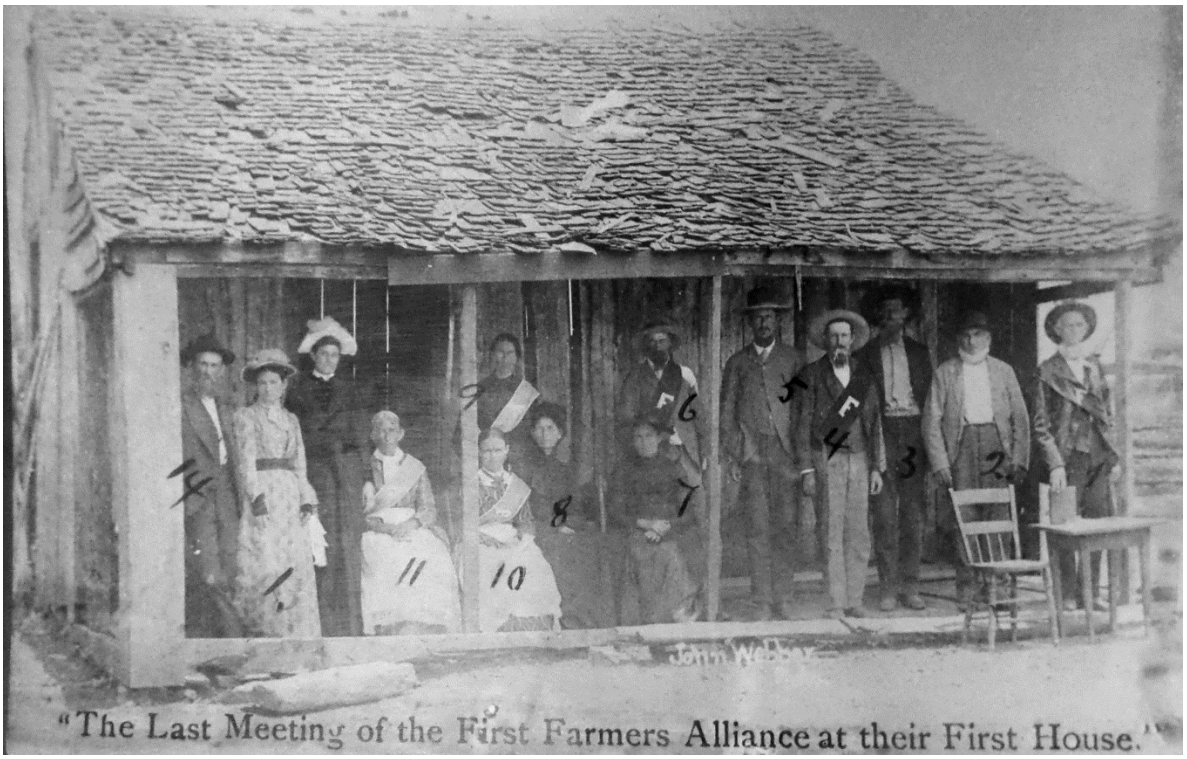

Figure 1: Reunion Of 1877 Founders Of The Farmers' Alliance, 1893.
Source: Pleasant Valley Alliance Number 1 File, Lampasas County Historical Commission.

Eventually, the Alliance won. On a sunny day in 1877, Farmers' Club members gathered to celebrate victory under the live oaks by a log schoolhouse on Donaldson Creek, about eight miles north of the town of Lampasas. Members did something they never thought they would be able to do, bring their children with them to a picnic sponsored by the organization. During the years of banditry, the group restricted knowledge of its existence to adult men and women as well as boys over the age of sixteen. Ignorance provided the children with some protection from murder if a parent's involvement in the club became known. Looking forward to a more peaceful future, the club began the process of relaunching as a more run of the mill fraternal organization in the model of the Freemasons and Grange. After some discussion, the group gained a new name as the Farmers' Club became the Farmers' Alliance. The new order would soon find itself torn apart by those disaffected with the current state government. (See, Figure 1).[20]

After being christened in Lampasas, the Farmers' Alliance expanded through a rapidly growing portion of Central Texas. In early 1879, the *Galveston Daily News* reported that "nine counties were represented at the last meeting of the State Alliance." It is highly likely, that many of the original nine counties possessed only a nominal Alliance presence. Nine counties represented a boast from the small and very local organization, not a statement of the location of major branches. Probably, the nine counties correspond to Lampasas and the neighboring

---

20 Beatrice Stevenson to Mrs. L. H. Baldwin, July 11, 1963, Texas Farmers' Alliance Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin. Stevenson's letter includes a typewritten reproduction of a newspaper article of unknown provenance – suspected to be from one of the several Lampasas area newspapers whose early archives did not survive. Information contained in the article – reporting on the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Farmers Alliance, puts it in either 1902 or 1903. The first meeting locatable by Dunning in 1891 represented a multi-county gathering of local Alliance in February of 1878. This argues strongly for a date of 1877 for the reorganization of the Alliance. For the reputed location of the original schoolhouse see, Texas State Historical Marker #4055 located off CR 2023 in Lampasas County.

counties that provided unusually strong Populist support in 1892, plus Parker County where the alliance relaunched from in 1879.[21] All nine counties lie to the west of the Balcones Escarpment and mostly in similar ecozones.[22] Of the nine only Hamilton, Lampasas and Parker are known for certain to have had an Alliance presence prior to 1880. Given the organization's agrarian outlook, it is likely that the nine original counties, however, constituted, represented farmers working the same type of land on one side of a major ridgeline.[23]

The Alliance not only originated in opposition to a group – confederate aligned bandits – but in an area of contested political affiliations. In 1878 the Greenback Party, an organization calling for currency inflation and claiming to represent rural interests, swept through the state. Lampasas and other counties with a strong Farmers' Alliance presence became battlegrounds. The fighting brought the Alliance into politics. In Hamilton County, the Alliance put forward a ticket for all county-level offices. While presenting an outward sign of unity, within the Alliance infighting between Greenback and Democratic Party supporters tore the organization apart. The hostility and ill feelings engendered by the election caused numerous lodges to disband. Exact details of the split remain obscure – the rules of the fraternal organization put its members under a quasi-religious obligation not to record or speak of its internal deliberations. With Democrats

21 The nine counties might refer to Brown, one of the counties from which Mills was created and not Parker. Brown County grew from 544 residents in 1870 to 8,414 in 1880. Switching Parker for Brown does not change the analysis.

22 While the University of Texas map breaks the various ecozones into their smallest subparts, most ecoregion maps of Texas simple list the area as the Cross Timbers. *See*, "Map Gallery – Biological," Texas Parks and Wildlife, https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/maps/gis/map_downloads/map_gallery/bio/.

23 "Farmers' Alliance," *The Galveston Daily News*, April 16, 1879. In 1878 the Alliance put forth a ticket for the coming election in Hamilton County. See, "Texas -- Facts and Fancies," *Weekly Democratic Statesman*, October 24, 1878.

ultimately holding the area, the Alliance paid a heavy price for its first foray into politics. (See, Figures 2, 3 and Table 1).[24]

By 1879, the Grand State Alliance was all but dead. Only the lodges in Parker County, far removed from areas of Greenbacker support, remained. These formed the core from which the second Grand State Alliance grew. Learning from past mistakes, the founders of the new Alliance sought to avoid taking political stances. Macune attributed the group's success in the early 1880s to its lack of any clear political stand:

> One reason for the rapid growth of the Alliance was it had such meager literature and such brief and broad declaration of purposes. The discontent was strong; and the desire for remedy urgent; an organization was offered, a secret organization of farmers for the purposes of "mental, moral and financial improvement." That was the whole of the platform. Every man could persuade himself that it stood for his own ideas.

This apolitical stance fell away as a major drought swept the area.[25]

---

24 "Texas -- Facts and Fancies." Dunning, *The Farmers' Alliance*, 20–22. Details of the split are in unfortunately short supply. Unfortunately, the Alliance's existence as a fraternal organization hampers study of its early history. Membership lists represented secret knowledge. The later Alliance would apparently consider politics party of the organizations secret work, not to be talked about with outsiders. When dealing with the later Farmers' Alliance this becomes a virtual non-issue. The various incarnations of the National Famers' Alliance leaked like a sieve. When it comes to the first Farmer's Alliance, out of Lampasas, members apparently believed that they held a quasi-religious obligation to keep discussions within the lodge hall private. While Dunning confirms a falling out over politics related to the Greenback Party and was able to locate members of the original Alliance to interview, it appears they simply did not want to talk about events surrounding the 1878 election. Maps of Texas legislative districts, from 1881 to 1964, can be found in James Russel Jensen, *Legislative Apportionment in Texas* (Houston Texas: Public Affairs Research Center, University of Houston, 1964).

25 Dunning, *The Farmers' Alliance*, 20–22. Macune, The Farmers Alliance, 1920, 9–10. See also, John Stricklin Spratt, *The Road to Spindletop* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 190.

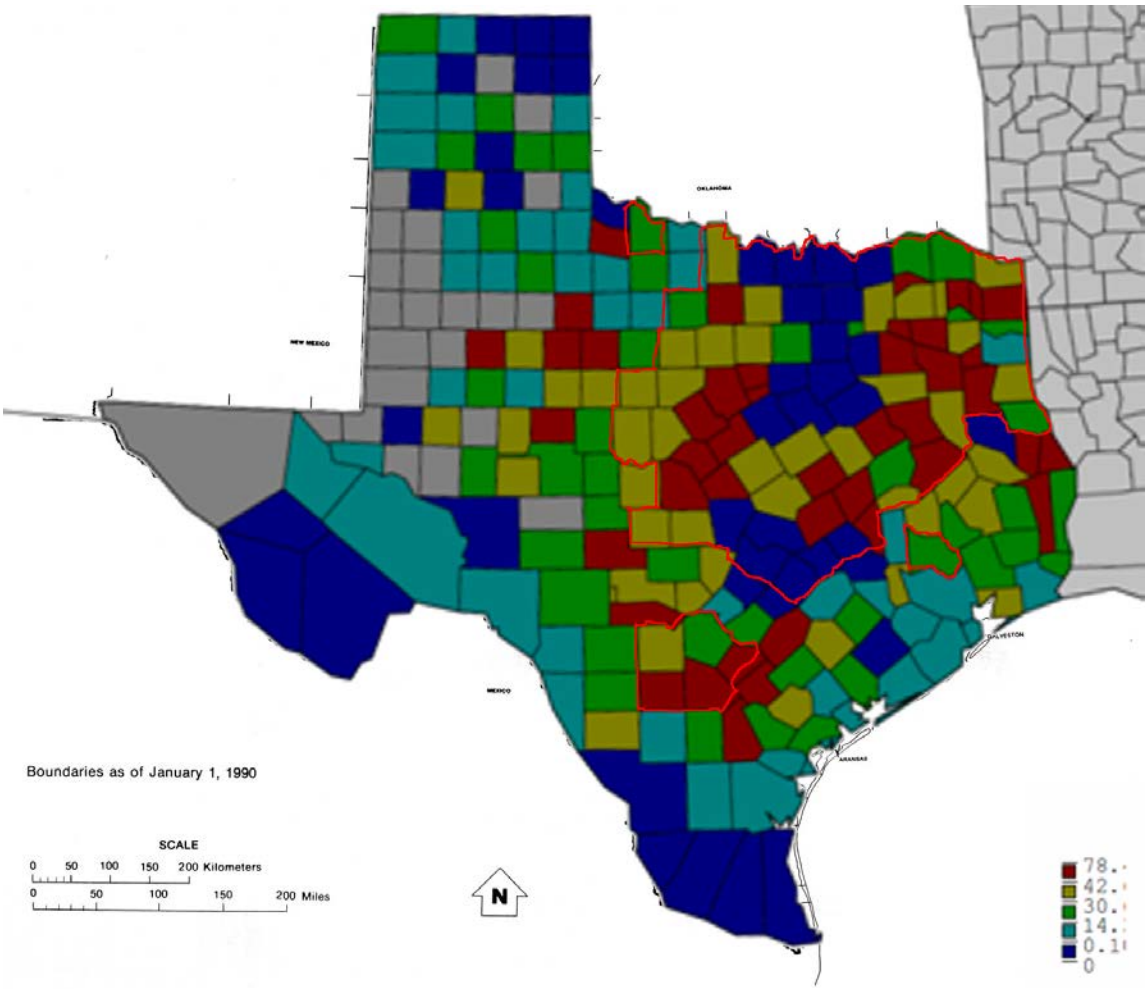

Figure 2: Alliance Block And Populist Congressional Returns, 1892.
As long been expected, the majority of Counties with strong Populist Party support comes from areas with an early Alliance presence. *Source*: *The Great American History Machine,* University of Michigan. *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.* (Dallas: The Dallas Mercury, 1886), 12–13.

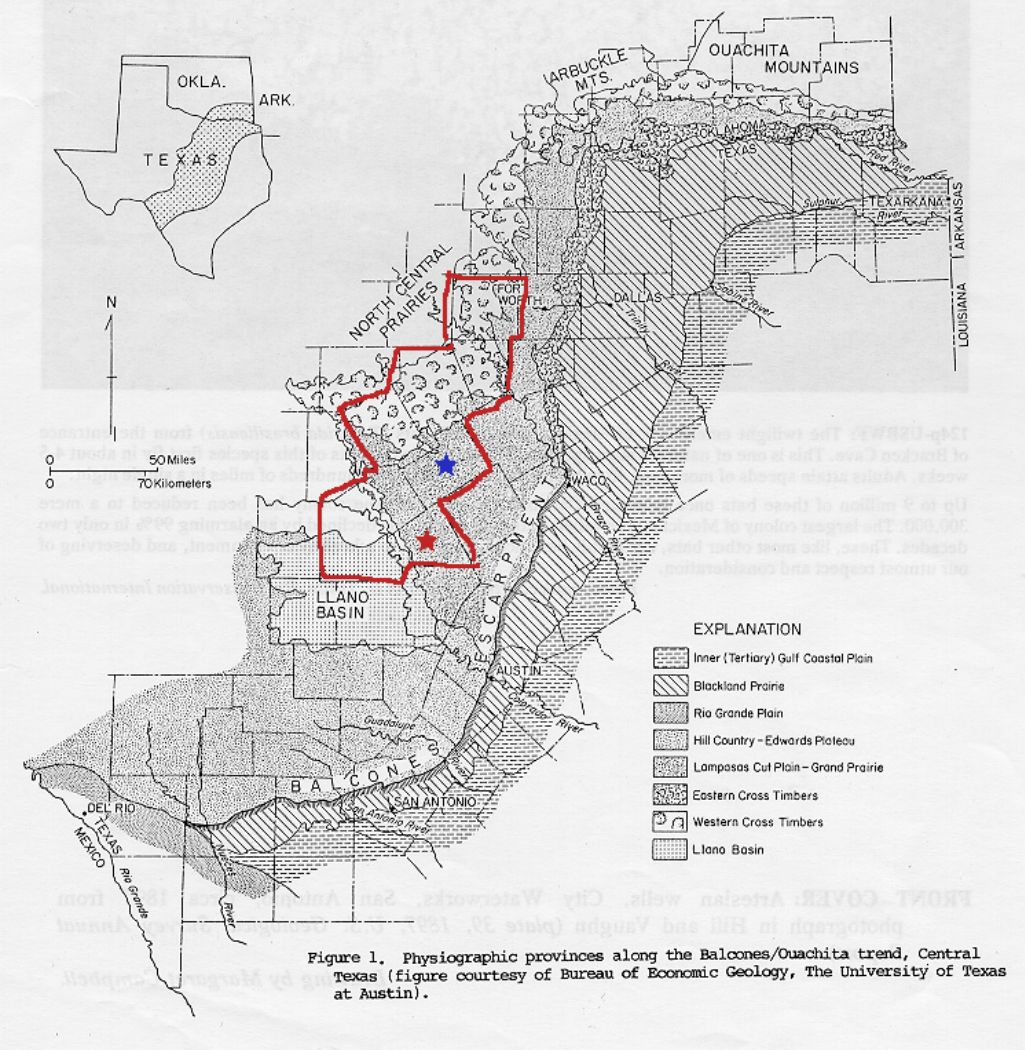

Figure 1. Physiographic provinces along the Balcones/Ouachita trend, Central Texas (figure courtesy of Bureau of Economic Geology, The University of Texas at Austin).

Figure 3: Central Texas, Showing Balcones Fault Line And Area of Farmers' Alliance Support.

Red star is Lampasas County, Blue is Hamilton. *Source:* C.M. Woodruff Jr. and Patrick L. Abbot, "The Balcones Escarpment," The Walter Geology Library – University of Texas at Austin,

County	1870	1880
COMANCHE	1,001	8,608
ERATH	1,801	11,796
HAMILTON	733	6,365
HOOD	2,585	6,125
LAMPASAS	1,344	5,421
MILLS	Created 1887	
PARKER	4,186	15,870
SAN SABA	1,425	5,324
SOMERVELL	0	2,649
WEBB	2,615	5,273

Table 1: Population Growth In Area Highlighted.
Somervell County was formed in 1875. *Source:* University of Virginia Historical Census Browser, Populist Congressional Vote, 1892, *Great American History Machine*, Dunning, *Farmers Alliance*, 20-22.

Drought

The Farmers' Alliance may have continued as a minor regional fraternal organization if nature had not introduced a random element. A major drought gripped Texas from 1884 to 1886. The existing power structure of the state found itself unable to effectively respond to the crisis. The lack of rain propelled the Alliance into a statewide institution. Lack of rain propelled a group alienated from the traditional political establishment into the forefront of Texas politics. [26]

The drought ravaged rural Texas and placed farmers deeply into debt. In inquiring to a family member about moving to Texas in 1885, William Foster summed up the situation in Arkansas:

> [T]imes are hard and money scarce. The hogs all dead or nearly so. The people of this County have all moved their smokehouse to St. Louis [buying pork instead of raising it]. Cotton [is] light. Corn is worth 50cts per bushel, bacon 10 cents per pound and the people all under mortgage for their last summer[']s supplies.

Things were not any better in Texas. Reports out of Washington County, in East Texas, indicate farmers going deeply into debt to survive the winter of 1885-86:

> "Crop mortgages are being received in large numbers in the County Clerk's office and corn, bacon, hay and oats are being received at Brenham by the [freight] carload, and plenty of carloads at that. The crop mortgage and the carloads of corn and bacon, when considered with reference to each other, may possibly afford food for mediation. . ."

A crop mortgage, also called a crop lien, constitutes a legal instrument allowing a farmer to secure a loan for supplies offering crops in the ground as collateral. Cotton, the primary cash

---

26 The contours of the drought zone have proved controversial. A late freeze in early 1886 caused massive agricultural damage in the western areas of the drought zone. Working from USDA rainfall data, Williams argues that East and Central Texas suffered the worst deficit in rainfall. By contrast, areas of West Central Texas saw the most crop damage as frost compounded with drought to create an acute humanitarian crisis. See, J.W. Williams, "A Statistical Study of the Drought of 1886," *West Texas Historical Association Year Book*, no. 21 (1945): 85–109.

crop in the South during this period, is drought resistant. Only in extreme conditions will it produce nothing. William Foster's description of dead hogs, a lack of food, but cotton still producing a "light" yield is consistent with drought in cotton country. Farmers could not feed themselves but retained a crop they could sell or mortgage to buy supplies. These circumstances tended to focus the mind on market economics.[27]

With the drought passed a traditional way of farming. Prior to the Civil War, small Southern farmers practiced a safety-first form of agriculture. Safety-first agriculture sought to plant adequate sustenance crops for the farmer's household, only then cultivating cotton or other cash crops for sale at market. Once in debt for supplies, farmers tended to stay in debt. In early 1886 the *Dallas News* – the state's leading Democratic paper – reported that:

> All the press associations, exchanges and Farmers' Alliances in the world cannot bring prosperity to a man who lacks thrift or industry. . . [O]ver twelve hundred civil suits have been filed in the Justice's Court in Corsicana within the past two months for the recovery of debts and accounts of farmers in the county they past year. The cost of the suits added to the large percent extra paid for goods bought on credit is more than enough to consume all the profits of the average farmer. . . But the farmer whose motto is pay as you go is relieved of all these surplus expenses and enjoys the full fruits of his industry.

Pay as you go farming proved much easier for farmers that could grow their own food. Merchants charged interest on crop loans but also marketed up the prices of goods sold on credit. With markups, interest on crop loans routinely ran from twenty-five to fifty percent. The need to repay drought-related debts brought with it a shift to market-oriented production. Farmers

---

27 William Foster to Moses P. Lamar, October 25, 1885, Moses P. Lamar Papers, GA 236-9, University of Texas At Arlington Special Collections. Untitled Article Page 3, *Brenham Weekly Banner*, January 28, 1886. Roy Sylvan Dunn, "Droughts," *The Handbook of Texas Onlin*e, June 12, 2010, https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ybd01. Joan S. Whitmore, *Drought Management on Farmlan*d (Norwell: Kluwer Academic Publications, 2000), 125–127.

increasingly found themselves caught in a cycle of purchasing supplies which in the past they grew or raised in order to plant more land in cotton to repay prior loans. In response, farmers looked for ways to save money and cut costs. (See, Figure 4 and Table 5).[28]

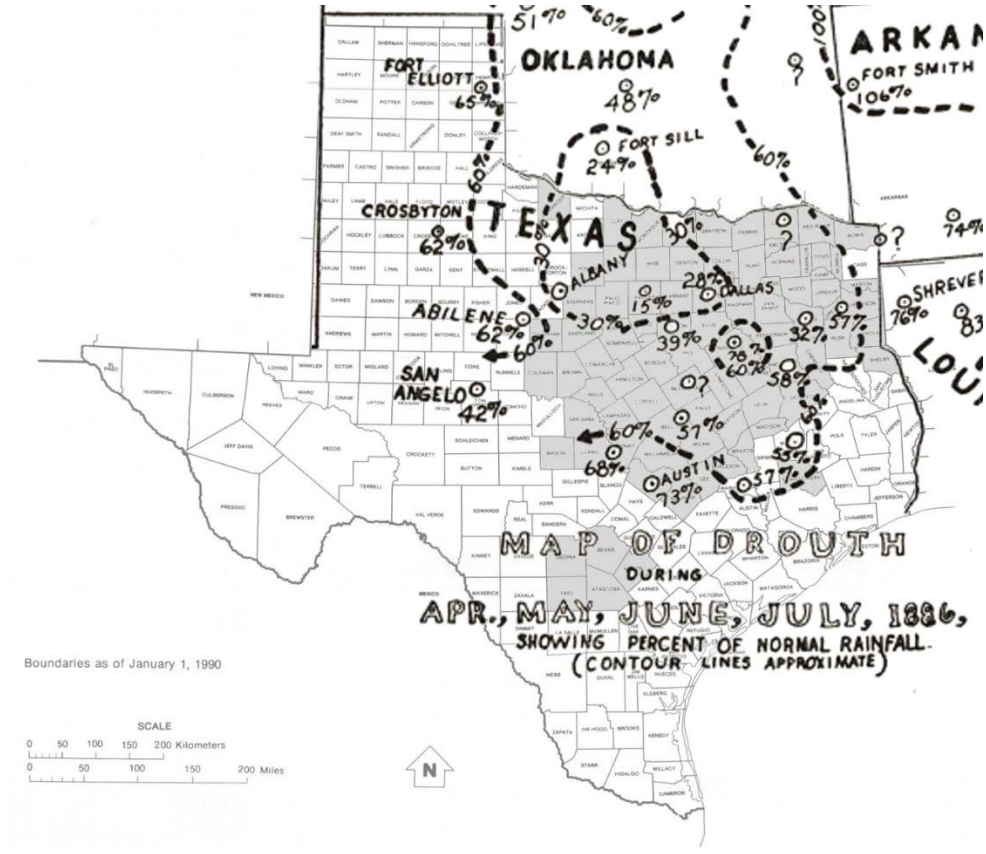

Figure 4: Map of Drought Area Superimposed On Map Of Alliance Counties.
Source: Adapted from: W. Williams, "A Statistical Study of the Drought of 1886," West Texas Historical Association Year Book, no. 21 (1945): 85–109, 104.

28 Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1997), 70. "The State Press," *Dallas News*, January 27, 1886. The *Dallas News* article points out a salient fact. Furnishing merchants normally charged both interest on their loans and a markup on products purchased on credit. While the interest rate might seem high, the annual percentage rate (APR) on the loans, taking all markups into account, could be astronomical. The *Brenham Banner* also takes farmers to task for seeking loans. See, "Untitled Article Page 3," *Brenham Weekly Banner*, January 28, 1886. "Report of the Statistician - Debts of Farmers," in *Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture. 1886* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886), 426.

	Inflation / Deflation 1879=100	Price of Cotton cents/lb	Real Annual GDP Growth	Cotton Price: Deflation Adjusted Percentage of 1879 Price
1879	100	10.28	1.76%	100%
1880	103.6	9.83	1.80%	92%
1881	103.6	10.66	1.42%	100%
1882	103.6	9.12	1.43%	86%
1883	100.08	9.13	1.51%	89%
1884	96.47	9.19	1.59%	93%
1885	96.47	8.39	1.63%	85%
1886	96.47	8.06	1.67%	81%
1887	96.47	8.55	1.74%	86%
1888	96.47	8.5	1.77%	86%
1889	96.47	8.55	1.83%	86%
1890	96.47	8.59	1.86%	87%
1891	96.47	7.24	2.21%	73%
1892	96.47	8.34	7.52%	84%
1893	96.46	7	-6.70%	71%
1894	92.91	4.59	-4.71%	48%
1895	89.37	7.62	9.95%	83%
1896	89.37	6.66	-3.84%	72%

Table 2: Economic And Crop Data.
For climate data please see map 1.4. *Source:* Minneapolis Federal Reserve, "Consumer Price Index (Estimate) 1800-," https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/teaching-aids/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800. Morgan Friedman, "Inflation Calculator," http://www.westegg.com/inflation/. Angus Maddison, *The World Economy: Historical Statistics* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2003), 81.
Cornell University, "Cotton Price Dataset," http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/data-sets/crops/96120/

Co-operative stores represented a new and promising way for farmers to control costs. Co-operative stores took advantage of a new business model. In a co-operative, farmers purchased stock in a store and gained the right, as shareholders, to purchase from the store's selection of discounted merchandise. Prior to the Civil War corporations in Texas – and all but a handful of other states – could only form through a special act of the state legislature. The requirement for a special act placed chartering a corporation out of reach of small business. In 1871, with the passage of the state's first general corporation law, any resident could form a corporation by filling out the correct paperwork and paying a fee to the Texas Secretary of State. This drastically changed the business landscape. The debts of a corporation apply only to the corporation. In other forms of business organization–with certain later exceptions such as limited liability companies–investors become liable for all the debts of the business. Absent a corporate charter, investing in a small local store represented a substantial risk. Without a way to limit liability, the store's debts to its suppliers become the personal debts of the investors. The availability of charters meant that farmers could now pool their resources and found a store without worry of losing everything if the enterprise failed.[29]

The drought, combined with changes in state law banning new co-operative stores, served to bring down the Grange – the leading agricultural organization in Texas – and launch the Alliance. Co-operative stores formed a central part of the Grange's program. Between 1882 and 1884 the Grange, also known as the Patrons of Husbandry, helped create at least forty-two

29 Michael S. Ariens, *Lone Star Law: A Legal History of Texas* (Austin: Texas Tech University Press, 2011), 119–21.

separate co-operative stores. Grange stores made up, roughly, one out of every twenty corporations charted in Texas during the two-year period. Stores carried names such as the Durango Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry; the Madison Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry and the aptly named Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry. The last, seemingly, arose when the founders of the Co-Operative forgot to insert a place name into the preprinted forms distributed by the Grange. By 1885, Grange stores proved successful enough to threaten to undermine rural economies.[30]

Rural retail sales revolved around a chain of debt. Wholesalers received loans from banks and manufacturers. These loans allowed the wholesaler to purchase goods. Wholesalers then sold the goods, purchased on credit, to retailers. Retail merchants found most farmers only possessed cash after harvest. Retailers, purchasing inventory on credit, sold on credit to farmers and waited to be repaid. While waiting, retailers and wholesalers faced the need to make interim payments on their debts. Without cash prior to harvest, merchants risked missing payments and going bankrupt. Wholesalers rarely received any of the money owed them by bankrupt merchants. Enough retail bankruptcy risked causing wholesalers to fail. Failing wholesalers meant soured loans for banks and manufacturers. Without cash customers, the system risked collapse.[31]

Grange co-operatives insisted on dealing only in cash. Even at the height of the drought Archibald J. Rose, the leader of the state Grange, urged stores not to extend credit. For Rose, offering credit either broke the merchant "or generally breaks many of his customers. . . [N]inety

30 Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas* (Austin, 1884), 156–77.
31 Donna A. Barnes, *Farmers in Rebellion: The Rise and Fall of the Southern Famers Alliance and People's Party in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), 56–59.

percent of our co-operative stores were successful at first. [The] cause of [this] success can be traced to the fact that they avoided the credit system." The model documents to set up a new co-operative, available from the state Grange, contained a clause that "[t]he entire business of this [store] either in buying or selling shall be confined to cash payments and under no circumstances shall an officer or agent be permitted to sell goods on credit." The insistence of the Grange in avoiding credit drained cash customers from other businesses and risked destabilizing the state economy.[32]

The Texas legislature found itself forced to react. In 1885, changes to Texas's corporate law banned the creation of further co-ops. The regular session of the Texas legislature lasts for only 140 days every two years. Meeting in the winter months, legislators could not realize that they had shut down a communal escape hatch just as a massive multi-year drought set in. The new law met with indignation from Grange members. At the 1886 meeting of the Texas Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry, the group's president informed its members that "but for the unjust actions of the Nineteenth Legislature prohibiting the chartering of new associations we would today be the largest grocery business in the state." Resentment spilled over from the Grange into the Alliance. News accounts from early 1886 reported at least one local Alliance ready to seek legislative heads. According to reports:

> The Barnesville Farmer's Alliance have boycotted [refused to do business with] every member of the Nineteenth legislature who voted for or were instrumental in the passage of the act which debarred Farmers' Alliances from forming co-operative associations. They also pledged hostility to every legislative candidate

---

32 "Remarks," in *Minutes of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Texas Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry, Held in Casino Hall, Galveston, Texas August 3, 4 and 5, 1886* (Galveston: W.A. Shaw & Co., Printers, 1886), 9–10. *Constitution and By-Laws of the Co-Operative Council of Beat No. 4 Bell Co. Patrons of Husbandry at Saledo, Texas* (Belton: The Journal Job Office, 1875), 3. (Saledo served as both home for Rose and the organizational center of the Grange in Texas. Beat No. 4 would have been Rose's local co-operative). (Both documents located in the Rare Book Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin)

who would not bind himself to work for the repeal of that act.

The twentieth legislature, convening in 1887, gave the Grange what it sought but with a catch. While removing the flat prohibition, the legislature raised the costs to form a corporation. This markedly increased the difficulty of starting a co-operative store, perhaps unsurprising in light of the Granges habit of putting forth political platforms at odds with those of the Democratic Party.[33]

Banning co-operative stores cut the political heart out of the Grange movement in Texas. The loss of a major part of its program showed the Grange lacked political influence. The change could not have come at a worse time. The drought found many farmers in distress and in search of help. Even under the best circumstances, Grange co-operatives, unable to extend credit to hard-pressed farmers, faced major difficulty dealing with the crisis. The inability to launch new stores served to highlight the organization's powerlessness. Rose, soon received reports on speakers from other organizations who "pronounced the Grange dead, its business methods a failure." Describing the co-operative store movement in 1886, the Lane's Chapel Farmers' Alliance put it bluntly "the Grange tried and failed."[34]

The Farmers' Alliance became the largest beneficiary of the breakdown in the state Grange. The drought brought a massive acceleration in membership. The Alliance grew from 5,000 members in Texas 1883 to 75,000 by 1886. At the conclusion of the disastrous 1885

---

33 John Stricklin Spratt, *The Road to Spindleto*p (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 181. E.W. Smith, "President's Report," in *Minutes of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Texas Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry, Held in Casino Hall, Galveston, Texas August 3, 4 and 5, 1886* (Galveston: W.A. Shaw & Co., Printers, 1886), 6. (Located in the Rare Book Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin). "State News," *San Antonio Daily Light*, April 22, 1886.

34 J.S. Rogers to A. J. Rose, June 20, 1888, Archibald Johnson Rose Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. "Lane's Chapel, April 10th, 1886" *The Clarksville Standard*, April 16, 1886.

harvest the *Rural Citizen*, the Alliance's official newspaper, comment that "160 organizations have been effected in the last thirty days and we now have 815 lodges. All organizers now in the field report people ready to work and there is a demand for more organizers in Eastern and Southern Texas." Unlike the Grange, the Alliance offered a solution fit to the changing environment.[35]

The rise in Alliance membership coincided with the introduction of new economic tactics aimed at going beyond the co-operative store. With the ban on new co-operative stores, the Farmers' Alliance turned to an alternative method to obtain discount merchandise. In order to obtain a better price, the Alliance organized bulk purchases of goods from local merchants. Alliance members also attempted to aggregate cotton crops for sale to a single large buyer. In doing so, they hoped to cut out middlemen who purchased cotton from multiple farmers to create large lots for sale on the international market. For the 1880s, these forms of communal action – the idea that those in debt to a store from buying on credit would band together to demand better prices from the merchant/creditor – were radical. [36]

Attempts to make group purchases from merchants proved particularly difficult. To negotiate these deals, county level Alliance organizations formed trade committees. The county committee then solicited bids from local merchants. The merchant with the lowest bid became the sole retailer for all local Alliance members. This arrangement limited the markup that a merchant could charge credit purchasers, reducing the effective interest rate paid by Alliance

---

35 Barnes, 65. "Untitled Article, Back Page Alliance Section," *The Rural Citizen*, November 5, 1885.
36 Barnes, 64. For both bulk sales of cotton and recognition of the practice of negotiation bulk purchases with merchants as already existing see Resolutions of the Grand State Alliance, August 5, 1885 reprinted in W.L. Garvin and S.O Daws, *History of the National Farmers' Alliance and Co-Operative Union of America* (Jacksboro: J.N. Rogers & Co., Steam Printers, 1887), 39. (Rare Book Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin).

members. Often merchants refused to participate in the system. Macune remembered an early Alliance victory:

> The Members of the Alliance in that county, many of them at least, believed that those merchants had combined to oppose the Methods [sic] of the Alliance, and one subordinate Alliance, composed mostly of Bohemians [Czechs], after considering this condition passed a resolution saying "We all agree that we will not trade five cents worth in _____ [sic] 'till the Merchants come to terms." News of this action soon went to every Alliance of that county and met the hearty endorsement of every one.

Merchants in the area quickly capitulated.[37]

The co-operative action espoused by the Alliance proved the right idea at the right time. Farmers could do nothing about the weather. They could pressure local merchants to give them better prices. Both farmers purchasing with credit and those buying with cash could participate in Alliance actions. While not always successful, Alliance tactics offered at least an illusion of control in a situation where it would otherwise be lacking. With the introduction of bulk purchase, membership in the Farmers' Alliance spread like wildfire across drought-parched Texas fields.

Corporate Miscalculation

The Southwest railroad strike galvanized the Alliance into politics. As an organization, the Alliance possessed a history of alienation to the state power structure. Failure to address the drought-related concerns of many farmers further drove the organization's membership away from the state's political power structure. At the same time, the Alliance maintained a position of formal non-involvement in politics. As frustrations boiled over, a policy of non-involvement became more and more untenable. Ironically, or perhaps fittingly, the final impetus to overturn

37 Macune, The Farmers Alliance, 1920..

the ban on direct political involvement by the organization came not from actions directed against farmers, but against sympathetic neighbors employed by the railroads. (See, Figure 5).

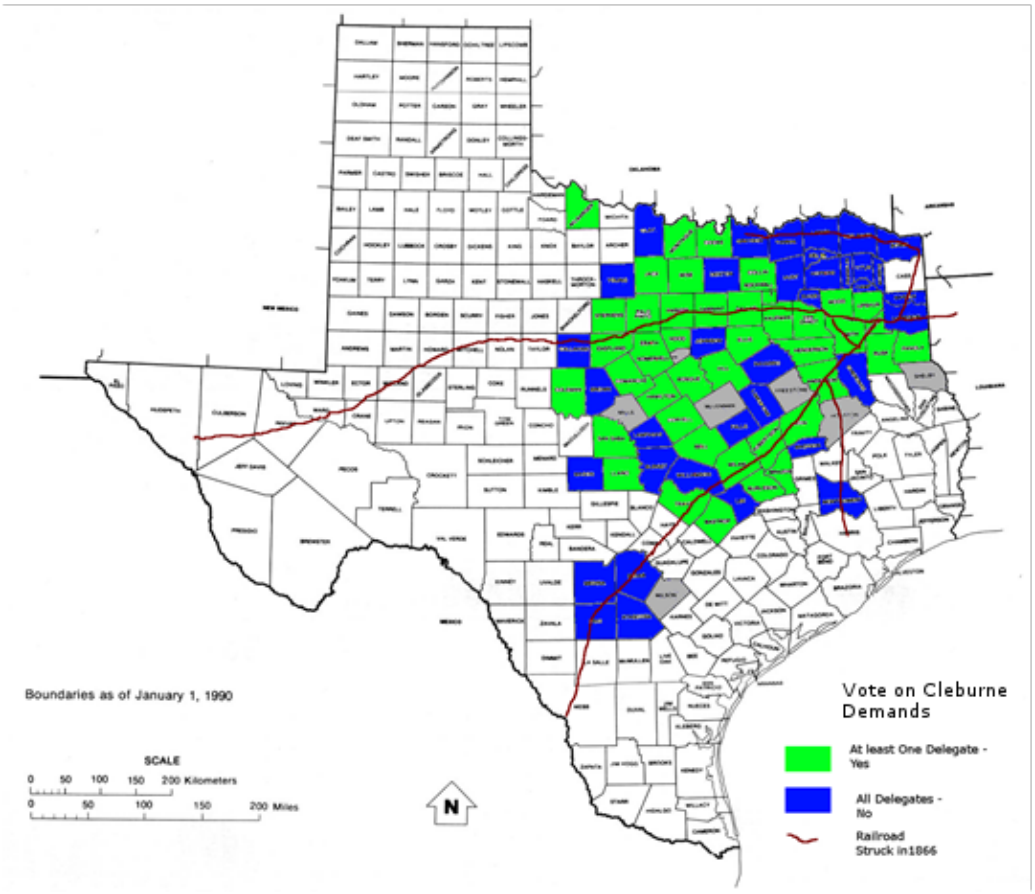

Figure 5: Vote On Cleburne Demands And Struck Railroads.
Note that counties along the Red River, with alternative means of shipping, tended not to vote for the demands despite location on a struck rail line. *Source: Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.*, 12–13. Railroad locations adapted from, Robert C. Cotner, *James Stephen Hogg: A Biography* (Austin: University of Texas Press: 1959), 155. "The Strike at Fort Worth," *The Rural Citizen*, March 4, 1886.

Farmers disliked railroads for economic reasons. Rural railroads of the time often carried the appellation "Granger railroads" or "Granger stocks." A Granger stock represented a Wall Street term for a line that primarily served a captive group of farmers. Granger railroads produced steadily high returns regardless of economic conditions. The companies followed a policy of setting rates at "what the freight will bear." Blessed with shippers with no other option, a Granger railroad could ask almost any rate for freight and be assured farmers would pay. Pushing the definition of navigable to the limit, Texas waterways failed to offer a viable alternative. Lacking any other way to get their crops to market, many Texas farmers paid over ten percent of the value of their crop in freight charges.[38]

To achieve the organization's political goals, restoration of co-operative stores and lower freight rates, the Alliance came to an agreement with the state's largest industrial union – the Knights of Labor. In the event of a strike, the Alliance would provide support to the Knights. The two organizations pledged to aid each other "when their interests were identical . . . or pertaining to any other laudable undertaking." Entered into with the best of intentions, the compact quickly began to fray.[39]

---

38 Hoyle, *The Game in Wall Street: And How to Play It Successfully* (New York: J.S. Ogilvie Publishing Company, 1898), 8, 13, 50. "A Review of Finance and Business: Important Changes of the Month," *Bankers' Magazine and Statistical Register*, October 1889, 247. Ten percent number applies to farmers paying the postage (maximum) rate of $4.50/bale to ship to Galveston for sale at $0.082/pound ($41 bale). Spratt, *The Road to Spindletop*, 63, 211. "Agricultural Depression and Its Causes -- Why the Farmer Is Not Prosperous," *The Defender*, April 9, 1890. (Containing cotton prices from 1884 to 1887).

39 "The Knights of Labor and the Farmers Alliance Amalgamate Under the Former Name," *Fort Worth Daily News*, September 3, 1885 (requiring correction from the Alliance that they had not merged with the Knights). "The Knights of Labor, Organization Perfected at Dallas, Farmers Alliance Offers Aid in Case of Strike," *Galveston Daily News*, September 3, 1885. "No amalgamation," *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, September 6, 1886 (making elements of the deal public to refute claim that the two groups had merged).

The agreement between the Knight and Alliance covered strikes but not boycotts. In November of 1885, the Knights of Labor stuck the Mallory Steamship Line operating in Galveston. In support of the strike, the Knights called a boycott of the line and anyone shipping on it. Faced with a labor revolt, the Mallory Line refused to negotiate. In order to pressure the shipper, the Knights stepped up pressure on its customers, calling for a boycott on those shipping with it. These tactics became incredibly controversial within the Texas business community. In response, Alliance leadership distanced themselves from the Knights, declaring that "no [cooperative] agreement has been made. Further, the Farmers' Alliance has nothing to do with the boycott in Galveston."[40]

The frustration of Alliance leadership with the Knights came to a boil when the Union entered into a seemingly hopeless strike against a railroad in receivership. Receivership represented a unique, and often little understood, legal invention. In the 1880s no universal federal bankruptcy law existed. Instead, a hodgepodge of state and federal statutes governed the process. In recognition of the importance of railroads in transportation, federal receivership laws offered special provisions to keep insolvent railroads operational. In receivership, a court-appointed an individual–the receiver–to oversee the running of the railroad and maximize return to its creditors. While the prior management of the railroad remained in place, the receiver held the final word on all decisions. In early 1886, the Texas & Pacific railroad – part of Jay Gould's Southwest system – went into receivership. Receivers' unwillingness to listen to workers

40 "Workingmen's Column, Devoted to the Interests of the Laboring Classes. Correspondence Solicited.," *The Sunday Gazetteer*, November 8, 1885. C.M. Wilcox, "The Farmers' Alliance Not In. The Organization Has Nothing to Do with the Mallory Boycott," *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, February 2, 1886. (Press release with formal statement of non-involvement by the official secretary of the Alliance).

complaints provoked a mass strike.[41]

The receivership of the Texas & Pacific put workers on edge. The Knights of Labor, struck the Texas & Pacific in 1885, the year before the receivership, over pay and safety issues. As one employee later described it:

> Conditions were all link and pin couplings, no airbrakes and over one half of the engines had no power brakes on them whatever. Pay was $45.00 per month or $1.50 per day and if you left a terminal in early A.M. and started to return before 12:01 P.M. you only got one day's pay for the round trip, and chances were you would lose next day-that is not leave a terminal on that date be short a day's pay for the month. In other words, it made no difference how many times you left a terminal or how many miles you made for one date you only got one day's pay for it and if any day you did not leave a terminal you lost that day.
> At this time there was no hour limit. I have been called time and again to go out with only an hour or two at terminal and no sleep or rest at all.

Equipment was old, outmoded and unsafe. In order to make the books balance, management resorted to having employees come in soon after midnight, working them for two days' worth of time, then giving the exhausted workers the next day off. Paid a flat rate per day, many workers resented tactics that were both hard on the body and on the pocketbook. The combination of exhaustion and unsafe equipment rendered already dangerous jobs even more hazardous. Making matters worse, different divisions of the company often had no idea of each other's actions. Workers complained of buying homes–and taking out mortgages–from the company's land development office only to be transferred to some distant location soon afterward. At the time of the receivership, the railroad had yet to fully carry out the terms of it's 1885 agreement to

41 Geroge C. Werner, "TEXAS AND PACIFIC RAILWAY," *Handbook of Texas Online* (Texas State Historical Association, June 15, 2010), http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/eqt0.Werner Stephen J. Lubben, "Railraod Receiverships and Modern Bankruptcy Theory," *Cornell Law Review* 89 (2004): 1420–1519.

improve working conditions.[42]

The receivers – adding to the general chaos the court appointed two receivers with shared authority – refused to honor the union contract. Faced with an uncertain situation, the union insisted that the company maintain its prior contract with the union. In response, the receivers refused to recognize the union or implement the terms of the contract and stated that they only enter into an agreement with the approval of the court. Federal Judge Don Albert Pardee presided over the case. Pardee, an expert in bankruptcy law, proved inept at dealing with the realities of a railroad experiencing a labor crisis. When faced with a possible strike, Pardee ordered the receivers to close any affected facilities and seek orders from the federal courts to get strikers back to work. Confronted with workers' contention that the prior agreement should be honored, the receivers could only inform the union that "[w]e must have the right to run the road and its shops under order of the court, or it will be closed." [43].

Given the situation, the Knights of Labor hesitated in calling a strike. The spark came in Marshall, a town in deep Northeast Texas near the Louisiana border. Marshall served as a major Texas & Pacific rail hub. In order to appraise the situation on the Texas & Pacific, District Assembly 101 – representing all workers on the Southwest System – met in the town. Among the delegates to the assembly was C.A. Hall, the leader of the local branch of the Knights of Labor. The Texas & Pacific agreed to give Hall time off to attend the meeting. The railroad then

---

42 Ruth A. Allen, "The Great Southwest Strike" (Austin: University of Texas Publication No. 4214, April 8, 1942), 28.

43 See: Knights of Labor Demand March 3, 1886; Order of the Court, March 4, 1886. John C. Brown to W.T.S. Keller, March 4, 1886 all reprinted in: Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics, *The Official History of the Great Strike of 1886 on the Southwestern Railway System* (Jefferson City: Tribune Printing Company, 1886), 10–15. *(*The term *Official History* is a misnomer. The work is actually the State of Missouri's investigative report into the causes of the strike. It reprints approximately 116 pages of documents related to the strike with limited commentary)..

fired Hall for absenteeism when he returned to work. Firing the head of the union local in Marshall while the Knights were still meeting in the town to consider a strike constituted a major provocation. The strike that followed encompassed all of the Southwest system, including several railroads not operating in Texas.[44]

The railroad won the strike by being unable to yield. Pardee would not allow the company to capitulate. The Knights could inflict unsustainable economic damage to the company and still have no hope of settlement. Lacking other options, the union found itself forced to simply surrender. The union instructed its members to return to work. The company greeted this move by firing many of the returning strikers. After the strike, the American Federation of Labor would supplant the Knights as the nation's leading labor Union. For the Knights, the strike was a disaster. It would quickly also become a disaster for the railroad. The reaction by the farmers' Alliance to the failed strike – a move into politics that eventually secure railroad regulation in Texas – would cost the company far more than meeting its employees demands ever would.[45]

Alliance leadership faced a revolt from dissatisfied labor supporters. Prior to the strike, the Montague County Farmers' Alliance passed a resolution endorsing the Knights' boycott of the Mallory Line. William Lamb, the President of the Montague Alliance, argued that "the day is not distant where the Farmers' Alliance will have to use a boycott on manufacturers in order to get goods direct. We think it is a good time to help the Knights of Labor in order to secure their help in the near future, knowing as we do that the Farmers' Alliance can't get a plow except that it comes through two of three [middlemen]." Two weeks later, Alliance President Andrew

---

44 Allen 50-51.
45 Mathew Hild, *Greenbackers, Knights of Labor and Populists: Farmer-Labor Insurgency in the Late Nineteenth Century South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007), *7*4.

Dunlap declared the Montague County resolution "null and void and without shadow of authority from the Grand State Alliance." Unfortunately for Dunlap, two weeks can be a lifetime in politics. A denunciation meant to apply to the Mallory boycott came at the height of the Texas & Pacific strike. Dunlap's fellow alliance members were not amused. [46]

After the failure of the strike, the Parker County Farmers' Alliance revolted. Parker County represented the birthplace of the non-political alliance. After the disaster surrounding the 1878 elections decimated Alliance membership, the organization relaunched from a handful of lodges in Parker. Dunlap, the Alliance's President, resided in Parker. The Texas & Pacific Railroad also ran through the county. The area possessed a strong contingent of Knights of Labor. In response to the failure of the strike, the Parker County Alliance overruled the organization's president, calling for "representation in proportion to the voting strength of the Farmers' Alliance and Knights of Labor, in nominating and electing to office none but good and true men from among the laboring class." Despite the protestations of its officers, the Alliance was about to enter politics.[47]

Cleburne

The drought allowed the Alliance to move from a small organization in Central Texas to one with membership throughout the state. The strike accelerated the push into politics. Alliance officers made a final attempt to block the group from endorsing candidates at the organization's annual meeting held in Cleburne, Texas. Only the annual convention held the

---

46 W.R. Lamb, "Montague County Alliance on Boycotting," *The Rural Citizen*, March 11, 1886. Andrew Dunlap, "The Farmers' Alliance and Boycotting," *The Rural Citizen*, March 25, 1886.
47 J.W. Marsh, "Knights of Labor. (Letter to the Editor)," *The Weatherford Times*, March 13, 1886. (Response of local chapter of Knights of Labor to letter condemning boycotting). "A Momentous Move, Important Political Action Taken By the Farmers' Alliance of Parker County, Initiative [sic] Step Looking at the Nomination and Election of County and State Officials," *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, April 8, 1886.

authority to either recognize the deal with the Knights of Labor or authorize the group's leaders to revoke the membership of the dissenters. Cleburne sat in motion a process that would displace the hold of conservatives over state government.[48]

An intense lobbying campaign kicked off to secure the votes of delegates to the convention. Supporters of the Knights of Labor capitalized on the Alliance's early history as an organization to protect against cattle theft. An early Alliance manifesto in favor of the Knights of Labor claimed both groups shared a common interest in "self protection [sic] against monopolies and soulless corporations linked and banded together to deprive honest labor of the just fruits of their toil." Addressing a gathering of Alliance members, Master Workman (President) of the Texas Knights of Labor, W. E. Farmer succinctly stated the reason for the two groups to seek common ground. In the Union President's view "there is no difference between legalized robbery [by corporations] and highway robbery." In attempting to create a link between the Alliances' heroic past – where members confronted highway robbers of the most literal sort – Farmer sought to influence members not directly radicalized by the strike. Unsurprisingly,

---

48 The author acknowledges that this could be seen as contrary to the contention by Charles Postel in *The Populist Vision* that "Charles Macune and the Farmer moved in the opposite direction. The Alliance held to its whites only clause and adopted a rule to prohibit dual membership in the Knights of Labor." Postel, 40. Postel footnotes an article from *The Rural Citizen* in April 29, 1886 to support this contention. No mention of a ban on dual membership is found in the corresponding issue of *The Rural Citizen* on microfilm at Midwestern State University. Macune only joined the Alliance in the Spring of 1886, and became one of the auditors on the executive committee tasked with investigating the groups accounts at Cleburne. Macune did not become the group's president until after the November election. The Alliance Constitution maintained a whites only clause since 1882. Garvin and Daws, *History of the National Farmers' Alliance*, 35, 137–38. (The 1887 publication of Garvin and Daws also does not mention a restriction on dual membership). Had the Alliance blocked membership in the Knights for racial reasons in 1886 the event would be found, loudly and unambiguously, in the state press. It is not. The Constitution and By-Laws adopted at Cleburne make no mention of a ban on dual membership in the Knights and Alliance. *Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at Cleburne , 1886* (Dallas: Dallas Publishing Company, 1886). A review of Postel's surrounding footnotes indicates that he is referring to the white's only clause adopted during the merger with the Agricultural Wheel in 1888. In 1888, Macune as president of the Alliance, possessed the authority to demand the Wheel implement a whites only policy. The author believes that Postel referred to the 1886 *Rural Citizen* only for an ancillary quote and that an editor, most likely, removed a reference to 1888 to save space leaving the section to imply that the Alliance banned dual membership in 1886.

Farmer gave his address in Bell County – an area distant from the strike but close to the Alliance's birthplace in Lampasas. (See, Figure 6).[49]

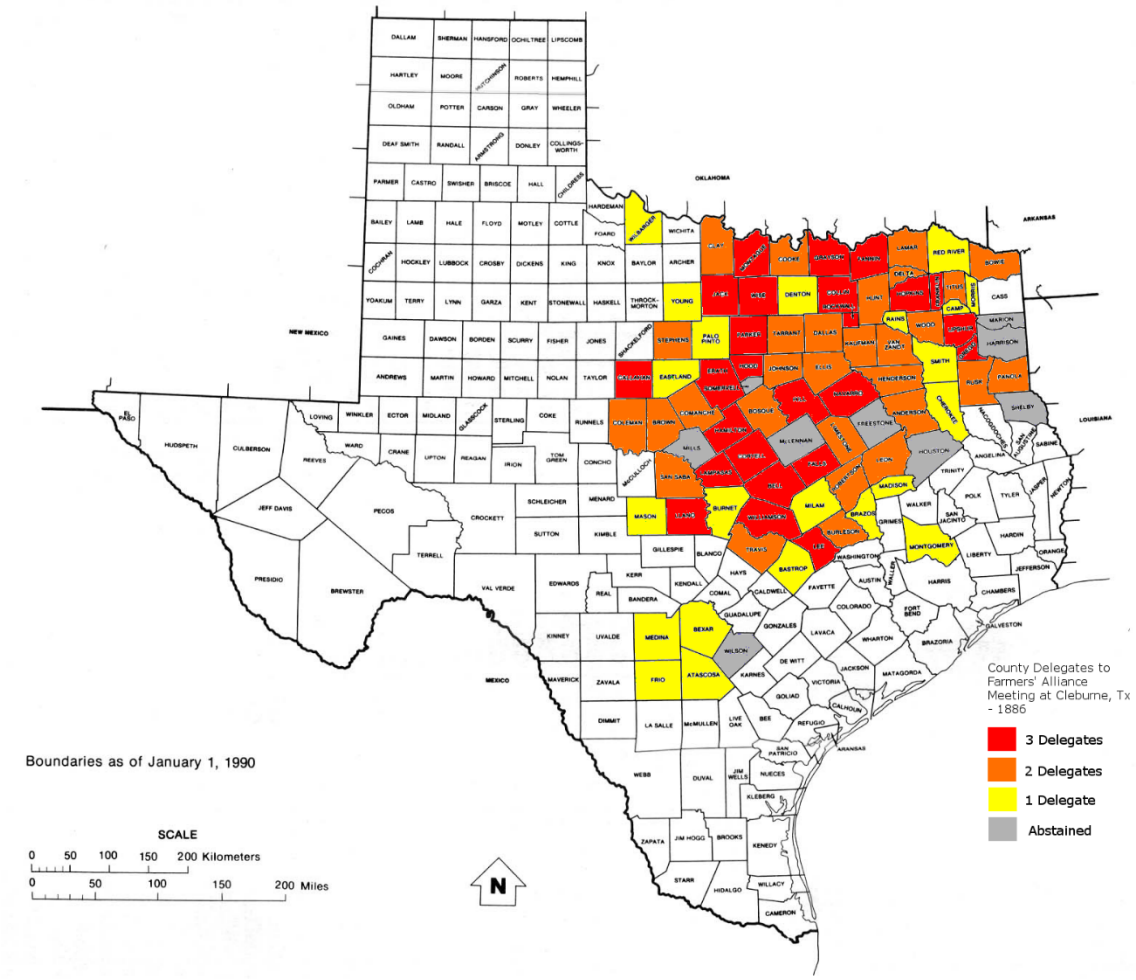

Figure 6: Map Of Counties Sending Delegates To The Cleburne Convention, 1886. Mills County was created in 1887 from the surrounding counties and has been listed as abstained. *Source: Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.*, 12–13.

49 Barnes, *Farmers in Rebellion*, 70. Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 76–77. Anonymous, "Frothy Farmer. Wild Talk of the Master Workman at Holland." *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, May 24, 1886. "

In the run-up to Cleburne, Alliance leaders planned to crack down on dissent. A long-standing Alliance resolution from 1882 provided that "it is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution and By-laws of our Order to take part in party politics, and we will not nominate or support any man or set of men for office as a distinct party or political body." The resolution provided no mechanism for enforcement. Officers hoped that the delegates to the Cleburne convention would amend the group's constitution to insert an explicit ban on political action. Rumors swirled that state-level Alliance leaders would insist that county and local Alliances withdraw all endorsements and nominations or forfeit their charters. In response to the rumors, the Alliance's President would only comment that "the Grand State Alliance will meet at Cleburne sometime in August and take prompt action to emphasize the non-political nature of the organization."[50]

Events came to a head at Cleburne, Texas in August of 1886. The Alliance's leadership carried the first day. Dunlap secured re-election to the presidency. Many of the prior year's officers gained re-election. Only one event marred the day. The financial accounts presented by the group's secretary, C.M. Wilcox, showed the receipt of large sums of dues money. Wilcox failed to itemize how much was received and how much paid out prior to depositing the remainder with the organization's treasurer. While the organization collected over sixteen thousand dollars in the prior year, its membership numbers imply it should have taken in roughly

50 Garvin and Daws, *History of the National Farmers' Alliance*, 36. "Untitled Article Page 4," *The Rural Citizen,* May 27, 1886. "The President of the Farmers' Alliance Defines its Attitude in Politics," *The Rural Citizen*, June 17, 1886.

ten thousand dollars more.[51] For a group made up of farmers in a drought year, this did not represent an impossible shortfall. After his presentation, the convention ordered Wilcox to submit his books to the finance committee for review. Despite support from Dunlap, Wilcox lost his bid for re-election as secretary after a contentious battle on the first day of the convention.[52]

The mood at Cleburne changed drastically on the second day. Wilcox could not produce ledgers showing where the money went. Political interventionists seized the moment to pass a series of political objectives – the Cleburne Demands – through the convention. The first demand called for:

> The recognition by incorporation of trade unions, co-operative stores, and such other associations as may be organized by the industrial classes to improve their financial condition, or to promote their general welfare.

In the coming days, interventionists would strip *The Rural Citizen* of its role as the organization's official newspaper, allowed a national officer of the Knights of Labor to speak to the gathering, and adopted a new constitution for the order. The last document contained provisions dealing with disciplinary actions against officers and the procedure to bring a lawsuit against a former officer. It also created a three-person executive committee to audit the group's accounts and devoted an entire section to the duties of the secretary. The office of the president merited barely a paragraph.[53]

After Cleburne, the Alliance dove headfirst into politics. Less than a week after

---

51 70,000 with $0.10 per quarter going to the state organization accord to the Constitution adopted at Cleburne. *Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at Cleburne , 1886*, 8.

52 *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.* (Dallas: The Dallas Mercury, 1886), 4–13. *See also*, "Report of the Committee on Examination of the Books of Ex-Secretary C. M. Wilcox", ibid., 21. The final report found a large amount of unpaid dues. It should be noted that Dunlap served on the three man committee.

53 *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.*, 4–20. *Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at Cleburne , 1886*.

adjourning, members of the Farmers' Alliance and Knights of Labor met behind closed doors ahead of the opening of the Texas Democratic Convention. The two groups settled on Lawrence Sullivan Ross for governor. Ross, already a heavy favorite, sailed handily to the nomination. The press downplayed the role of the Alliance in the process. The *Galveston Daily News* reported on the only major achievement of the two groups comprised of having several of their delegates forcibly ejected from the convention after losing a credentials fight. Reporting on the incident the *News* opined that "the contest really signified little to candidates, being most of a local character and almost entirely the result of the squabble between little politicians." The *News* glossed over the importance of local politics. The 1886 election proved the worst year for Democratic incumbents in the state legislature since the Greenback revolt. Unlike in 1878, the losses came at local conventions not at the hands of a third party.[54]

The State power structure proved slow on the uptake. Alliance attempts to bring the railroads to heel by setting a formula for shipping rates failed in the twentieth legislature. The Alliance then shifted to demanding that the state adopt a commission to regulate rates. Alexander Watkins Terrell, a leader of the conservative faction, begged Guy Morrison Bryan, the speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, to honor the call in the party platform to establish a commission. Terrell noted that "the Alliances have generally shown themselves Democratic . . . they embrace a majority of the white vote. On this subject [the Railroad Commission] they are informed and militant." Further, Terrell noted that "I am tired of platform hypocrisy and unless it stops in time we are headed for a revolt such as Houston made in 1860."

---

54 "Will Ross be the Nominee? The Knights of Labor and Farmers Alliance Agree to Support Him." *Galveston Daily News*, August 11, 1886. "Lawrence Sullivan ross, Will Lead the Democratic Clans to Victory, One Ballot and a Nomination by Acclaim, The Free-Grass Men Squarely Beaten, A Platform Saying Little and Meaning Less Adopted." *Galveston Daily News*, August 13, 1886. See table 1.2 for statistics on legislative turnover..

(See, Table 3).[55]

Terrell's choice of revolutionary summed up the problem. In 1859, Sam Houston – an opponent of Southern secession from the United States – secured the governorship of Texas. Houston's election represented a major blow to the state's conservative faction. Terrell's Conservatives required the support of rural white voters to remain in power. Loss of Conservatives' rural voting base meant a loss of power. Though Conservatives were loath to impose regulation on the railroads, Terrell suggested that political survival depended on defusing the situation. A railroad commission offered a means of appeasing the agrarians before a more serious revolt could take place. Unfortunately for his faction, Terrell's pleas went unanswered. The predicted revolt soon followed.

55 Alexander Watkins Terrell to Guy M. Bryan, November 25, 1888, Guy M. Bryan Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Legislature	Term	Democrats Served	Democrats returning in next legislature	Percentage Returning Next Session	Notes
14	1874-1876	114	19	17% / 34%*	End of Reconstruction.
15	1876-1879	115	22	19%	Greenback Revolt Against Democratic Party.
16	1879-1881	105	37	35%	
17	1881-1883	121	32	27%	
18	1883-1885	133	45	33%	
19	1885-1887	132	25	20%	Farmers' Alliance enters into politics. Substantial incumbent losses in primary process.
20	1887-1889	133	41	30%	
21	1889-1891	131	45	34%	

Table 3: Turnover Within The Texas State Legislature.
Candidates who ran with an undeclared party affiliation but previously or later identified as Democrat, and did not identify with any other party, have been counted as Democrats. *Source:* Legislative Reference Library of Texas, "Texas Legislators: Past & Present," http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legeLeaders/members/lrlhome.cfm (accessed October 1, 2015). "An Ordinance Submitting the Constitution to a Vote of the People and for other purposes", 8 Gammel 775.

* All state senators stood for reelection in 1876, when the Texas Constitution of 1876 came to a vote. The percentage after the slash normalizes the data by supposing fifteen Democratic state senators not standing for reelection.

Terrell failed to secure passage of an act creating a railroad commission in the upcoming legislature. The act stymied, James Stephen Hogg, the state's Attorney General, became the only public official to take decisive action against the railroads. Elected in 1886, Hogg spent the next four years fighting the railroad industry. The Texas constitution provided that:

> No railroad or other corporation, or the lessees, purchasers or managers of any railroad corporation, shall consolidate the stock, property or franchises of such corporation, with, or lease or purchase the works or franchises of, or in any way control any railroad corporation owning or having under its control a parallel or competing line; nor shall any officer of such railroad corporation act as an officer of any other railroad corporation owning or having the control of a parallel or competing line.

Hogg accused the Texas Traffic Association, a cartel established by the state's railroads to set rates, with violating the constitutional provision by, effectively, becoming a single manager. In a rare defeat for the railroads, the Texas Supreme Court agreed with Hogg, upholding a lower court order breaking up the association. Upping the stakes, Hogg attempted – unsuccessfully – to revoke the charter of the Gould owned International and Great Northern. Loss of the charter would have put the railroad out of business in Texas. In Hogg's battle against the railroads, the Texas Alliance found its political champion. [56]

Hogg's background made him the obvious choice as the farmers' candidate for Governor. Born in 1851, Hogg escaped service in the Civil War. Neither of Hogg's parents lived to see the end of the war. Left with limited means, his early career included work as a newspaper typesetter and as a sharecropper. The latter lasted only one year. Sharecropping allowed the

---

56 Texas Constitution of 1876, Article X, Section 5. Tarlton Law Library, Jamial Center for Legal Research, http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/constitutions/texas1876/a10. (Reproducing original document without subsequent amendments). Gulf, C. & S. F. RY. CO. v. State, 72 Tex 404 (1888). International & G.N. Ry. Co. v. State, 75 Tex. 356 (1889). Robert C. Cotner, *James Stephen Hogg: A Biography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959), 168–189.

landowner from who Hogg rented to control the sale of the crops. In his first year of farming, Hogg received only $10 out of $625 due him. Unlike many other sharecroppers, the literate Hogg understood exactly how much his landowner had cheated him. The future governor quickly sought other employment.[57]

Hogg succeeded in winning the Governor's office in 1890 on a platform supporting the Railroad Commission. The establishment of the Commission took part in three phases. In 1890, the same election Hogg obtained the governorship, voters approved a constitutional amendment authorizing the body. The next year the legislature created the regulator. After the creation of the Commission, railroads brought suit in federal court to block it from setting rates. The Commission remained powerless until the United States Supreme Court lifted the injunction on its operation three years later. Under the original legislation, the governor appointed the commissioners overseeing the agency. Whichever faction controlled the governorship, with the power to appoint commission members when the courts lifted the injunction, would be able to set the tone of future regulation for decades to come. (See, Figure 7).[58]

57 Robert C. Cotner, *James Stephen Hogg: A Biography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959), 34–46.
58 Reagan v. Farmers' Loan and Trust Co., 154 U.S. 362 (1894). Cotner, *James Stephen Hogg*, 169, 376–77.

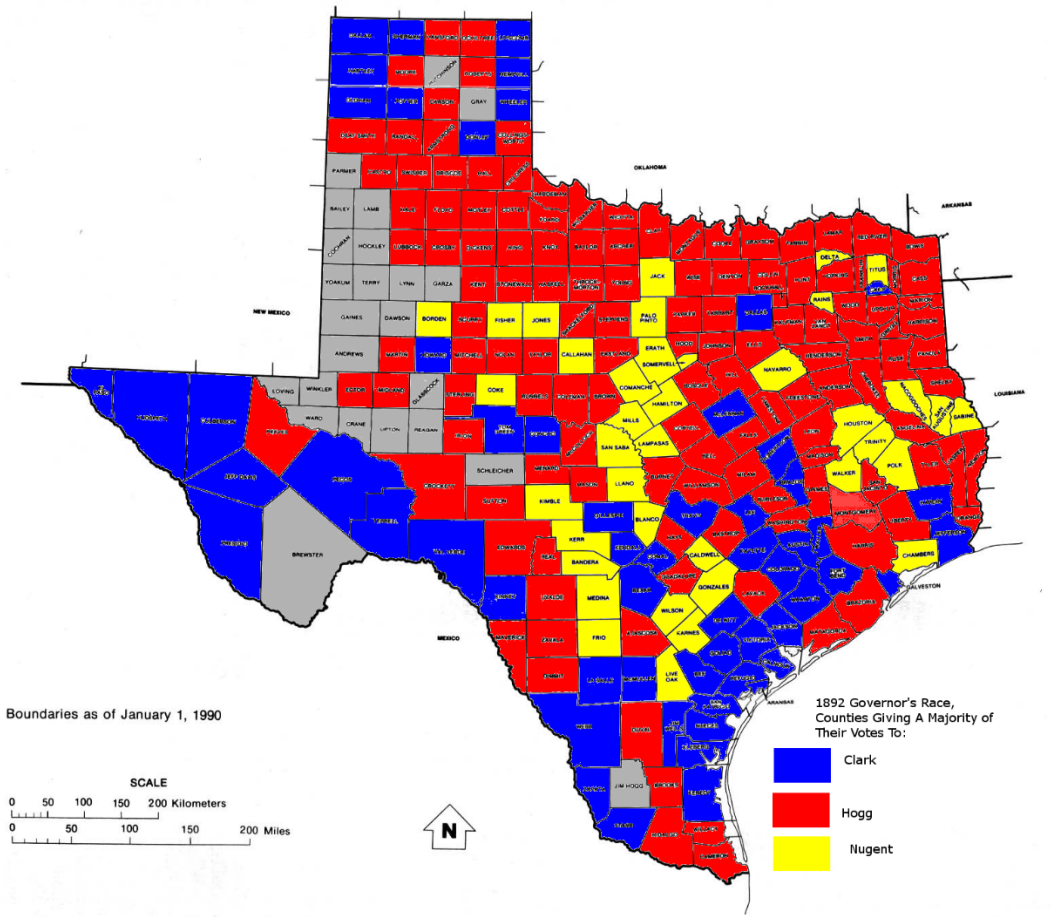

Figure 7: Gubernatorial Election, 1892.
Gray denotes a county not making a return in 1892. In 1892, there was no Republican candidate for Governor. Note that returns have been projected onto a modern county map causing some distortion in deep South and West Texas. Source Alwyn Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform: Texas Politics, 1876-1906* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 2000), 140–41. Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas* (Austin, 1884), 88–92.

Conservatives quickly realized they could effectively scuttle the commission if they seized the governorship. A party revolt aimed at denying Hogg reelection formed around George Clark, a railroad attorney from Waco. After losing the nomination, Clark's supporters declared themselves the true Democratic Party and put their candidate forward as an independent Democrat in the November elections. The race should have been winnable for Clark. The arrival of the Populist Party in Texas threatened to split the agrarian vote between Thomas Nugent, a Populist Candidate, and Hogg. Instead, Clark suffered a decisive defeat carrying almost none of the East Texas counties conservatives counted on as a bastion of support – the same areas that only a few years earlier had represented a bastion of interventionist strength at Cleburne.

With the reelection of Hogg, the conservative wing of the Texas Democratic Party faced a grim reality. A faction with the power to challenge them for dominance sprung into existence almost overnight. Further, the faction they faced appeared nonsensical. The Farmers' Alliance the Knights of Labor brought together agrarians and industrial workers, both groups that would benefit from selling their goods to the other at an increased price. Conservatives, especially the rising generation of business facing leaders, were simply at a loss as how to respond. For Conservatives, the situation would worsen before the faction could force the situation to improve.

CHAPTER III

A MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY

Texas formed a vibrant multi-ethnic society as the nineteenth century came to a close. The evolution of multi-factional politics meant that any faction alienating a racial or ethnic group created an opportunity for another to swoop in to capitalize on the situation. As the Farmers' Alliance grew into the Populist Party it drew strength from its ability to reach out to African American voters. At the same time, it failed to attract members of other minority ethnic groups, who found a home with other groups on the political scene. The cumulative effect was a society in which politics were more likely to bring a community together than to push it apart.

The existence of a multi-ethnic society in which political alliances forced at least some levels of mutual toleration squares the circle of one of the greatest conundrums of the history of the Populist movement. Were Populists a forerunner of the civil rights movement or the vanguard of segregation? The Texas Farmers' Alliance actively courted non-English speaking European ethnicities, unsuccessfully sought to limit the land ownership rights of many Hispanics and found itself forced by events to move from a policy of exclusion to one of inclusion of African-Americans. When viewed against the backdrop of a – at least for its day – tolerant society the problem takes on a new light. The Farmers' Alliance was simply spread over too wide an area, with too sparse a population and too limited options for communication to devise a single racial program. Instead, the Alliance accepted whatever racial and ethnic situation it

found and concentrated its energy on the economic issues discussed in detail in chapter 3. Populists in Texas were likely to be inclusive, those in Alabama less so.[59]

European Ethnicities

Attempts to appeal to European ethnic groups show the agrarian movement seeking greater inclusiveness for its own advantage. Germans and less numerous Czechs, sometimes called Bohemians, formed tight-knit ethnic communities in South and Central Texas. Germans represented a particular concern for the Alliance. An area of concentrated German settlement – the Texas German Belt – helped form the southern boundary of Alliance expansion. Among other attempts to attract members of this group, the delegates meeting at Cleburne in 1886 ordered: "5,000 copies of the Constitution and By-Laws[,] and the Ritual" of the Alliance translated into German. The importance of these ethnic groups helps explain a long-standing mystery of Populism – the rapid rise of Charles W. Macune. (See, Figure 8).[60]

---

59 What caused this period of tolerance is a good question. A complete explanation of the reasons for this would take a separate volume. Woodward, writing during the Civil Rights movement, presumed it as a natural state. Another possibility would be to see this period as a result of the Civil War. Starting with the war the South saw a period of intense conflict over issues of race, followed by both guerilla uprisings and attempts to bring about equality through use of federal power during reconstruction. Following the end of Reconstruction, many of the legal and structural underpinnings of equality were repealed or relaxed. A subsequent movement toward tolerance is reflective of a society undergoing wild gyrations in its approach to race and ethnicity following a period of Civil War. Segregation represents one possible stable state. This work argues that the tolerance identified by Woodward also formed a potentially stable state, but one that was destroyed for political reasons.

60 *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.*, 20.

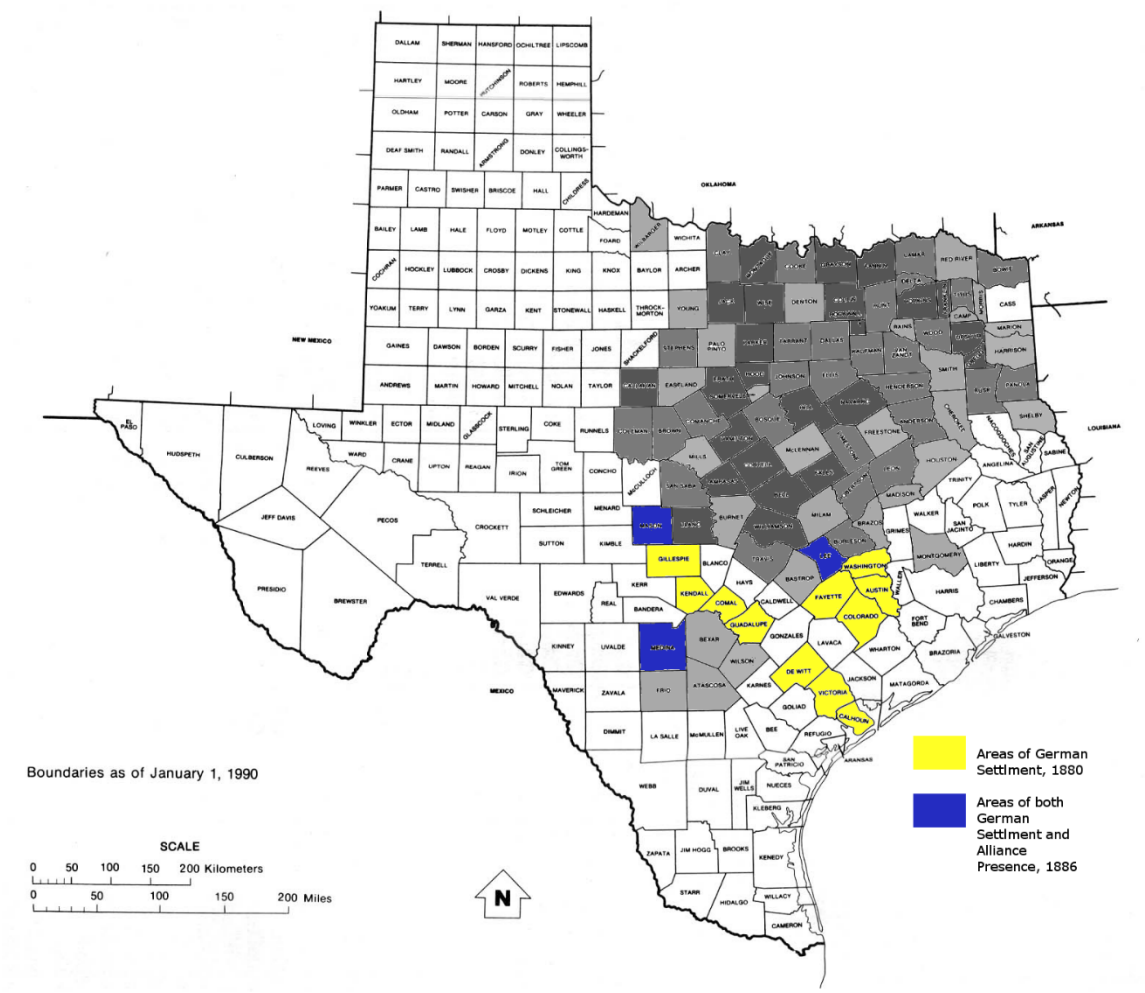

Figure 8: German Settlements And Alliance Presence, 1886.
Showing counties with at least a 20% German Population in the 1880 census. Gray counties represent counties with a voting presence at the Cleburne Convention. *Source:* Terry G. Jordan, *German Seeds in Texas Soil: Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press: 1966), 58. *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.*, 12.

Macune joined the Alliance in early 1886. The same year, he was chosen as one of the Milam County delegates to the Cleburne Convention. At Cleburne, he secured a place on the three-man executive committee tasked with auditing the organization's accounts. When the group's president attempted to form a rival Farmers' organization in November of 1886, Macune – the chair of the executive committee – became the acting president of the Farmers' Alliance. In January of 1887, the Alliance formalized this arrangement electing Macune president of the newly formed national Farmers' Alliance. Macune would prove the most influential intellectual leader of the Alliance, and one of its least documented. No substantial archival collection exists for Macune. His rise, from new member to the national president in less than a year, proved so meteoric and inexplicable that historian Lawrence Goodwyn could find no explanation for "the enigma that was Charles Macune."[61]

The enigma spoke fluent German and Czech. As a child in Illinois, Macune – a native English speaker – attended a German-speaking elementary school. Later, he found employment as a farmhand, translator, and language tutor on the farm of a recent German immigrant family. In the late 1870s, Macune practiced medicine in Fredericksburg, Texas. Fredericksburg represents one of the major towns of the German belt.[62] German remained the primary language of many Fredericksburg residents well into the twentieth century. Macune later moved his medical practice to Milam County, an area with a sizable Czech population. In early 1886,

---

61W.L. Garvin and S.O Daws, *History of the National Farmers' Alliance and Co-Operative Union of America* (Jacksboro: J.N. Rogers & Co., Steam Printers, 1887), 116–17.
Lawrence Goodwyn, *The Populist Moment : A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1978), 90.
62 Fredericksburg is in Gillespie County. Gillespie had, and still has, one of the highest percentage of German descended individuals found anywhere in the state.

Macune became one of the founding members of Friendship Alliance #1963. The name referred to a region of western Milam County with a mixed Czech and Anglo-American population.[63] When Macune attributed the success of Alliance bulk purchases in Milam County to "one subordinate Alliance, composed mostly of Bohemians [Czechs]" he highlighted the role of European ethnic groups in the Alliance and hinted at his own importance as a cultural intermediary. (See, Figure 9 for a picture of Macune).[64]

63 A small town of Friendship Texas – primarily a Methodist Church with a place name attached – exists in Western Milam County. (In later life, Macune would become a Methodist ministers). Prior to the creation of Granger Lake, the Czech town of Friendship existed only twelve miles away in Williamson County. The entire region between the two towns was, most likely, referred to as Friendship. It seems unlikely that any local would have unintentionally picked such a confusing name for the chapter. Clara Stearns Scarbrough, "FRIENDSHIP, TX (WILLIAMSON COUNTY)," *Handbook of Texas Online*(http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hnf44), accessed November 21, 2015. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association. Vivian Elizabeth Smyrl, "FRIENDSHIP, TX (MILAM COUNTY)," *Handbook of Texas Online*(http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/htf08), accessed November 21, 2015. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

64 Charles W Macune Jr., "Biographical Sketch of Charles W. Macune" January 24, 1964, 1–3, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin. Much of what is known about Charles Macune comes from the senior thesis written by Charles Macune, Jr. Charles W. Macune, Jr., "The Wellsprings of a Populist: Dr. C. W. Macune before 1886.," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 90, no. 2 (October 1986): 142–49. . (A distant relation, not a son) and later Journal article. In his writing Macune Jr. accessed oral histories from family sources unavailable to other scholars. While the advantages and disadvantages of these sources are open for debate, Macune Jr. remains the best source for information on Macune in Texas currently available. L. L. Foster, *Forgotten Texas Census: First Annual Report of the Agricultural Bureau of the Department of Agriculture, Insurance, Statistics, and History, 1887-88* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2001), 159. C.W. Macune, The Farmers Alliance, Transcript of Oral Interview, 1920, Vertical Files, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

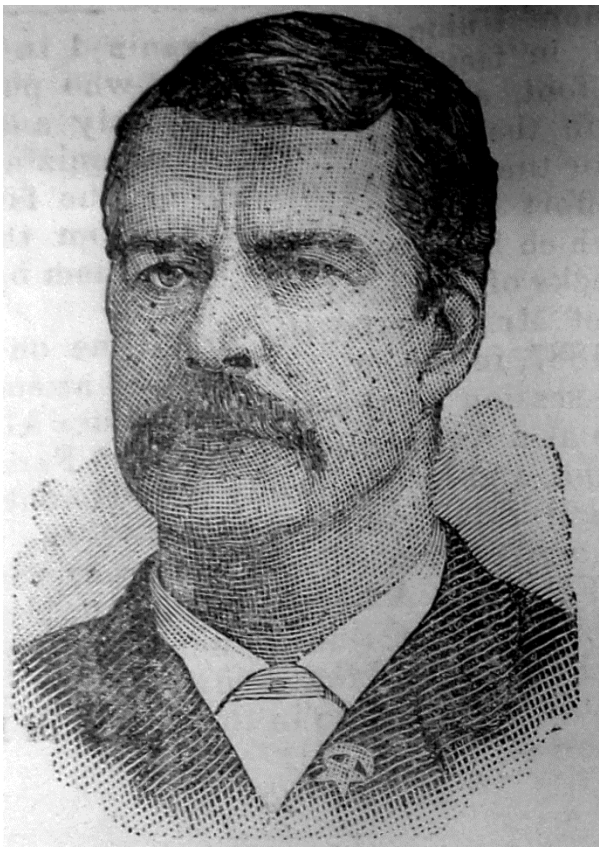

Figure 9: C.W. Macune, 1887.
Source: W.L. Garvin and S.O Daws, *History of the National Farmers' Alliance and Co-operative Union of America* (Jacksboro: J.N. Rogers & Co., Steam Printers, 1887), 116.

Macune should not have been able to join the Farmers' Alliance. The Alliance banned current or former attorneys from membership. As a youth, Macune followed farm work with an apprenticeship to a pharmacist. After a period of travel, he settled in Burnett Texas, read law, and became a practicing attorney. In 1874 "C.W. Macune, Esq.," purchased the Burnett *Bulletin*. Macune lost his paper and his law practice as the Long Depression of the 1870s set in. To survive the economic downturn, Macune took to painting houses in San Saba County while studying with local physicians. In 1879, he passed the state medical exam at the same time the nation's economy began to recover from the downturn. While the Alliance prohibited attorneys from membership, it proved more accepting of a country doctor who had once practiced law. Only Friendship Alliance #1963, Macune's home sub-alliance, could expel the doctor. Its members were unwilling to expel the influential leader.[65]

The doctor found himself in an important sounding, but time-consuming, position with little actual power. Macune spoke languages needed by the Alliance and held contacts in areas where the group wished to expand. This made him an excellent candidate for the honor of joining the executive committee – and the thankless task of auditing the group's books. Formed out of a concern about potential embezzlement the Alliance's executive committee exercised only limited influence. Committee members could "examine the books of the Secretary and

---

65 "Texas Press," *Galveston Daily News*, September 26, 1874. Macune Jr., "Biographical Sketch of Charles W. Macune," 5–7, 64. (Macune opened a law office relatively soon after returning to Texas in the 1890s without any indication by family members that he completed the associated apprenticeship period. In order to do so, Macune would have needed to already be licensed to practice in Texas).. *Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at Cleburne , 1886*, 7–8. *Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at The Session Held in Dallas, Texas, August, 1888* (Dallas: Southern Mercury Publishing, 1888), 32. (Interestingly, despite the group's Constitution saying clearly that prior employment constituted a bar to membership, by 1888 the Texas Alliance had adopted a rule that only current employment in a prohibited profession could bar membership).

Treasurer . . . supervise the execution of suitable [surety] bonds" and "audit all claims." [66] As a former attorney, Macune possessed useful legal skills and quickly came to chair the committee. No one anticipated how quickly Macune would come to lead the Alliance.[67]

Macune's rise to power coincided with the last fight over the Texas Alliance's involvement in politics. After the election of 1886, the officers of the Farmers' Alliance took drastic steps to force the organization out of politics. The President, Vice-President and one member of the Executive Committee chartered a new organization with the same name as the old. The renegades claimed that thousands of Alliance members would support them in splintering the organization unless the political project came to an end. In order to head off a potentially fatal split, the remaining officers formed a correspondence committee and met with the dissenters in Waco. The resulting communique called for the Alliance, at its next annual meeting in August, to adopt resolutions forswearing politics. County Alliances received warning that the meeting would also consider a ban on dual membership in the Alliance and the Knights of Labor. Delegates who also held membership in the Knight of Labor might not be seated. In a final and routine act, the organization's officers voted that they should be reimbursed for their travel, and allowed the executive committee to audit the expense reports. Seeking reimbursement turned out to be a major blunder for the dissenters.[68]

The dissenting officers made a critical mistake. At the Waco conference, they represented the second Alliance – with the same name as the first. Along with the other officers in attendance, the dissenters filed expense reports for their travel with the original Alliance.

---

66 A surety bond is an insurance policy against embezzlement or other malfeasance by an organization's officers.
67 *Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at Cleburne , 1886,* 4.
68 "Alliance Matters, Official," *Dallas Mercury,* November 26, 1886.

Perhaps inadvertently, the dissenters attempted to embezzle from the first Alliance by claiming reimbursement for a meeting they attended on behalf of another organization – the second Alliance. It was a nuance any lawyer would spot. By filing expense reports, the officers provided written evidence of their actions. Two days later all three resigned. The last act of Andrew Dunlap, the Alliance's outgoing president, was to name Charles Macune acting president.[69]

The new president acted quickly to secure power. Not waiting for the annual meeting in August, Macune recalled the representatives from Cleburne into an emergency session. Opposition to the current path of the Alliance collapsed. Members were outraged when they heard of the financial improprieties. Dissenting former officers found themselves preoccupied with avoiding prison. Without effective opposition, Macune secured the merger of the Texas Alliance with a smaller Louisiana organization. The merger created a new – national – organization with Macune at its head. The meeting reaffirmed the Cleburne Demands – the political declaration calling for the Alliance's entry into politics – and authorized a campaign aimed at expanding the Alliance throughout the South. [70]

The next two years saw the quiet, expansion of the Alliance in Texas. Between the delegate count available in Cleburne in 1886 and the next available enumeration in 1888, the Texas Alliance grew substantially. Outside of Texas, the National Alliance also saw rapid growth. In South Texas, the German belt ceased to form an impediment to the organization's growth. By 1888 the Alliance had established itself throughout the area, including counties with

---

69 "Alliance Matters, Official," *The Dallas Mercury,* November 26, 1886. "The Alliance Trouble Reviewed," *The Dallas Mercury,* January 14, 1887.
70 "The Alliance Trouble Reviewed," *The Dallas Mercury,* January 14, 1887. "Alliance Matters," *The Dallas Mercury,* December 31, 1886. "The Waco Meeting," *The Dallas Mercury,* January 28, 1887.|

a substantial ethnic German majority.[71] The group would face a new demographic challenge in appealing to Tejano and Mexican residents of South Texas. Unlike the push into the German belt, the Alliance lacked a respected doctor with connections in the area. (See, Figure 10).[72]

Tejanos and Mexicanos

The Tejano and Mexicano[73] experience differed markedly from other ethnic groups living in Texas. At the time, the state's Hispanic population formed a relatively small group clustered in a limited number of regions. Only after the Mexican Revolution in the twentieth century sent waves of refugees across the border did Texas gain a substantial Hispanic population. The Farmers Alliance and later Populist Party proved unable to make substantial inroads in areas with the highest percentage of Hispanics. Many of the reasons for this failure reflect ethnic insensitivity on the part of the Alliance movement. (See, Table 4).[74]

71 Comal and Gillespie Counties.
72 For the Alliances growth in Texas see Map 2.2. For growth outside of Texas see, Robert C. McMath, Jr., *Populist Vanguard: A History of the Southern Farmers' Alliance* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 33–47.
73 Tejano refers to Texans of Hispanic ancestry, Mexicano to Mexican immigrants to the United States.
74 Terry G. Jordan, "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change In Texas, 1836-1986," in *Texas Vistas*, ed. Ralph A. Wooster and Robert A. Calvert (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1987), 330.

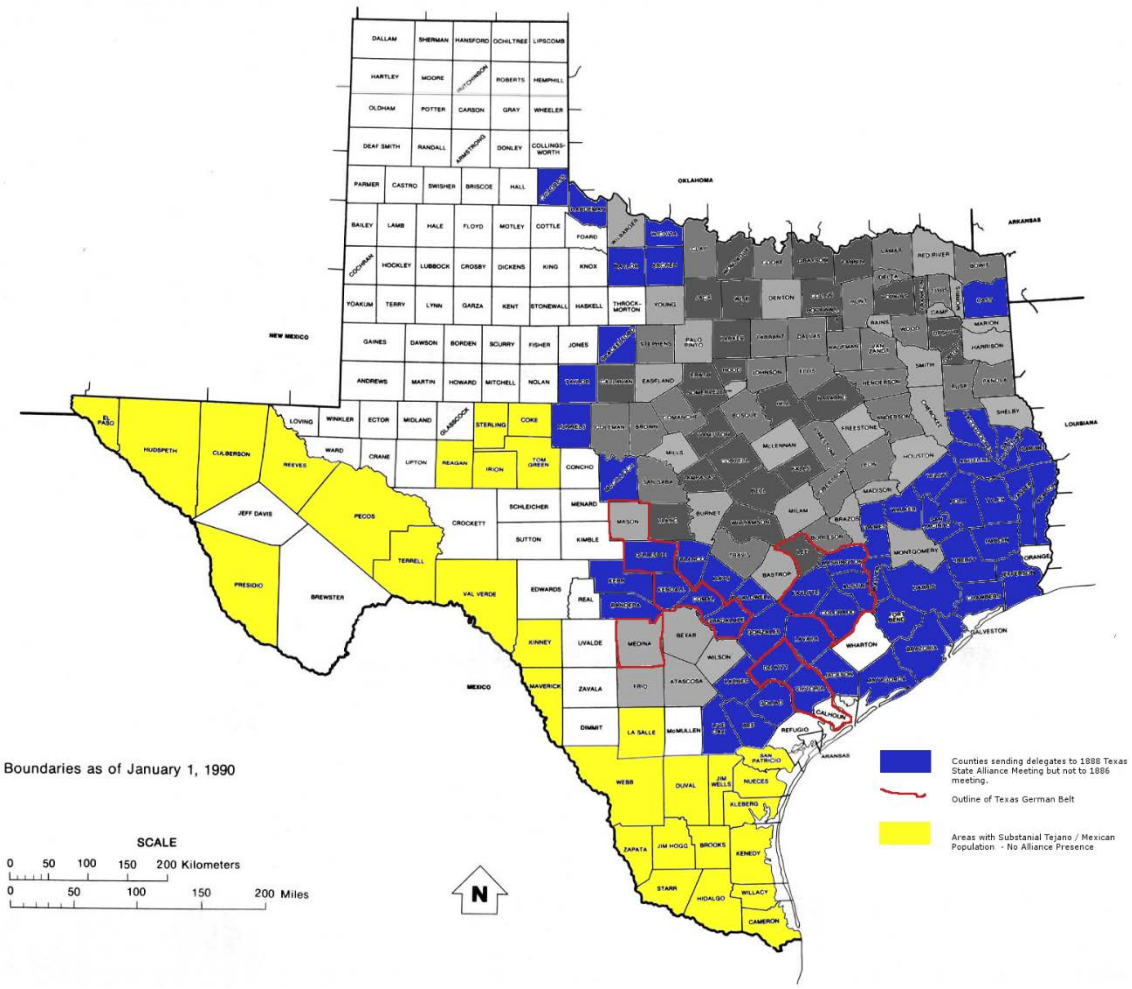

Figure 10: Counties Sending Delegates to Texas Farmers' Alliance Annual Convention And Heavily Hispanic Counties Without Alliance Presence, 1888.
Grey indicates a county sending delegates in 1886. Red outlines areas of major German settlement. Yellow indicates a county with a heavy Hispanic/Tejano presence. No county in this third category provided delegates to the 1888 convention. *Source: Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886.*, 12. *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Ninth Regular Session, Held at Dallas, Texas, August 22-26, 1888.* (Dallas: Circular Letter Office, 1888), 3–8. Terry G. Jordan, "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change In Texas, 1836-1986," in *Texas Vistas*, ed. Ralph A. Wooster and Robert A. Calvert (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1987), 330.

Ethnic Origin	Population	Percentage
Southern Anglo-American	1,156,000	57%
African-American	396,000	20%
European	225,000	11%
Northern Anglo-American	148,000	7%
Mexicano/Tejano	83,000	4%
Other / Unknown	2,900	<1%
Louisiana French	2,300	<1%
Asian	800	<1%
Native-American	800	<1%
Hispanic, 2010 Federal Census		38.60%

Table 4: Ethnic Makeup Of Texas, 1887.
The percentage of Hispanic residents of Texas in the 2010 Federal Census has been included for comparison purposes. *Source:* Jordan, 330. "Demographic Profile of Hispanics in Texas, 2011," *Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project* (blog), accessed November 23, 2015, http://www.pewhispanic.org/states/.

The proximity of Mexico caused unique problems for many Tejanos, a term used to describe Texans of Hispanic origin often indicating ancestors present in Texas before the Texas Revolution, and Mexicanos – a term often used to describe Hispanic Texans holding Mexican citizenship. European immigrants left many of the legal – though not cultural –ties to their former homeland behind. Mexican citizens in Texas continued to live in close proximity to their country of origin. Historian Armando C. Alonzo has characterized the zone of inherited rancheros and farms along the lower Rio Grande Valley as the "Tejano homeland in South Texas." Mexican law was not friendly to those living in this borderland. The Mexican constitution provided "Citizenship shall be lost . . . by naturalization in a foreign country." Further, Mexico treated border zones as areas of special military importance. Non-citizens could not own real estate within sixty miles. Becoming a naturalized United States citizen meant the loss of the ability to own or inherit land on the Mexican side of the border.[75] For some, this represented a break in a chain of inheritance, and cultural legacy, going back to the early eighteenth century. The laws of the state of Texas offered an alternative. [76]

English common law – the basis for much of Texas' legal system – barred foreigners from owning land. Texas law before 1892 offered three exceptions from the common law rule. An alien could hold land under the same rights as "accorded to citizens of the United States by

---

75 Depending on circumstances, Tejanos might – or might not – also be considered Mexican nationals. The considerations around Tejano land ownership are complex enough that they cannot easily be covered here.
76 Armando C. Alonzo, *Tejano Legacy: Rancheros and Settlers in South Texas, 1734-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 95. *The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared with the Constitution of 1857* (Philadelphia: American academy of political and social science, 1917), 31. Myron Weiner and Michael S. Teitelbaum, *Political Demography, Demographic Engineering* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001), 79. International Bureau of the American Republics, *Mexico* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1891), 88. T.F. Bayard, "Rights of Foreigners in Mexico," in *Consular Reports: Commerce, Manufactures, Etc*, vol. Bayard (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1885), 199–200.

the laws of the nation such alien shall belong." A treaty between the United States and the alien's home government could define rights in relation to land. Of concern to many Mexicanos living in Texas, the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo protected the right of Mexicans to inherit land in the United States but remained silent on the ability to purchase. Finally, "any alien who shall . . . have [legally] declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, shall have the right to acquire and hold real estate in this state [of Texas], in the same manner as if he was a citizen of the United States." The statute required the initiation, not the completion, of the citizenship process. Without a need to complete the citizenship process, Mexican Texans could own land in the state and preserve their rights in Mexico.[77]

Not only did Texas give non-citizens the right to own land, they gained the right to vote. The Texas Constitution of 1876 provided that:

> [E]very male person of foreign birth, ... who, at any time before an election, shall have declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, in accordance with the federal naturalization laws, and shall have resided in this State one year next preceding such election, and the last six months in the county in which he offers to vote, shall also be deemed a qualified elector.

Including the provision offered an obvious advantage to the Democrats who drafted the document after the end of Reconstruction. Many German communities heavily favored Republicans. Germans possessed few legal reasons not to quickly become citizens. By contrast, the lower Rio Grande Valley – the area with the heaviest concentration of Hispanic voters during this period – tended to vote heavily Democrat. Contrary to later urban legend, the law – at least

---

77 Randolph B. Campbell, *Grass Roots Reconstruction in Texas, 1865-1880* (LSU Press, 1997), 3. *Revised Statutes of the Texas State Legislature, Adopted by the Regular Session of the Sixteenth Legislature A.D. 1879* (Austin: State Printing Office, 1887), 5. (Reprint of statutory consolidation and reenactment, print date is not in error). John Sayles and Henry Sayles, *A Treatise on the Laws of Texas Relating to Real Estate: And Actions to Try Title and for Possession of Lands and Tenements in Two Volumes*, vol. 2 (St. Louis: Gilbert Book Company, 1890), 306, 413–17.

on its face – did not allow new immigrants to vote until after they spent significant time in the community. Recognizing the unique situation many Mexicanos faced, the Democratic Party secured the votes of individuals who possessed good legal reasons not to become citizens. In Texas, one could, at least legally, be both Texan and Mexican at the same time.[78]

Non-citizen voting gave rise to decades of allegations of fraud in the lower Rio Grande Valley. Often, these consisted of stories of Mexican citizens being paid to cross the border and registered to vote on the eve of the election. Some of the most prominent reports of fraud deal with turnout against the Populist Party during the 1894 congressional elections. While some voting improprieties existed, it seems unlikely these caused Populists to lose the region. An analysis of election returns finds that Populists encountered difficulty in the same set of counties where the Alliance failed to gain a toehold in 1888. This suggests a pre-existing reluctance to participate in the agrarian movement represented the prime contributor to poor Populist support. (See, Figure 11).[79]

---

78 Article 2, Section 2, Texas Constitution of 1876, Jamail Center for Legal Research, Tarlton Law Library, http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/constitutions/texas1876/a6. For voting patterns in South Texas during this period *see*, Evan Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas: The Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013). For Texas German alignment *see*, Gary Halter, *Government and Politics of Texas: Ninth Edition* (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2013), 4.

79 Gregg Cantrell, "'Our Very Pronounced Theory of Equal Rights to All': Race, Citizenship, And...," *Journal of American History* 100, no. 3 (December 2013): 669–71. (The bulk of Cantrell's article, dealing with the racial politics of Populism in South Texas, is either unchanged or improved with an alternative explanation of events on the border. The author suspects that Cantrell is, likely, correct about some amount of fraud at the border. Cantrell argues that the high number of citizenship declarations made in County Court reflect fraud. The possibility that migratory agricultural workers may have filed declarations in several counties, suggests a high degree of noise to the data). University of Virginia, "Historical Census Browser," http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/. Great American History Machine, University of Michigan, 1997. Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Ninth Regular Session, Held at Dallas, Texas, August 22-26, 1888. (Dallas: Circular Letter Office, 1888), 3–8. Jordan, "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change In Texas, 1836-1986," 330. For more on the political situation in South Texas, albeit from a slightly later time period *see*, Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas*.

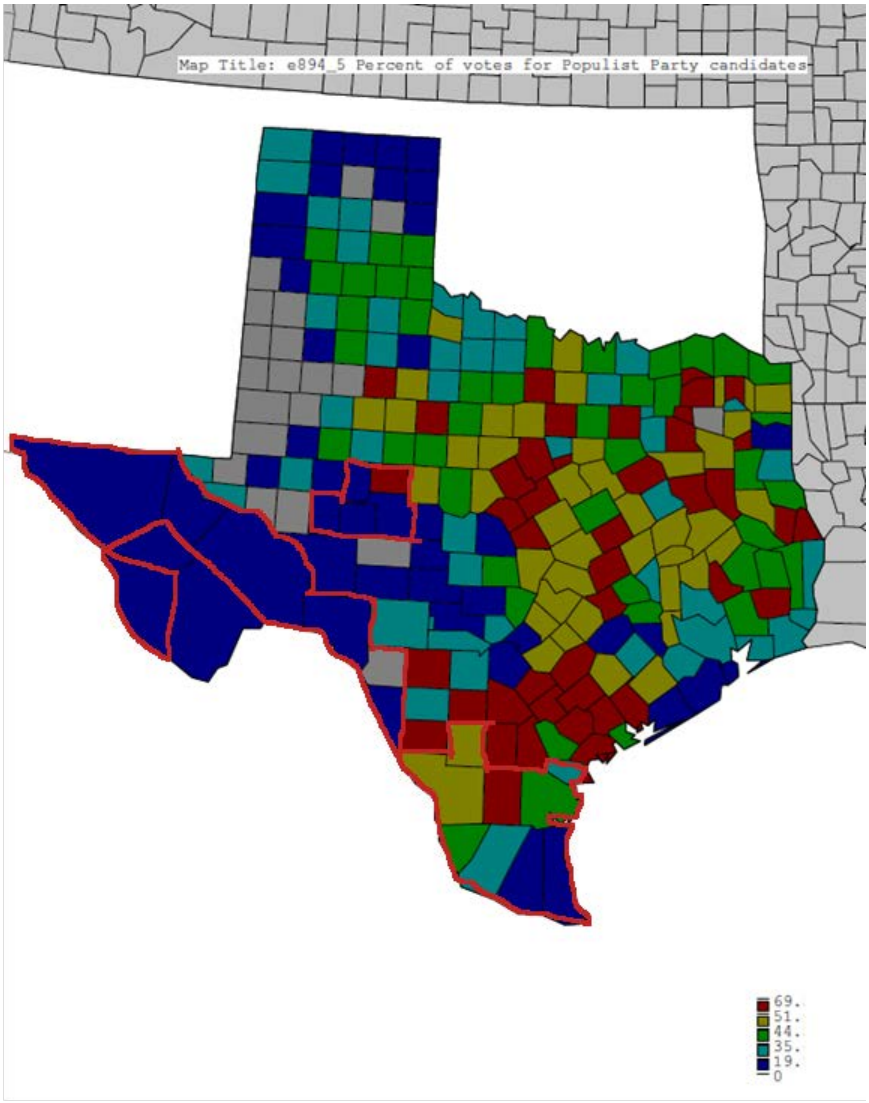

Figure 11: Populist Congressional Vote, 1894.
Areas with a high percentage of Tejanos/Mexicanos as a percentage of the total population are outlined in red. None, of the outlined areas, possessed a significant Alliance presence in 1886. Source: Great American History Machine, University of Michigan, 1997. *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Ninth Regular Session, Held at Dallas, Texas, August 22-26, 1888.*, 3–8. Jordan, "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change In Texas, 1836-1986," 330.

Hispanic turnout falls into a larger pattern. Alien Land laws limited the ability of foreigners to own real estate. The Populist Party inherited its support for Alien Land laws from the Farmers' Alliance. Texas Populists ran poorly in ethnic communities with sizable immigrant populations until the state party moderated – and eventually abandoned – its calls for a stronger Alien Land Act. A strong act passed at either the state or national level, threatened to end Mexicano land ownership in Texas. Mexicanos, legal voters under the laws of Texas, showed up at the polls in large numbers to defend their right to own land.[80]

The push for stronger Alien Land Laws in Texas arose from the fight over the future of the Texas Panhandle. Removal of Native Americans and access to rails turned the Panhandle into the state's agricultural frontier. Vast tracts of land in the region remained with or were recently owned by, the State of Texas. Farmers sought land sales to settlers in small lots. Ranchers, the free grass movement, looked for an unfenced range with leased grazing rights. Outside of securing grazing rights, ranchers purchased land from the state at wholesale prices. Foreign corporations quickly entered into the land game. The massive XIT Ranch exemplified this trend. Backed by a British syndicate, XIT owned over three million acres in the Panhandle. The Alliance supported laws to stop foreign corporations from acquiring additional agricultural real estate.[81]

---

80 James A. Henretta, Kevin J. Fernlund, and Melvin Yazawa, "The People's (Populist) Party National Platform (1892)," in *Documents for America's History, Volume 2: Since 1865* (Boston: Bradford/St. Martin's, 2011), 138–39. Winkler, *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas*, 333, 381, 396–400.Worth Robert Miller and Stacy G. Ulbig, "Building a Populist Coalition in Texas, 1892-1896," *The Journal of Southern History*, no. 2 (2008): 255–96.

81 "Untitled Article Relating to Free Grass, Page 2," *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, March 18, 1887. "The Lease Question," *Galveston Daily News*, August 14, 1887. H. Allen Anderson, "XIT RANCH," *Handbook of Texas Online*(http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/apx01), accessed November 27, 2015. Uploaded on June 15, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association. "Alien Landlordism," *The National Economist*, December 7, 1889 (explicitly linking Farmers' Alliance support of an Alien Land Law in Texas with a reaction against foreign corporations owning land in the Panhandle). For a similar opinion on causation see, Ariens, *Lone Star Law*, 89.

Both publicly and privately, the Texas Alliance sought to control the actions of foreign corporations. The proceedings of the Alliance's 1888 Texas convention defined the land question as "the wholesale absorption of our land by foreign capitalists." In 1890, the Texas Alliance dropped any mention of foreigners and simply called for breaking up large tracts of land – regardless of their ownership – and for protection and strengthening of the state's homestead law. In its internal deliberations, the Texas Farmers' Alliance called for the same thing as it did in public, restrictions on corporate land ownership.[82]

Unlike the Texas Alliance, the National Farmers' Alliance sought to ban all foreigners from owning land. The change in focus came with the organization's movement out of Texas. Starting in early 1887, the Farmers' Alliance expanded into numerous other Southern states. The following year the Alliance merged with the Agricultural Wheel, an organization with substantial membership throughout the South. Originating in Arkansas, the Wheel included numerous members of Scots-Irish ancestry – a substantial ethnic group in both Arkansas and other areas of the South. The descendants of Protestant tenant farmers brought into Ireland to replace Catholic peasants and pushed from Ulster by English landlords many Scotts-Irish vehemently objected to British investors buying land in America and renting it to tenant farmers.[83] One contributor to the National Economist – the Alliance's national newspaper – complained:

---

82 *Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Ninth Regular Session, Held at Dallas, Texas, August 22-26, 1888.*, 3. *Proceeding of the 11th Regular Annual Meeting of the Farmers' Alliance, Held in the City of Dallas, Commensing Aug 19, A.D. 1890* (Dallas: Robert T. Bibb, Printer, 1891), 13.

83 While many historians will see a good deal of irony in Protestant Ulstermen complaining about the plight of Ireland, this made the grievance no less real to those displaced. Individuals of Irish background likely agreed with their Scots-Irish neighbors. Isaac McCracken – the President of the Agricultural Wheel and vice-president of the National Alliance after the merger – carried a Scots-Irish surname. In Arkansas, where the Wheel originated, Scots-Irish forms a major ethnic group, while other forms of Irish ethnicity form a much small portion of the population. James Patrick Byrne, Philip Coleman, and Jason Francis King, *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History : A Multidisciplinary Encyclopedia* (New York: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 69.

> Ireland has suffered for generations from the oppression of English landlordism, and her people have struggled like heroes to rid themselves of this vampire . . . [N]ow thousands of so called free Americans are as much vassals of English masters as the most oppressed of Ireland. Millions of acres of American land today pay tribute to English lords in rent. . . Can it be said even now that we have achieved our independence from England?

The constitution of the new organization prohibited its president holding back to back terms. This change forced Macune from office. Reflecting the change of leadership, concerns unique to Texas gave way to an agenda opposing all alien land ownership.[84]

Opponents of the Texas Alliance gave the group what the National Alliance wanted. In 1891, the Alliance's chief lobbyist in Austin reported "a movement was afoot to disrupt the Alliance" by legislators afraid that Alliance members might help establish a third political party. The same legislature that created the railroad commission passed a new Alien Land Act. Enacted on the last full day of the legislature, the act passed without the normal time for review. The British consulate in Galveston summed up the legislation's flaws:

> The idea was to prevent the acquisition of large tracts of land of land by foreign syndicates. . . [B]ut in their attempt to do this they included and prevented each and every foreigner from even owning a homestead. This appears to be the literal meaning of the law as it originally stood.

The consul's report oversimplified the act. The law proclaimed that a foreigner could not buy land without first starting the citizenship process. If an immigrant failed to finish the process within six years, the land became the property of the State of Texas. The law lacked a provision

---

84 W. Scott Morgan, *History of the Wheel and Alliance and the Impending Revolution* (Fort Scott: J.H. Rice and Sons, 1889), 63, 74, 130. (The constitution of the merged body can be found in Morgan). "Wheel Demands" *The National Economist*, April 19, 1889. "Untitled Article, Page 229," *The National Economist*, June 29, 1889.

preventing its retroactive application. The Alliance found itself behind a law that threatened to take the homes and farms of Mexicanos living in Texas.[85]

Almost as soon as it was passed, the Texas political establishment turned on the 1891 Act. Texas courts struck down the law on a weak claim that the bill was improperly drafted. With the original law thrown out, the Texas legislature passed a new act to regulate who could own land in Texas. The resulting law restored the right to own land with a declaration of citizenship and created a new class that could own property, a "bona fide resident of the State of Texas." The statute offered no definition of a bona fide resident. One, it seems, could become a Texan – regardless of nationality – by failing to run away fast enough.[86] Even if an alien failed to fulfill the statute they could still "convey fee simple title at any time before the institution of an escheat proceeding." The law further stated that only the attorney general or district attorney could bring escheat proceedings.[87] Aliens who could not own property before 1891 could now buy and sell real estate. This represented an expansion of the rights of non-citizen landowners.[88]

Politics drove the sudden expansion of Alien Land rights. The 1892 Governor's race became a contest between Democrat James Stephen Hogg and Independent Democrat George Clark. Clark made opposition to the law a central campaign issue. Previously, Texas banks used mortgage loans as collateral to borrow money on the international market. Banks made loans to individuals, then pledged ownership of those debts as collateral to borrow money from other

---

85 "The Report," *The Southern Mercury*, August 28, 1891. James Boyles, "United States - Galveston," Diplomatic and Consular Reports. Annual Series (London: Foreign Office, 1892), 2–3.Henry Hutchings, *General Laws of the State of Texas Passed by the Twenty Second Session of the State Legislature* (Austin: Henry Hutchings, 1891), 83–84

86 The bona fide resident provision would, at least on its surface, allow those barred by the Chinese Exclusion Acts from participating in the citizenship process to hold land.

87 Most district attorney's offices specialize in criminal prosecution. Many real estate attorneys would consider an escheat proceeding well outside of the normal areas of competence of a D.A.'s office, an event likely to invoke both amusement and horror in equal measure.

88 Ariens, *Lone Star Law*, 90–91.

banks. Foreign lenders became unwilling to continue lending in Texas under an Alien Land Law that might mean they could not foreclose on the land securing the underlying mortgage. Opposing the act appealed to both immigrant and business communities – two constituencies Clark sought to cultivate. Passage of broad land ownership rights during the 1892 special legislative session allowed Hogg's supporters to nullify a hot-button issue.[89]

The ultimate fate of the Alien Land Act illustrates the movement towards a multi-ethnic society in Texas. Economics and politics limited the extent of discriminatory actions. If one faction alienated an ethnic or racial group, another would take the opportunity to secure their votes. While racial and ethnic relations would remain poor by the standards of the late twentieth century, the balance of political power moved Texas society towards steadily more openness. The Texas Farmers Alliance would reflect these larger trends but took little-concerted effort to either encourage or oppose broader changes.

African Americans

Relations between the Farmers' Alliance and African-Americans were some of the most fraught and problematic the organization faced. Economic conflicts of interest defined the relationship. African-Americans largely comprised the agricultural laborers and sharecroppers that worked, either throughout the growing season or as harvest time labor, on the land of the small farmers made up the bulk of the Alliances' membership. Bringing African-Americans into the Alliance structure risked providing a vehicle for farm laborers to organize and demand higher wages. Many in the Alliance insisted on a whites-only membership, citing the economic conflict

89 "Hon. Geo. Clark. Fires Opening Gun in 1892 Campaign, It Is War to The End," *Austin Daily Statesman*, February 28, 1892.

of interest between landowners and laborers for justification. Despite this reticence, political cooperation between white farmers' and African Americans would become one of the central political underpinnings of the Farmers' Alliances as it morphed into the Populist Party. In its relations with African-Americans, the Alliance and the larger agrarian movement found itself propelled toward greater inclusiveness by events.

The early Farmers' Alliance formed neither a racially progressive nor a hyper-racist institution. Beginning in 1882, the Alliance charter required all members be "white." The clause reflected the political situation of the Alliance in 1882. Infighting between Democrats and Greenbackers tore apart the original Farmer's Alliance. Starting in 1880, a remnant group in Parker County reformed the organization often referred to by early members as the Second Alliance. In 1881, the Second Alliance – then limited to Parker, Jack, and Wise counties – suffered a serious attack when the organization passed up a politically connected printer for its publishing work. With the 1882 election on the horizon, the Second Alliance adopted charter provisions prohibiting African-Americans from becoming members and banning the organization from endorsing any candidate or party. In so doing the organization adopted a strategy to protect itself from race-baiting attacks from the outside and internal strife from the inside.[90]

The restriction proved unusual only in appearing in such a visible place. Southern branches of the Patrons of Husbandry – also known as the Grange – followed an informal whites-only policy. The Masonic jurisprudence of Texas, governing the state's Freemasons,

90 Garvin and Daws, 17-37.

urged lodges not to admit members "who are incapable of appreciating the objects of our institution – to mingle with us and participate in privileges which they cannot enjoy." While Masonic membership rules allowed the organization some plausible deniability – oblique references to race are by their nature not explicit – its rules on recognizing lodges were clear. Texas Masons did "not recognize as legal or Masonic any body of negroes working under their charters in the United States, without respect to the body granting such charters, and they regard all such negro Lodges as clandestine, illegal, and unmasonic." The Alliance adopted the default position of Southern fraternal organizations in barring African-American members. The segregated nature of other fraternal organizations makes the Alliance's later efforts to desegregate even more extraordinary.[91]

Conflicting economic interests formed one of the major objections to co-operation between the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance. Those opposed to the two organizations working together noted that "The Knights of Labor want cheap provisions and higher prices for their labor. The farmers want high prices for their produce and cheap farmhands." Unlike the Alliance, the Knights of Labor recruited its membership without regard to race. Thomas Furlong, the owner of the detective agency contracted by the Texas & Pacific to deal with the union, described the Knights' practices in his autobiography:

> No class of people were ineligible for membership; all trades in professions, as well as all classes and tongues, provided they were males over the age of 18 years of age, and had the price of the initiation fee, usually one dollar, could join. The color line was not even drawn, as it is in most secret societies.

---

91 Garvin and Daws, *History of the National Farmers' Alliance*, 35. Robert C. McMath, *American Populism: A Social History 1877-1898* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 61. Freemasons Grand Lodge of Texas, *The Masonic Jurisprudence of Texas* (Brenham: T. McGill & Company, printers, 1879), 50, 122.

The Alliance found it could work with the union. At the same time, many in the movement proved less than enthused at the idea of field hands organizing under the Alliance banner. [92]

Race and politics caused an unacknowledged split in the Alliance. Starting around 1886, local chapters of the Farmers' Alliance and Knights of Labor began running county-level People's tickets. In Rains County in 1886:

> The Farmers' Alliance of [Rains] county met in general session to consider the propriety of nominating candidates for county offices. After quite a lengthy debate it was determined to make no nominations within the Alliance, whereupon the meeting was adjourned. Immediately upon adjournment of the Alliance, the audience resolved itself into a "people's meeting" and the announcement was made that "a people's convention" would meet in Emory . . . to place a "people's ticket' in the field for county officers. Old Democrats here look upon this action as a direct stab at the party.

In Rains, the Peoples' Party formed as a way for the Farmers' Alliance to nominate candidates without breaching the requirement that the Alliance remain apolitical. In Wise County, reports circulated of a people's ticket forming "embracing all the county offices. The move is organized by Greenbackers and Republicans, relying on the Knights of Labor and Farmers' Alliance."[93]

County-level people's tickets forced white Alliance members to work closely with members of others races and ethnicities. The Knights of Labor included African-American members. Political common sense dictated that the new county parties appeal to any voters they could reach, regardless of race. In 1887 the Dallas Morning News reported on a "Washington County political imbroglio. . . [F]our Negros have been indicted for intimidating one of their own color at the last election. The four voted what is known in that county as the people's ticket,

---

92"Untitled Article, Alliance Section," *The Rural* Citizen, April 8, 1886. Thomas Furlong, *Fifty Years a Detective* (St. Louis: C.E. Barnett, 1912), 78.
93 "State Campaign Notes," *Dallas Morning News,* June 13, 1886. "State Campaign Notes," *Dallas Morning News,* July 22, 1886.

in contradiction from the Republican ticket." At least in Washington County, some members of the African-American community supported an embryonic Peoples' Party from an early date.[94]

Alliance leaders sought to channel grassroots energy into a controllable form. Founded in 1886 the colored Farmers Alliance, (the lower case colored represents the group's preferences), offered African-Americans a way to participate in the movement. The colored Farmer's Alliance sought to help members sell crops without extortion from white middlemen, provide banking services and secure loans to purchase land. A white "superintendent" exercised nominal control of the colored Alliance. Emphasis on land ownership, and oversight by whites meant the colored Alliance posed little economic danger. What made the colored Alliance safe also rendered it unattractive to many African-Americans. A segregated group born of a white need for control held little appeal. [95]

Events outside of Texas brought the colored Alliance to prominence. Membership in the colored Alliance skyrocketed after the dissolution of the colored Agricultural Wheel. Also a segregated organization, the colored Wheel possessed a broader range of concerns than simply landownership. The dissolution of the colored Wheel formed one of the stipulations in the merger between the white National Farmers' Alliance and the white Agricultural Wheel. With its major competitor out of the way, the colored Alliance underwent rapid growth. By 1891, the Alliance linked organization would – at least on paper – boast over a million members.

---

94 "Federal Prosecutions," *Dallas Morning News*, March 10, 1887.
95 Martin Dann, "Black Populism: A Study of the Colored Farmers' Alliance Through 1891," Journal of Ethnic Studies 2, no. 3 (Fall 1974): 62.

Ironically, the huge membership of the colored Alliance formed one of the primary arguments for a merger between the white and colored Alliances.[96]

At the Alliance's 1889 convention in St. Louis, former president Macune led a revolt against the group's whites-only policy. With a base of support based in Texas, Macune – unsurprisingly – attempted to bring the national organization in line with Texas practices. The National Economist – the newspaper owned and edited by Macune – announced on its front page that the former president moved to strike out the word white from the charter at the group's annual convention. The same article called for closer co-operation with the colored Alliance. Macune's attempts to desegregate the organization did not go over well with delegates from other Southern states. Macune lost his bid to regain the presidency to the racially conservative ex-Confederate Leonidas Polk. Instead of striking white, the convention allowed each state organization to set its membership requirements, with the provision that no African-American delegates would serve as representatives to the national convention. [97]

To make its publication deadline, The National Economist typeset the report of Macune's speech before he gave it. The paper, presuming Macune would secure election to another term as Alliance president, identified him as such.98 Later scholars would interpret an erroneous chain of events based on Macune remaining president until St. Louis. Under this view, Macune opposed integration in 1887, insisted on the destruction of the colored Wheel in 1888 and called

---

96 Nelson A. Dunning, *The Farmers' Alliance History and Agricultural Digest* (Washington D.C.: Alliance Publishing Company, 1891), 290.

97 "Meeting and Consolidation," *The National Economist*, December 14, 1889. Morgan, *History of the Wheel and Alliance and the Impending Revolution*, 104. "Third Day," *National Economist*, December 21, 1889.

98 Most likely, all of the reporting on the convention in the December 14th issues, other than handful of articles filed via telegraph, came from speeches and other preplanned event that Macune was able to secure copies over before the convention.

for continued segregation as his last act as president in 1889. Leonidas Polk, who ultimately replaced Macune as the group's leader, negotiated the 1888 agreement that ended the colored Wheel and forced Macune from the presidency. It is doubtful that Macune exercised substantial control over the merger that set the stage for Polk's ascendancy.[99]

Macune called for the convention to put aside race and focus on economic goals. The former President urged member that:

> The very existence and perpetuation of the order [demands] that it must take an aggressive position in favor of an overshadowing effort for good in behalf of the membership, that would act as nucleus and rallying cry, and be of so general a character that it would receive the endorsement of the entire membership. Without this local issues developed by local condition . . . would assume undue proportions[.]

As a unifying goal, Macune proposed the sub-treasury plan. The plan, a highly complex piece of agricultural policy that takes up a large portion of a subsequent chapter, sought to bring about an end to deflation through federal crop loans made with newly created fiat money. The

---

99 "Annual Address By President C. W. Macune of the F.A., and C. U. of A. Delivered at St. Louis, December 4, 1889," *The National Economist*, December 14, 1889. (Note that Macune identifies himself under the name used by the group prior to merger with the Agricultural Wheel). "The Book! The Book!! The Book!!!, The History of the Agricultural Wheel, Farmers Alliance and the Impending Revolution," *The National Economist*, November 2, 1889 (advertisement carrying an endorsement by Jones as President of the Alliance). Morgan, *History of the Wheel and Alliance and the Impending Revolution*, 125. For further clarification of Macune's position see "Proceedings of the Annual Session of the Farmers' and Laborers Union," *The National Economist*, December 21, 1889 (especially the annual President's address given by "President Jones" on the first day and the notation of Macune giving the, previously published, speech on the second day).
The relationship between Macune and Polk could best be described as stormy. With neither man willing to give way for the other, the leadership of the Alliance often found itself working at cross purposes. In 1890, the Alliance general convention investigated both men for their actions surrounding the Alliance endorsement in the primary for United States Senator from Georgia, neither of the two leaders' home state. Polk supported a candidate that subscribed to all of the Alliance's platform, but the sub-treasury. Macune favored a railroad attorney who supported his pet program. The eventual winner of the Alliance endorsement, supporting the entire Alliance platform but favored by neither Macune nor Polk, called for both men's political heads. He didn't get them. See. Stuart Noblin, *Leonidas Lafayette Polk: Agrarian Crusader* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949), 257–61.

subtreasury carried with it racial overtones. Macune's views on race might be best summed up by an editorial that ran in the National Economist on July 4, 1891.

> The conflict of interest between whites and blacks of the South is a great absurdity. The fact is that they are to a great extent mutually dependent on one another. . . The Southern farmer feels it his duty to protect and assist . . . his neighbors. No one realizes better than he, if he allows sharpers to swindle the colored man by paying him excessively low prices . . . that the flooding of the market at such low prices will tend to keep prices low.

Still a product of the times, The National Economist failed to mention equality. Despite the omission, the subtreasury represented a major evolution in Alliance thinking about race. With the new plan, the Alliance moved from fear of African-American laborer's organizing to seeking African-American allies for a larger purpose.[100]

Political necessity dictated inclusion. After its introduction, the vast majority of Alliance members came to wholeheartedly support the subtreasury. A detailed explanation of the reasons for this support appears in chapter 3. To carry its audacious economic plan into action the Alliance could not afford to leave any votes – white or African-American – on the table. A year after introducing the subtreasury plan, the white and colored Alliances merged. Though now together, the new group proved less than fully integrated. Instead, the national alliance morphed into an umbrella organization comprising a number of groups – including Northern and Western agrarian organizations and the Knights of Labor – all retaining their own membership criteria. In the merger, the African-American group gained an equal number of seats on the national organization's executive committee and equal voting rights for its members as enjoyed by the

---

100 Macune's reported speech does not mention the subtreasury plan. Macune's hand written notes, found at the University of Texas archives, indicates the subtreasury portion of the speech was originally considered an organizational secret. As a secret, it would not have been included in the official transcript of Macune's speech. No mention of the subtreasury appears in the *National Economist* until several weeks after the convention. A later, oral history, interview given by Macune in the 1920s confirms that the subtreasury was first presented in St. Louis.

other component organizations. Responding to African-American fears of political repression the National Alliance pledged that a "free ballot and a fair count will be insisted upon and had, for colored and white alike, by every true Alliance man in America." Having accepted African-Americans as political equals, J.H. Turner, the National Alliance's, white treasurer, could not help but wax poetic. "This looks more like a step in settling [the race] question in the South than anybody has ever done since the question existed. 'God moves in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform' and who knows but that he rises up a Moses, the person of these farmers' organizations, to lead us out of these troubles."[101]

Desegregation of the National Alliance freed Texas agrarians to expand the Peoples' Party. Disappointment with the established Democratic Party power structures unwillingness to support the subtreasury boiled over into the formation of a national farmers' party, known as the People's Party or Populists, in the early 1890s. Whether or not the Alliances' 1890 actions constituted divine salvation, it offered political salvation for the embryonic Texas Populist Party as it struggled to organize in 1891. Populists held little hope of carrying either deep West or South Texas. Victory requires securing East Texas, the most populous section of the state and the area with the highest African-American population, as well as rapidly growing areas of Central Texas. With the white vote split, even a limited number of African-Americans switching their votes from Republicans to Populists could prove the margin of victory in a tight race. Integrating the Alliance helped smooth the way for the creation of a large-scale, integrated, political party. (See Figures, 12 and 13).[102]

---

101 Dunning, Farmers Alliance, 1891, 279.

102 Populists generally ran poorly among Hispanics and Germans. By 1896, Populist support among German voters would mirror the party's support among the population in general. For linear regression coefficients *see*, Miller and Ulbig, "Building a Populist Coalition in Texas, 1892-1896."

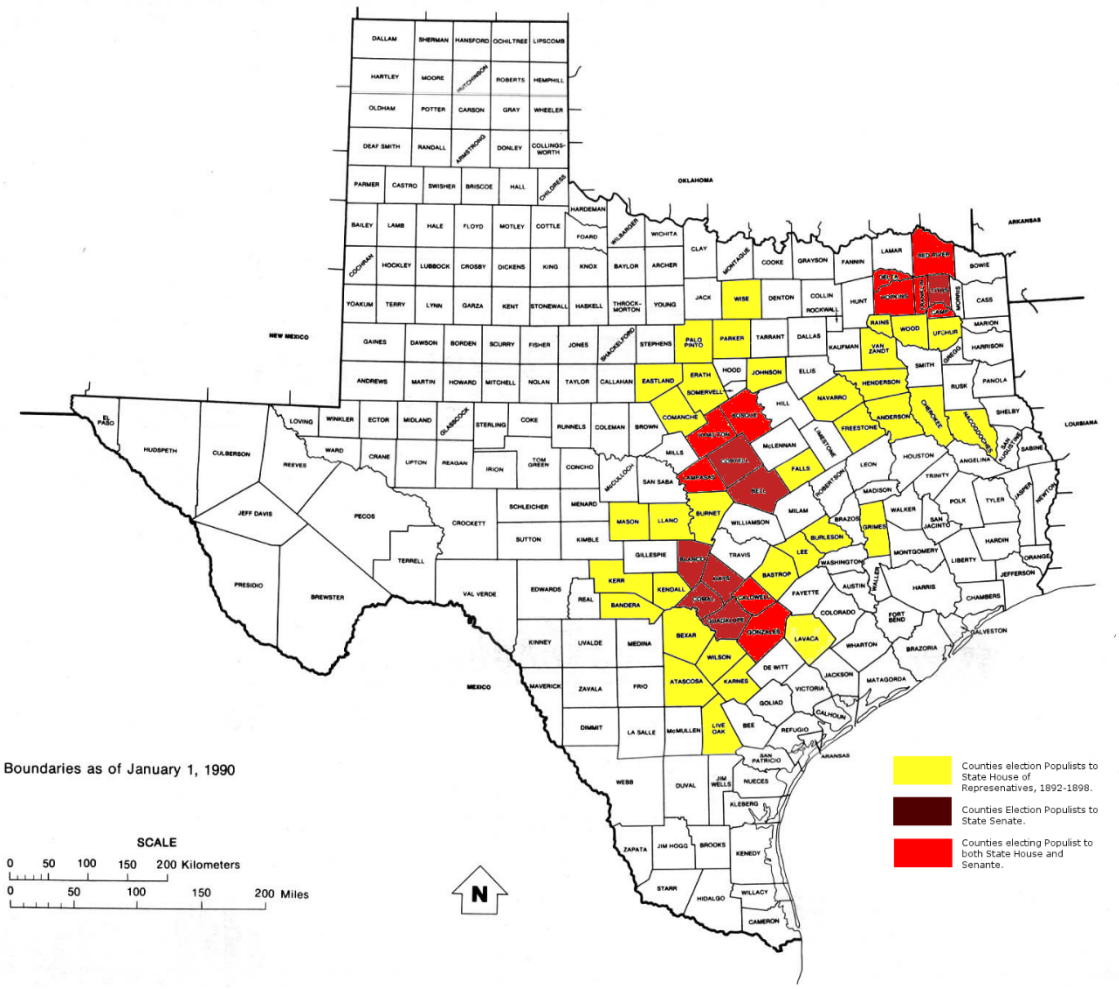

Figure 12: Counties Sending Populists To Texas State Legislature, 1892-1898.
Source: Legislative Reference Library of Texas, "Legislators & Leaders: Texas Legislators Past and Present," http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legeLeaders/members/lrlhome.cfm. James Russel Jensen, *Legislative Apportionment in Texas* (Houston Texas: Public Affairs Research Center, University of Houston, 1964).

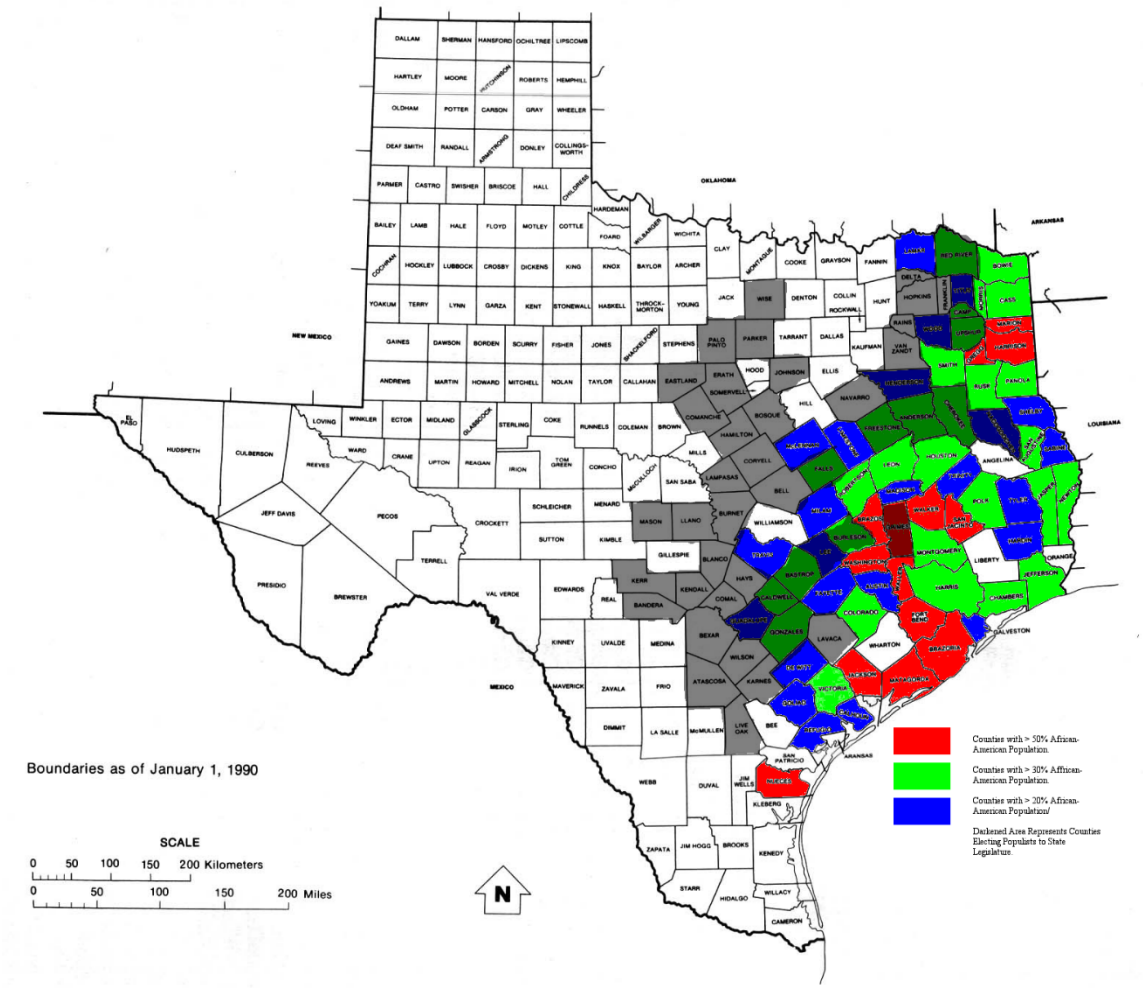

Figure 13: African-American Population Of Texas, 1896.
Populists did best in areas of East Texas where African-Americans comprised a substantial percentage but not a majority of the Population. While the African-American vote could be decisive when the white community split, Populist fared poorly in areas that were either overwhelmingly Republican or prevented from being overwhelmingly Republican by longstanding – institutionalized – fraud. *Source:* Gerald H. Gaither, *Blacks and the Populist Movement: Ballots and Bigotry in the New* South (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 246-252. Legislative Reference Library of Texas, "Legislators & Leaders: Texas Legislators Past and Present," http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legeLeaders/members/lrlhome.cfm.

The People's Party of Texas officially launched with a convention in Dallas on August 17, 1891. What the media saw and what actually happened at the convention differed drastically. The public saw a racial showdown. In a moment of high drama, Melvin Wade, an African-American and long-time member of the Knights of Labor, forced the floor to recognize him. After being assured that "[e]very colored citizen in these United States has the same privileges that any white citizen has," Wade exploded "[w]hen it comes down to practice such is not the fact! If we are equal, why does not the sheriff summon Negroes on juries? And why hang up the sign, 'Negro,' in passenger cars? I want to tell my people what the People's Party is going to do. I want to tell them if it is going to work a black and white horse in the same field." Wade's statement presaged a public debate over race and the People's Party later the same day.[103]

Initially, the Dallas Convention elected all-white party committees. With the deed done, African-American leaders pointed out that it virtually assured that Populists would lose the black vote. In response, the new party's white leadership offered to compromise by having committee chairs appoint African-Americans. R. H. Hayes, an African-American member of the Knights of Labor, offered a blunt response to the proposal. "If you cannot take us and elect us in this convention, we will not thank you. We do not propose to be appointed by chairmen. You must appoint us by the convention and make us feel we are men."[104]

With Hayes' demands, African-American farmers asked the seemingly impossible. If Texas Populists wanted African-American votes, white Populists would have to vote to put African-Americans onto party committees. Doing so would require white populists to offer

---

103 Lawrence Goodwyn, Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 288–89.

104 Goodwyn, 290.290.

African-Americans the same political concession they would any other powerful group. It seemed mad and impossible that Southern white men would, of their own violition, vote to recognize African-Americans as equals. As the convention tallied to votes a hush fell over the crowd followed by euphoria. On August 17, 1891, the People's Party of Texas became an integrated political party.[105]

If the integration of the Texas People's Party appears like a perfectly drawn narrative, that's because it most likely is. Organizers were unlikely to allow any vote to come to the floor without already knowing its outcome. Prior to the commencement of proceedings William Lamb, the convention chair checked to make sure Melvin Wade, the chief African-American protagonist, was within the convention hall. The emphasis placed on ascertaining Wade's presence, seemingly at random prior to even introducing the party platform, indicates that the entire series of dialogues between Wade and various Populist leaders was scripted for the benefit of the press. Organizers needed to make sure Wade was in attendance prior to moving forward with the proceedings. While great theatre, influential African-American members of the Knights of Labor did not hijack a convention of some of their closest political allies, without the allies knowing and approving of the attempt well in advance.[106]

Scripted dialog provided procedural structure to the proceedings. The convention organized itself as a new body and elected officers. The new party then absorbed the old county People's Parties and went through a leadership change in the process. Through Wade, the

---

105 Ibid., 290–91.

106 "The People's Party, Proceedings of the State Convention Yesterday" *Dallas Morning News,* August 18, 1891. Unfortunately, retaining correspondence indicating that a Southern political convention was rigged to give African-Americans a formal role in a new party would be an act of sheer insanity. If any correspondence existed, it would have been burned post-haste. As a result we must look to the recorded stage ques to derive what took place.

Knights of Labor, a prime mover in organizing the county parties, became the vector through which African-Americans came into the party. The problematic colored Farmers' Alliance found itself sidelined. African-Americans saw themselves exhibiting agency, while whites received a reason – the need for victory – for the integration of the party.

Buttressing likelihood of stage-managed convention, Wade's demands fortuitously formed the basis of Populist's political appeal to the African-American community in East Texas. Starting in 1876, Texas allowed the exclusion of African-Americans from grand and petit juries. Without jury representation, African-Americans found that they had little chance of justice. All white grand juries routinely refused to indict whites for crimes against African-Americans. All white petit juries offered African-Americans no recourse for civil wrongs. Throughout East Texas, a common pattern emerged. A coalition of farmers and African-Americans would elect a new county sheriff. The sheriff would use his position to thwart Democratic Party retaliation against Populists and to place African-Americans on juries.[107]

The Alliance between white farmers and African-Americans in Texas proved successful if heavily pressured by outside forces. Working from oral accounts that have not survived, Roscoe Martin, writing in the 1930s, described Election Day during the Populist era:

> [African-American voters from the meeting] were prepared for the proper exercise of their sovereign right by their hosts who . . . placed in their hands Populists ballots, folded into odd shapes sometimes to avoid possible confusion. Thus prepared, the colored electors approached the polling place, marching four abreast down the dusty road surrounded by white guards on horseback. Each guard, be it noted, rode with a Winchester across his lap not so much to keep the Negroes in line as to guarantee the company against the ever-present menace of interference by the Democratic leaders. Some distance from the voting place the

107 Lewis L. Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell: Civil War Soldier, Texas Lawmaker, American Diplomat* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 66–67.

> march was halted. Additional white men appeared, and each took charge of two Negroes, leading them to the ballot box."

The need to escort voters to the polls under armed guard shows a situation far from the, perceived, American norm. The same could be said for the need for the 101st Airborne to escort students into Little Rock High almost sixty years later. With these actions, Texas farmers had come full circle. From initially fearing the economic implications of African-American organization, Populists became protectors of African-American voters.[108]

The multi-ethnic nature of Texas turned the Alliance into a threat not just for Texas Conservatives but for Conservatives throughout the South. The Farmers' Alliance and People's Party proved able to adapt to seek the maximum possible number of votes. The change though was one of degree. The Agrarians sought multi-ethnic alliances in areas where social conditions made them politically viable. The results were a continuation of the rapid political change that Conservatives found difficult to effectively respond to. The threat to Conservative dominance would become only more acute in light of political aims sought by the agrarian movement.

---

108 Roscoe Coleman Martin, *The People's Party in Texas: A Study in Third Party Politics* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 181–82.

CHAPTER IV

THE WHITE MAN WITH THE YELLOW MONEY

The very responsiveness the allowed Populists to quickly become a political force would mobilize their opponents. By a process of observation, Populist thinkers were able to develop economic theories well ahead of their time. This led Populists to conclude that a fiat currency would be more workable than the gold standard – support for silver was largely a later, compromise, position. Populists call for modernization of the currency ran headlong into an elite for which gold held both racial and status implications. Conflict over the currency gave common cause to Southern Conservatives and national financial elites. If Southerners sought to protect white rule, Easterners sought to protect national whiteness through use of gold. Support for one form of whiteness, racial or monetary, became support for the other.

The Metal of Whiteness

Monetary systems took on racialized connotations in the late nineteenth century. European colonial powers based their currencies on gold. Colonizers used gold, the colonized used silver. In Britain, discussion of the gold standard turned to talk of "the yellow man with the white money, and the white man with the yellow money." The yellow man with the white money represented the fear that fast-growing economies in China and other Eastern economies would eventually subsume the West. This would leave white Europeans on the gold standard – the yellow money – behind. This threat brought calls for an "economic Alliance of Europe and the United States against the Asiatic peril." (See, Table 5).[109]

---

109 *Sound Currency, 1895-1896: A Compendium of Accurate and Timely Information on Currency Questions Intended for Writers, Speakers and Students* (New York: Reform Club Sound Currency Committee, 1895), 51–68. "Peoples of Europe Guard Your Most Sacred Possessions," *The Bimetallist*, February 15, 1896, 37.

Leading Gold and Silver Standard Nations circa 1895	
Gold Standard Nations	**Silver Standard Nations**
Britain	(British) India
(British) Canada	Persia
(British) Australia	China
Germany	Japan
Austria-Hungary	Mexico
The Latin Union (France, Italy, Switzerland, Greece).	Columbia

Table 5: Leading Gold And Silver Standard Nations.

Source: Sound Currency, 1895-1896: A Compendium of Accurate and Timely Information on Currency Questions Intended for Writers, Speakers and Students (New York: Reform Club Sound Currency Committee, 1895), 51–68.

Racialization of the currency went beyond relations with Britain. Panama provides one of the period's clearest examples of the racial overtones of money. In the early twentieth century, the United States helped separate Panama from Columbia. In return, the American government secured a ninety-nine-year lease of an extra-territorial canal zone. To build and maintain the Panama Canal, the American government found it expedient to utilize Afro-Caribbean laborers. White, American experts and administrators received their pay in gold coins. Afro-Caribbeans were paid in the local silver currency. Employees on the Gold Roll enjoyed paid vacations and sick leave, those on the Silver Roll lacked these benefits. Separate schools, hospitals, shops and other facilities existed for those on the Gold Roll and their families. This de-facto segregation led one observer to remark that "Panama is South of the Mason-Dixon line." In the Panama Canal Zone, white Anglo-Americans were gold and Afro-Caribbean workers were silver.[110]

A Brief Monetary History of the United States

Despite the insistence on the importance of gold, the gold standard represented a relatively recent innovation for America. Prior to the Civil War, American existed on a gold standard in name only. In the 1880s and 1890s the hardening of the gold standard, along with inexperience in its implementation, led to widespread economic distress. Failures of the gold standard included recurrent currency shortages in rural America. These failures would

110 Velma Newton, *The Silver Men : West Indian Labour Migration to Panama, 1850-1914* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2004), 122–123. Matthew Parker, *Panama Fever: The Epic Story of the Building of the Panama Canal* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2009), 381–90.

eventually lead farmers in Texas – a state with deep experience with international trade – to insist on massive economic reforms.

Prior to the Civil War, the United States dollar represented a fixed weight in gold. No single national currency existed. Most Americans never saw the gold upon which the financial system revolved. Banks issued private currencies backed by some commodity with a value translated into dollars. In the North, the system of private currencies collapsed with the outbreak of the American Civil War. Without cotton exports, a negative balance of trade quickly depleted the gold stocks of northern banks. In response, the nation abandoned gold, moving to a system of Greenbacks – federally issued notes that held a value only because the law compelled Americans to accept them as money.[111]

The years after the war left the country with a spastic currency supply. Gold could, officially, still be exchanged for currency with the treasury. This established a floor under which gold prices could not fall. Congress augmented the money supply by authorizing the minting of silver dollars and the issue of silver certificates. The Resumption Act of 1875 required the government to buy and sell gold at a fixed price starting in 1879. Under the Act, the Treasury would redeem all forms of U.S. currency in gold. With resumption, a sufficient amount of Greenbacks could be exchanged for a fixed value in gold, if anyone cared enough to do so. Despite the Resumption Act Greenbacks continued to circulate. The Bland-Allison Act and its later replacement, Sherman Silver Purchase Act required the government buy a fixed amount of silver each year and issue money based upon it. The fact that Greenbacks and silver dollars were

---

111 Bray Hammond, *Banks and Politics in America from the Revolution to the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 8–20, 40–50. Bray Hammond, *Sovereignty and the Empty Purse: Banks and Politics in the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 150–58. Benjamin Klebaner, *American Commercial Banking: A History* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990), 61.

not immediately swapped for gold indicates that value of the United States dollar exceeded the value of the gold found in its coins. A more modern example would be small change. While the metal in a modern quarter has some value if melted down, it is less than the value of the quarter itself.[112]

Unlike later versions of the gold standard, no special fund existed to support the currency. Only after the Gold Standard Act of 1900 did the Treasury gain a gold reserve. Prior to this reform, the Treasury redeemed notes in gold from the government's general fund. A negative balance of trade, gold exiting the country, could cause a fiscal crisis as the government's money left the country. Further, over a long enough period, the Treasury might redeem all the outstanding currency for gold, a poor idea as even an ounce of gold represented a denomination too large for daily use. To ward against this possibility, Congress required a minimum amount of paper bills, roughly three hundred forty-seven million dollars, be kept in circulation.[113]

The possibility that money in any form other than gold could become a drain on the treasury caused Congress to hesitate in authorizing more bills. This created practical imbalances. Gold entered the country as high denomination coins. Banks then needed to change it for a part of an almost fixed supply of small denomination notes. As an officer of a major New York bank put it "in normal times it [selling gold to the government] was a common way the banks had of getting rid of useless [high denomination] gold and getting useful [low denomination] notes." Only the requirement that the government purchase silver and issue money, normally in small denomination, based on it kept the supply of small bills from complete stagnation.[114]

---

112 Davis Rich Dewey, *Financial History of the United States* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1918), 377.
113 Craig K. Elwell, "Brief History of the Gold Standard (GS) in the United States" (Congressional Research Service, October 1, 2011), 8.
114 J.S. Case, "'Greenbacks' and an Elastic Currency," *Bradstreet's*, February 15, 1896.

The resulting pseudo-gold standard created an inelastic currency that could neither provide enough money for the country's economic needs nor produce physical bills in the appropriate denominations for everyday use. The currency shortage quickly became a pressing agricultural problem. Temporary field hands, employed for the harvest, needed to be paid in cash. Buyers ofter paid for crops in cash. This created a problem. The harvest arrived just prior to the holiday shopping season. Large amounts of physical bills and coins needed to move from the country's urban centers to remote rural areas and then quickly make its way back to the cities for use during the holidays. To avoid risking a run if useful notes ran short, urban banks often refused to forward adequate supplies of currency to rural correspondent banks[115]

Spot shortages of currency became normal occurrences during harvest. With most agricultural loans becoming due at harvest time, farmers found themselves forced to sell their crops at whatever the local market offered. C.W. Macune, a major leader and economic thinker in the Farmers' Alliance, blasted a system that produced "a scarcity of money which depresses local price perhaps 25 or 50 percent below [the international market price]." The inability of the financial system to provide adequate currency to account for seasonal fluctuations would help fuel the agrarian revolt.[116]

Currency shortages could drive small farmers into a rage. Prices declined by over forty-five percent from 1870 to 1900. Between 1865 and 1880, the amount of currency available per person dropped by a third, from $30.35 to $19.36.[117] The currency shortages that accompanied

115 Milton Friedman and Anna Jacobson Schwartz, *A Monetary History of the United States, 1867-1960* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1963), 292–95.
116 C. W. Macune, Speech, Fall 1891. Macune Papers.
117 Deflation during the currency famine of the 1890s is dealt with later in this chapter.

deflation proved particularly acute in rural America. One farmer writing to *Bradstreet's*, a leading financial publication of the day, summed up the situation:

> "The agony of it is that we have no money, and get none, and you will kill the goose that lays the golden egg if you do not try to get in touch with those who have to pay their bills in either cash or repudiation.
> . . .
> We have been led a long way but are about to call halt. If you will only get in touch with the farmer you will know much more about what is necessary for the good of this great republic."

Deflation decreased commodity prices and increased the real amount of debt owed by farmers. The physical effects of deflation, a shortage of currency, fell particularly hard on farmers who needed to make payments in cash. Debts could either be settled in cash, a logistically hard to acquire medium, or allowed to go into default. The inability of the nation's banking system to supply an adequate supply of currency to the countryside proved a continuing aggravation for many small farmers.[118]

A Borderlands Solution

Texans, living in a state bordering Mexico, understood money in a different way than many of their fellow Americans. Prior to the effective date of the Resumption Act, the law allowed dollars to be purchased for a set weight of gold. The dollar could not rise above a set value against currencies backed in gold. The inability of the dollar to trade at parity with gold convinced many in the nation's financial centers that fiat currencies carried inherent defects. The currency floated freely against silver. From the end of the Civil War to the resumption of the gold standard, Texans saw the Greenback – a currency backed by nothing but the full faith

---

118 Elizabeth Sanders, Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State, 1877-1917 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 106. M.C., "One of Our Farmer Friends of Silver," *Bradstreet's*, August 8, 1896. Morgan Friedman, "Inflation Calculator," accessed April 2, 2015, http://www.westegg.com/inflation/. (Implementing CPI dataset from Historical Statistics of the United States).

and credit of the United States Government – undergo a seemingly inexorable rise against a Mexican currency consisting of actual silver coins. The experience with Mexico helped shape Alliance and Populists economic policies.

Close economic ties with Mexico caused Texans to develop a view of money distinctly at odds with the mainstream. Mexico used coins made of silver as its circulating currency. Many first time travelers across the border were amazed to, often accidentally, pay for goods with U.S. silver dollars and receive change in Mexican coins with greater weight and purity of silver than the American coin. In response, many Texans viewed the value of money as tied to the national economy. The editor of the *Southern Mercury*, a leading populist newspaper, sought to explain the forces driving changes in the exchange rate with Mexico. "In the first place Mexico is a weak republic, and especially so financially, and its government is not backed by the wealth that Uncle Sam has behind his signature. In the second place, Mexico is a debtor country, that is she buys very much more than she sells each year." These circumstances caused the Mexican currency to fall in value.[119]

Others Texans saw the advantages that could be reaped by a fluctuating currency. As one businessman noted in the Brownsville *Daily Herald*:

> "The fall in the price of silver [dictating the exchange rate with Mexico] has been a godsend for Mexico, not the curse that the gold campaign orators try to make out. . . The upshot of all of this has been to practically put a big a big bonus on exports. . .Everybody made it a point to rake and scrape together everything

---

119 Anonymous, "The Mexican Dollar: Why It Is Worth Less in Mexico than the American Dollar," *The Southern Mercury*, October 4, 1884, http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth185581/m1/1/zoom/?q=Mexican%20dollar. Illegible, "[Illegible on Microfilm]: President of National Railroad Talks Strongly for the While Metal," *Brownsville Daily Herald*, September 24, 1896, http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth61992/m1/6/zoom/?q=Mexican%20dollar&zoom=4&lat=5224&lon=2172&layers=BT.

> exportable. . . Business has been stimulated right along, and every line of commerce has shown great improvement ever since.

These experiences with international trade caused many Texas farmers to conclude that an increase in the supply of money would not destroy the economy. The value of the dollar might fall on the international market. As a result, it would take more dollars to buy a certain amount of crops. For farmers, a weak dollar is rarely a bad thing.[120]

Texans and other borderland states experienced an almost unheard of process. Absent the price ceiling placed on gold, the Greenback floated freely against Mexican silver. Constantly fluctuating exchange rates primed borderland agrarians for the idea that the value of money could change slowly over time. When faced with deflation in the 1880s and 1890s, Texas agrarians initially turned to a scheme that would regulate the value of money slowly over time.[121]

The subtreasury plan put forth by Charles Macune offered a long-term solution. The plan attempted to solve several problems at once. Unregulated commodities warehouses often returned goods of worse quality than those originally deposited. Warehouse difficulties caused farmers to suffer losses if they attempted to store crops until the harvest time glut cleared the market. Farmers found it difficult to secure loans against harvested crops. Loans formed a key component in allowing farmers to pay immediate debts without dumping crops onto the market as soon as they were harvested. Shortages of physical currency plagued the annual harvest. Beside these short-term issues, deflation presented a constant threat to many farmers – especially those struggling to pay off mortgages on their land.[122]

---

120 Illegible, "[Illegible on Microfilm]: President of National Railroad Talks Strongly for the While Metal."
121 For an example of fluctuating exchange rate see currency quotes found in "Financial and Commercial," *Houston Evening Telegraph*, May 3, 1870.
122 Elizabeth Sanders, *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State, 1877-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 26–28.

The new scheme offered a solution to all problems. Under the plan, farmers would gain the ability to store crops in government-run warehouses. The government would then provide loans up to a percentage of the value of the crop, allowing the crops to be held off the market during the initial harvest rush. Newly created fiat money, money issued by the government without any metallic backing would directly inject physical currency into the rural economy at the time it was most needed. Repayment of government loans formed a way to take money out of the economy, limiting the inflationary impact of the system. Though not explicitly stated, the failure of some of these loans to be repaid would allow for a slow increase in the currency supply accelerating in times of economic distress.[123]

Macune's plan called for, essentially, the creation of a modern central banking system without a central bank.[124] Before the creation of the Federal Reserve in 1913, the United States possessed no analog to the Bank of England and other European central banks. The seasonal fluctuations identified by Macune proved one of the chief concerns of the early Fed. Even into the twenty-first century, the central bank routinely increases the size of the money supply in the fall before contracting it against after the holidays. Despite the gold standard's popularity with members of the political fringe, mainstream economics has come to view it as a horrible mistake for many of the reasons agrarians railed against it. Almost all major modern economies use a system of fiat currency controlled by a central authority. Instead of directly funding loans, as the subtreasury plan envisioned, modern central banks use a system of buying and selling bonds to regulate the money supply. Likewise, modern central banks have adopted more advanced

123 Sanders, 26–28. Macune Papers, St. Louis Convention speech, Fall 1889.
124 Macune believed that any institution run by bankers would, eventually, become so afraid of inflation that it would send the economy into a deflationary spiral. As a result, Macune favored a mechanical system to control the currency. *See,* Macune Papers, St. Louis Convention speech, Fall 1889.

systems for transporting currency than envisioned by Macune. Despite its rough edges, what agrarians sought constituted the nucleus of a central banking system.[125]

Macune's plan proved too radical for the times. In 1896, William Jennings Bryan led the Democratic Party in adopting a free silver platform. The Democratic plan called for the mint to produce coins for anyone presenting a set weight of silver. The ratio between silver and gold, 16:1 rendered the metal in existing United States gold coins worth more than its face value. Bryan's plan proposed effectively placing the country on a silver standard. With the country possessing more silver than gold, inflation would soon follow. In response to the Democratic silver plank, the National Populist Party agreed to a deal nominating Bryan as its chosen candidate. Running on the Populist ticket provided Bryan hope of carrying Northern and Western areas hostile to Democrats. Fusion of Populists and Democrats would set the stage for one of the greatest tragedies in American political history.

Backlash

Financial leaders reacted to attempts to change the monetary system with panic.At the apex of the financial system stood a group of bankers and brokers who earned an income primarily by investing the money of others. Despite claims to special skill, these individuals acted essentially as salesmen of financial products. If financial workers lacked skill, they often possessed insider connections that offered their clients windfall profits. Marketing this required constant assertions of privilege and elite status.

Advances in technology lay at the center of status panic among the financial elite. Traditionally, the American financial markets represented a – if not sedate – then at least

125 Jeffrey A. Miron, *The Economics of Seasonal Cycles* (Boston: MIT Press, 1996), 166–67.

moderately paced, local, affair. Stock trading on the New York Stock and Exchange Board did not surpass a thousand shares a day until the 1830s. Introduced in 1866, the stock ticker offered real-time information about financial markets to communities across the country. The communications revolution continued when telephones appeared on the stock exchange floor in 1877. With these inventions came a surge in investment. Volume on the country's financial markets rose from approximately 40 million shares traded in 1877 to a quarter of a billion in 1901. These changes had drastic consequences for those working in the financial industry.[126]

Real-time financial markets act in fundamentally different ways from their slower counterparts. Large, interconnected, markets are unpredictable. Twentieth-century researchers labeled this unpredictability the efficient market hypothesis. Under the most popular version of the hypothesis, consistent, useful predictions from publicly available information become impossible. The market moves with such speed and contains so many participants, that no one can consistently see opportunities and act on them before they vanish. Over a long enough period, an investor's return will – on a risk-adjusted basis – work out to the average return on the market.[127]

If changing markets no longer turned on skill, they richly rewarded insider information. The efficient market hypothesis applies only to publicly available data. In the nineteenth century, few legal restrictions existed on insider trading. After the Civil War, pools became

---

126 Charles R. Geisst, *Wall Street: A History : From Its Beginnings to the Fall of Enron* (Oxford University Press, 2004), 41. Walter Werner and Steven T. Smith, *Wall Street* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 146. Julia C. Ott, When Wall Street Met Main Street: The Quest for an Investors Democracy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 20.

127 Burton Gordon Malkiel, *A Random Walk Down Wall Street: Including a Life-Cycle Guide to Personal Investing* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999), 190–93. Eugene F. Fama, "Efficient Capital Markets: A Review of Theory and Empirical Work," *The Journal of Finance* 25, no. 2 (1970): 383–417.

increasingly prevalent. The concept of a pool originated in the antebellum market. Traders pooled together resources to drive the price of a stock up or down, profiting from the result. In the post-war period, the most successful pools revolved around information. Company insiders, along with groups of others, joined to borrow money and either buy or short sell their company's stock. When insider information became public, the stock would rise or fall resulting in a large profit for the pool. Being invited to participate in pools or syndicates turned on social connections.[128]

Andrew Carnegie, later one of the richest men in the world, provides a good example of nineteenth-century insider trading. Carnegie worked as the personal telegraph operation for Thomas Scott, a superintendent at the Pennsylvania Railroad. Scott and J. Edgar Thompson, the railroad's president, wanted to purchase stock in a sleeping car company about to receive a major contract from the railroad. To avoid the appearance of self-dealing, which might cause difficulty with the railroad's shareholders, Scott and Thompson registered their shares in Carnegie's name.[129]

For his troubles, Carnegie – the immigrant telegraph operator – was allowed to buy into the scheme, purchasing stock on subscription. Under the plan, investors would buy an initial batch of shares. They would also become obligated to buy further shares at a set price at set times. To accomplish this, dividends would be rigged so that cost of future purchases would come out of dividends owed the subscribing investors. In essence, the plan operated as a way to funnel shares to insiders. Using modern parlance, Scott and Thompson engaged in insider

---

128 Geisst, *Wall Street*, 116–17, 177.
129 Harold C. Livesay, *Andrew Carnegie and the Rise of Big Business*, Third Edition (New York: Pearson, 2007), 55–57.

trading and laundered the money through Carnegie who received corporate stock options in payment for his involvement.[130]

Pools and other insider schemes required a group of well-heeled individuals to work together. Gaining access to these groups turned on social connections. Once on the inside, doors opened quickly. To buy into his superiors' scheme, Carnegie found he needed to secure a loan from a local bank for the first purchase of stock. After explaining the situation to a banker, "he put his great arm around me saying, 'Why of course I will lend it. You are all right Andy.' And here I made my first note and actually got a banker to take it." Poor immigrant telegraph operators without a prior credit history did not receive bank loans to speculate in the stock market. Poor telegraph operator with connections and insider information were a different matter entirely.[131]

Gold provided one element of the elite insider culture surrounding money. Before 1900, most Americans rarely, if ever, handled gold or explicitly backed gold bills. Gold certificates started in denominations of twenty dollars and ran up to ten thousand dollars. Gold coins, likewise, tended to appear only in larger denominations. Most Americans used some form of small change, Greenbacks, silver dollars or silver certificates in their daily lives. While the law required the Treasury to redeem all of these forms of currency for gold, they held a precarious place in the financial system.

Clearinghouses, institutions set up to facilitate moving money and settling accounts between banks, discouraged use of silver dollars and low denomination greenbacks. The

130 Livesay, 55–57.
131 Livesay, 55–57.

physical weight and volume of these forms of currency – and amount of individual things requiring careful counting – became unwieldy. Before 1890, when they became legally required to accept them – clearinghouses also banned silver certificates. Handling gold on a regular basis set the elite, those deserving special privileges and opportunities, apart from others.[132]

Economic misunderstanding compounded the status implications of moving away from gold. Normal inflation represents small changes that, over time, can cause noticeable changes in price. Nineteenth-century American economist failed to understand that inflation and deflation could occur in small amounts. Economists were aware that prices changed drastically, normally upwards, over decades but found themselves at a loss to explain why. Absent data showing annual fluctuations, economists saw large changes occurring with major events such as invasions and gold strikes. Francis Amasa Walker, the writer of one of the leading economics textbooks of the day, described the phenomena. "[W]hile the precious metals are thus almost a perfect standard of deferred payments from one year to another they are yet subject to great periodic variations from generation to generation and from century to century." Walker then went on to explain generational changes as a result of major discoveries of gold. [133]

Many financial leaders in the United States viewed inflation as a form of theft. Inflation decreased the amount, in real terms, that borrowers owed lenders. During normal times, inflation took place at a level not easily detected. Prices, especially commodities prices, fluctuated from year to year. Without official statistics, it remained almost impossible to tell if aggregated prices

---

132 James Graham Cannon, *Clearing-Houses: Their History, Methods and Administration* (Neew York: D. Appleton, 1900), 37–40, 127–31.California Board of Bank Commissioners, "Report of the Board of Bank Commissioners of the State of California" (Sacramento: Office of the Board of Bank Commissioners, 1886), 15–16.
133 Thomas A. Stapleford, *The Cost of Living in America: A Political History of Economic Statistics, 1880-2000* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 22–58. Francis Amasa Walker, *Political Economy* (New York: Henry Holt, 1888), 141.

rose or fell. Many simply assumed that inflation could not exist so long as gold backed the currency.[134] As one lawyer wrote in support of the gold standard, the metal formed "a fixed definite and certain standard by which the value of all commodities and the obligations of contracts can be measured. . . Every nation will have that portion of the stock of the gold in the world which is proportioned to its trade. Each nation will have just as much as it needs." Such views transformed proposals to expand the currency supply into attempts to bail out debtors by forcing creditors to accepted depreciated money. Many in the financial elite failed to realize that, in normal times, the gold used to repay a loan might be worth less than the gold used to make it.[135]

Failure to understand basic concepts of modern economics, such as inflation and fluctuating exchange rates caused financial leaders to view currency reform with horror. Agrarian demands represented, in essence, a call to strip financial leaders of their whiteness while publically robbing them in the marketplace through inflation. When pushed, financial elites would respond explosively.

Crisis

In 1893, the defects in the banking system blew the American economy apart. The failure of several large companies forced major losses on the nation's banks, setting off a run. New York banks, those holding the majority of the nation's currency, responded by suspending transfers of cash to the interior. Suspension touched off what some economic historians have dubbed a "currency famine." Rural banks found their urban correspondents unwilling to ship

134 While late nineteenth century economists did not possess evidence for annual changes of price, they did believe in concepts of inflation and deflation.

135 George H. Benton, *The Evolution of the Gold Standard.* (Philadelphia: G. H. Benton, 1896), 12,19.

currency. Short on cash in the best of times, rural banks failed in large numbers. The resulting four-year downturn earned the moniker "the Great Depression" until the collapse beginning in 1929 claimed the title.[136]

By some estimates, the unemployment rate reached as high as twenty percent during the Panic of 1893 and the following downturn. In the early months of the depression, cotton sales in some areas of the South came to a virtual halt due to lack of currency. Flour mills in the West paid for raw materials in script redeemable for milled flour. Banks instituted a sixty-day waiting period on cash withdrawals. Many New York banks simply refused to cash any checks. The economy quickly became the most pressing political issue of the day.[137]

The Cleveland administration responded to the crisis by attempting to force currency not expressly backed by gold out of circulation. Grover Cleveland – a Democrat and the only President ever to serve a split term, winning office in both 1884 and 1892 – proved a zealous supporter of gold. The President believed that only solution to the downturn lay in abolishing the United States dollar as a national currency. America would return to the antebellum system where dollars represented only a fixed weight in gold. Anything other than gold would come from banks issuing private currencies backed by gold. Unable to fully secure the end of the dollar, Cleveland presided over the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. The act provided one of the few ways for additional money to enter the economy during the currency famine.138

---

136 Jerry W. Markham, *A Financial History of the United States: From Christopher Columbus to the Robber Barons (1492-1900)* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 331–33.
137 Alyn Brodsky, *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Character* (New York: Macmillan, 2000), 308.
138 Fred L. Israel and Jim F. Watts, eds., "President Grover Cleveland's Defense of the Gold Standard: 28 Janury 1885," in *Presidential Documents: The Speeches, Proclamations, and Policies That Have Shaped the Nation from Washington to Clinton* (New York: Psychology Press, 2000), 176–81. Brodsky, *Grover Cleveland*, 350–51.

Attempts to reduce further the amount of currency in circulation further exacerbated the currency famine. Members of the President's party – silver Democrats – supported expanding the currency supply, by issuing additional money backed by silver. Faced with economic failure, the administration and its gold Democrat supporters, settled on a response that put democracy itself in danger. Officials blamed the poor economy on a years-long run on the Treasury sparked by the discussion of currency reform. (See, Table 6).

It fell on James H. Eckles, the Comptroller of the Currency, to spread the administration's message. Under the National Banking System, the Comptroller of the Currency held a position of pivotal importance. The Comptroller's office issued federal bank charters. The Comptroller also stood as the nation's leading financial examiner. During bank runs, after banks began to shut down, the Comptroller certified which banks were sound and could reopen. The vote of confidence by the Comptroller could mean the difference between a bank's survival and failure. When the Comptroller spoke, bankers listened.[139]

139 Rik W. Hafer, *The Federal Reserve System: An Encyclopedia* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2005), 64.

	Inflation / Deflation 1879=100	Real Per Capita GDP Growth
1891	96.47	2.21%
1892	96.47	7.52%
1893	96.46	-6.70%
1894	92.91	-4.71%
1895	89.37	9.95%
1896	89.37	-3.84%

Table 6: Deflation And GDP In The 1890s.
Note this table is formulated from modern estimates and reflects information that would not have been available to decision-makers at the time.
Source: Minneapolis Federal Reserve, "Consumer Price Index (Estimate) 1800-," https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/teaching-aids/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800. Morgan Friedman, "Inflation Calculator," http://www.westegg.com/inflation/. Angus Maddison, *The World Economy: Historical Statistics* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2003), 81.

In the spring of 1896, Eckles went on a tour of state and city bankers' associations in support of gold. To the comptroller, the Sherman Silver Purchase Act "accomplished what all the other currency heresies and follies of three decades could not do, and succeeded in creating for the first time a suspicion that the fiatists might yet control the financial operations of our people." Eckles reiterated the view that the gold standard must be beyond discussion while testifying before Congress:

> The first essential to placing the people of this country upon a safe business basis is to so establish the national credit that it will cease to be a matter of discussion either here or elsewhere. . . The simple fact that there has been a continual discussion for the past four years of the ability of the United States to maintain the credit of the country and redeem its demand obligations in gold [i.e. maintain the gold standard] has alone been a great source of financial embarrassment to the people.

Congressional discussion of currency reform endangered the economy. Economic catastrophe threatened from any attempt to question gold orthodoxy. [140]

The nomination of William Jennings Bryan made currency reform an imminent possibility. Financial markets sent mixed signals about the nomination of Bryan. Inheriting the Populist coalition, Bryan came to represent a multi-racial, multi-ethnic group of Americans who called for moving past the sectional animosities of the Civil War and focusing on a program designed to boost the nation's economy. If elected, Bryan promised to bring an end to deflation. Should the most radical of Bryan's coalition prove ascendant, the nation stood to implement a

---

140 "Untitled Article, Page 1," *Bradstreet's*, January 18, 1886. "Untitled Article, Page 1," *Bradstreet's*, April 11, 1886. Anonymous, "Comptroller Eckles on Sound Money," *Bradstreet's*, April 25, 1896. James Herron Eckels, *Statement of Hon. James H. Eckels, Comptroller of the Currency, Made Before the Committee on Banking and Currency, House of Representatives, (at the Request of the Committee) on the Existing Financial and Banking Situation and the Proposed Remedies, January 28, February 1, 2, 8, and 18, 1897* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1897), 233.

modern fiat currency and take the first steps towards establishing a central bank. Soon after Bryan's nomination, the stock market, in a downward spiral throughout early 1896, rallied.[141]

The gold market panicked. Gold outflows – ongoing since early in the year – intensified. The added pressure to the gold supply proved too much for many of the country's nationally chartered banks. Slightly less than one percent of all federally chartered banks failed – a high rate of failure for large banks. To many of the nation's financial elite, this confirmed Eckles' predictions. The rising stock market, if it indicated anything, showed faith in the ultimate defeat of Bryan's threat to the gold standard. Opponents of Bryan found themselves baffled when forty-eight hours after Bryan lost the presidency the stock market suddenly crashed.[142]

The Panic of 1896, as the mild downturn came to be known, represents a turning point. Bryan, and his coalition of Democrats and Populists questioned gold in the most public way possible. Eckles and other supporters of the metal believed serious discussion of change risked creating financial panic. The Panic of 1896 provided apparent empirical evidence supporting Eckles position.

Looming financial apocalypse had brought unheard of sums of money into the Presidential race. McKinley's campaign manager, Mark Hanna, sought to convince the nations' banks to donate 0.25% of assets to defeating Bryan. A portion of the saved income of a significant portion of America went to defeating Bryan. By some estimates, as a percentage of GDP, more money was spent on the election of 1896 than any other contest before or since. Bryan lost the election of 1896 but made political inroads in many traditionally Republican

---

141 Richard T. McCulley, Banks and Politics During the Progressive Era: The Origins of the Federal Reserve System, 1897-1913 (New York: Routledge, 2012), 40.
142 Charles W. Calomiris, *U.S. Bank Deregulation in Historical Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 147.

states. Only by stopping opponents of gold from voting could the metal's supporters guarantee an end to the political debate.[143]

Williams v. Mississippi

It fell to the Supreme Court to defuse the threat to the nation. In *Williams v. Mississippi,* the United States Supreme Court legalized a system of poll taxes and literacy tests that disfranchised both African-Americans and the poor white farmers, the bedrock groups of the Populist coalition. *Williams* grew from national politics. Currency reform constituted the hottest political issue of the day. Justices sitting on the case could hardly have been unaware of its implications for the national electorate. Financial leaders believed that only by silencing currency dissenters could the country fully recover from one of the worst economic downturns in the nation's history. In this climate of fear, the once unthinkable became possible.

The currency crisis kicked off an era of intense legal interest in economics. Speaking in 1897, future Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes observed that in law "the man of the future is the man of statistics and the master of economics." Justices could not have missed the widely held elite sentiment, expressed during Eckles congressional testimony, that the economy recovered from the Panic of 1896 when "the public because of the result of the Presidential election came to the conclusion that we were not going to be brought to a silver basis." [144]

Historians and lawyers often see this era of Supreme Court jurisprudence differently. *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the 1896 case upholding Louisiana's segregated rail car requirement, defines

---

143 Matthew O'Brien, "The Most Expensive Election Ever: ... 1896?," The Atlantic, November 6, 2012, http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/11/the-most-expensive-election-ever-1896/264649/.
144 Eckels, *Statement of Hon. James H. Eckels*, 423. Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Path of the Law," in *The Mind and Faith of Justice Holmes: His Speeches, Essays, Letters, and Judicial Opinions*, ed. Max Lerner (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2010), 83.

the era in much of the historical literature. Lawyers tend to focus on the court's economic rulings. Starting in 1897 the justices handed down a series of highly politicized rulings aimed at protecting corporate interests. *Lochner v. New York,* a 1905 case in which the court held that freedom of contract prohibited a state from capping working hours, came to define the period. The *Lochner* era remains infamous in legal circles for both the politicization of its decisions as well as their almost unerringly pro-business slant. For the *Lochner* court, the justices' political prejudices trumped the Constitution, and at times even common sense.[145]

Williams arose out of Mississippi's attempts to enact suffrage restrictions. In 1890, the state enacted a new constitution with the intent of forcing African-Americans from the voting rolls. Proponents of the changes argued that disfranchisement would help lessen electoral fraud. Debate quickly turned on the requirement of a literacy test to vote. Only citizens successfully able to read a passage of the state constitution, to the satisfaction of the official administering the test, received the right to vote. Other provisions gave local officials the ability to restore voting rights to those they deemed fit. One of the state's leading newspapers opined of disfranchisement that "we don't see where this would be any improvement on ballot-box stuffing." By 1898 the Mississippi plan held two benefits over simple ballot stuffing. It offered a way to disfranchise the Populist coalition and it could do so with a patina of legality.[146]

Eight years after the State of Mississippi began its path to disfranchisement, the United States Supreme Court upheld the state's restrictions. On its surface, the Mississippi plan

---

145 Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896). For more on the court a Populism see Gerard N. Magliocca, *The Tragedy of William Jennings Bryan: Constitutional Law and the Politics of Backlash* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). Magliocca, identifies much of the early Lochner era jurisprudence, include that on civil and voting rights, as a reaction against Populism.

146 Michael Perman, *Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1908* (Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 2001), 72–87.

appeared blatantly unconstitutional. The Mississippi Supreme Court, in a different case, noted that "within the field of permissible action under the limitations imposed by the Federal Constitution, the [state constitutional] convention swept the field of expedients, to obstruct the exercise of suffrage by the negro race." Contrary to any reasonable interpretation of the situation and after directly citing the above-quoted text from the Mississippi Supreme Court, the United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of Mississippi. For the nation's highest court Mississippi's voting laws "do not on their face discriminate between the races, and it has not been shown that their actual administration was evil, only that evil was possible under them." The State of Mississippi could prevent its citizens from voting, especially if it also kept poor white farmers – often viewed as illiterate in light of their support for Populism – away from the polls.[147]

Within two years of *Williams,* the United States would fully adopt gold. The Gold Standard Act of 1900 removed many of the last vestiges of a mixed currency system. In *Williams,* the Court allowed the Southern states to purge the electorate of non-white people. The Gold Standard Act then purged the economy of the money of the world's non-white population. American politics became, at least on paper, the domain of white men with the yellow money. The tragedy of disfranchisement would only be compounded by the failure of the gold standard. In 1933, faced with widespread deflation caused by the Great Depression, the Roosevelt administration took the country off gold. The price of gold fell. To mitigate further deflation, the United States government found it necessary to subsidize the price of gold. It quickly

147 Williams v. Mississippi, 170 U.S. 213 (1898).

became apparent that, instead of gold defining the value of the dollar, its use as money by the United States had held up the price of gold for years if not decades.[148]

How Democracy Dies

Williams represents the American political system *in extremis*. American financial and political leaders of the time believed that the money question risked unleashing a financial apocalypse. Leaders faced a double quandary. A majority of the nation's voters might rally behind currency reform. Even if it did not, a substantial enough minority favored the issue to keep it in the headlines. Even speaking about the issue risked a financial meltdown. Support for disenfranchisement grew from a desperate need for silence.

Disenfranchisement showed the hubris of the elite at its worst. No one stopped to consider if the Populists might be correct. The threat of assault on the gold standard became a spectre haunting American politics. No matter the disintegration of the Populist Party, or the extent of disfranchisement, the currency remained in danger. It remained so because the Populists' critique was basically correct. The gold standard represented a poor way of running an emerging modern economy. In forming an axis between the Eastern elite and rising segregationism in the South, political leaders provided a durable bulwark against change – one reinforced by every imagined threat to gold. The price of this stability would be a half-century of disfranchisement and segregation.

148 Friedman and Schwartz, *A Monetary History of the United States, 1867-1960*, 463–73.

CHAPTER V

WHO SHALL SAY NO?

Opponents of Texas Populism orchestrated a campaign of violence against the party. Chillingly, the downfall of Populism showed the hallmarks of being orchestrated by political professionals. Many elections see some level of problematic third-party involvement. Individuals outside the campaign, motivated by belief in the cause, do things that those on the inside would prefer that they had not. Violence against Populists differs in that it proceeded not in the random way a political outsider might apply it but in a calculated manner as if a strategist or campaign manager had decided to dismantle the other party by any means necessary.

Populism's Discontents

Political professionals are among those least likely to support violence or extracurricular pressure against the other side. Partially this comes out of shared experience and shared suffering. The highs stress of a political campaign brings about a bonding process that, at times, can transcend party. More pragmatically, anything done to campaign staff on the other side opens the door for retaliation in kind. In the late nineteenth century, economics caused this tacit understanding to break down.[149]

Candidates are only the most visible part of a political campaign. The bulk of a candidate's time is spent either meeting with voters or raising money. This leaves little opportunity for the organization, planning, and logistics that go into making a campaign

149 For a modern example of the reaction among some in the consulting community to allegations that Paul Manafort masterminded electoral violence in the Ukraine Sean J. Miller, "Manafort's Resignation Highlights Risks Of International Work," Campaigns and Elections, accessed June 28, 2017, https://www.campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/manafort-s-resignation-highlights-risks-of-international-work.

successful. Moreover, the number of individuals with both the capability and inclination to manage a campaign is extremely limited. Modern candidates often deal with this shortage by hiring general consultants who work with multiple campaigns simultaneously. Outside of management, campaigns require a host of specialized and technical skills. Often, these special skills could be no more than the ability to compile and copy lists.

Nineteenth-century campaigns solved their personal issues through a machine system. Party committees ran campaigns. With different state, congressional, district, city town and ward committees, most races could have their own committee. Individual candidate committees could also exist, or one county committee might handle multiple candidates. Depending on the formality of the machine system, one committee might supply the campaign personnel for a candidate at the top of the areas ballot and for all inferior positions. The lower level political position served as a means to reward those supporting the top of the ticket. In practice, the number and organization of committees likely mirrored the number of individuals present with the skills to organize a campaign.[150]

Experienced campaign personal made up the heart of the party machine. Campaign managers used their entrenched position and the convention system to pick the candidates, instead of the candidate picking their manager. As one late nineteenth-century political writer put it:

> The men who make up party ministry, entrusted with its direction, are not speakers, for speaking would be wasted on their work; nor political thinkers, for their object is not to carry out a policy, but to win an election. They are generally almost unknown to the public, and they have all the contempt of the professional expert for amateurs in their chosen field. Beginning with the careful management

150 WILLIAM M. IVINS, MACHINE POLITICS AND MONEY IN ELECTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishing, 1887), 16–17.

> of a ward, they have risen by the rude natural selection of political strife. Conventions, while they often make mistakes in candidates, rarely blunder in their selection of managers. Inevitably, by the time the member of an executive committee, and still more the chairman and secretary, have "run" a campaign, particularly a successful campaign, their influence is felt and their personality is well known throughout the party organization. . . The wonder is not that the machine wins but that is ever beaten.

Any beating the machine took was likely to be temporary. By defeating the machine, and then winning a general election, an amateur manager proved they possessed the skills needed to accomplish both tasks. In doing so upstarts accumulated the contacts needed to become a party insider. The machine stood more likely to gain an additional party boss than find itself broken up at the hands of reformers.[151]

Compensating campaign staff forms a perineal political problem. The inner workings of a campaign require long hours from highly skilled individuals. While ideology provides a motivation expending a large amount of time or complicated tasks require some form of compensation. Political patronage offered nineteenth-century politicians a way to reward supporters. At its most simple, key supporters received government jobs from victorious candidates. Patronage though could extend well beyond a simple transaction of service or support for employment.

Access to a party's patronage network provided influential supporters with a safety net in times of economic distress. At a local level, the possibility of patronage could prove more valuable than actual government employment. Lenders knew that well-connected borrowers could obtain waged positions to pay off small debts, and political assistance with large ones.

---

151 Talcott Williams, "Party Government in the United States," in Cyclopaedia of Political Science, Political Economy, and of the Political History of the United States, ed. John Joseph Lalor (Rand, McNally, 1884), 119–20.

This added security allowed lenders to make loans at lower interest rates. For riskier enterprises, political influence might serve as a prerequisite for credit. In an age of tight money, the implied safety net that came with political influence provided party supporters with an important advantage.[152]

Edward Rotan exemplifies the power of the patronage system. During the American Civil War, Rotan fought for the Confederacy as a lieutenant in the sixteenth Tennessee infantry. Afterward, Rotan migrated to Texas at the behest of his cousin, James Throckmorton, the governor of Texas. Arriving in Texas as the Throckmorton administration slumped toward eventual removal from office as an impediment to reconstruction, relatives prevailed on Rotan to remain in Waco. It proved a well thought out decision. The new arrival quickly secured a patronage position as a school teacher and later principal. Two years later, when reconstruction made Rotan's position untenable, W.R. Kellum, a local shop owner offered the former officer a job. The arrangement promised "a co-partnership with a salary for $100 in gold and a third of the profits."[153]

152 For a sermon criticizing the practice of giving public positions to connected Party members fallen on hard times see, George Louis Crocket, "Work!" 1907, Box 11, Folder 12, East Texas Research Center, Stephen F. Austin State University; Nacogdoches, Tx.

153Edward Rotan, "Autobiographical Essay" n.d., 45, Baylor University Archive.

	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D
Profits/Loss	10	10	-10	-10
Borrowed Money	10	90	10	90
Investor's Money	90	10	90	10
Percent Return	11.11%	100.00%	-11.11%	-100.00%

Table 7: An Example Of Leverage.
By borrowing money an investor can create large percentage return but risk large losses if things go bad.

Partnering with Kellum brought Rotan into a risky business. Leverage is the process where borrowed money is used to buy an investment. By using little of their own money, leverage allows investors turn very high percentage profits. Furnishing merchants such as Kellum operated highly leveraged businesses. Kellum purchased goods on credit, sold them to farmers – also on credit with the merchant receiving a lien on the farmers' crops – then hoped to be repaid at harvest time. A successful merchant could become wealthy. Failure led to bankruptcy as debts mounted. As described by Rotan, Kellum's business "was a small country store. We sold everything . . . We sold on credit. We sold about $100,000 a year." The large amount of debt involved in procuring and selling $100,000 of goods on credit helps explain why Kellum needed to take on a partner. (See, Table 7).[154]

Kellum rented Rotan's credit. In a partnership, every partner becomes liable for repaying the enterprise's debts. If the partnership lacks the assets to pay its debts, then they become the personal debts of the partners. Kellum's business regularly incurred large debts. Rotan's political connections assured investors of repayment. With Reconstruction coming to an end in Texas, the partnership moved into the highly lucrative and debt intensive wholesale market. Rotan traveled to Boston to line up suppliers. Meeting with a boot manufacturer, Rotan faced a demand to explain "where the hell is 'Wocco' and who the hell is 'Rottan' and Kellum." Summarily dismissed, Rotan received instructions to come back the next day. Returning "I went in at ten the next morning. . . I didn't wait on the bench. [The manufacturer] had kept the wires busy, had found out our business. . . I bought a huge bill." In doing so, a politically connected

154 Rotan Manuscript, 42.

young man with minimal business experience started what would become one of the larger wholesale houses in the South.[155]

Populism threatened the creditworthiness of local Democratic insiders. The years after the Civil War found the Democratic Party largely out of power on a national level. Lacking access to federal systems of patronage, Democrats monopolized most state and local offices in the South. In an example of the difference between the public perception of a party and how insiders experience it, Republicans – the era's party of patronage – expressed concern, occasionally boiling over into a minor campaign issue, at the Democratic Party's insistence on preserving the spoils system. For Democrats, patronage formed a valuable form of compensation. Even if the Democratic Party split into factions those on the outside today could easily be on the inside tomorrow, or able to claim favors from elsewhere in the party apparatus. Populism threatened to strip party leaders, and their most ardent supporters, of many of these benefits. Fewer offices held by Democrats equated to less ability to bail out party insiders when they encountered financial difficulty. Diminished party support, in turn, made local insiders worse credit risks.[156]

Politics and Death

Initial responses to Populism turned on brutal executions, later labeled spectacle lynching, as a way to target the Populists political coalition. The political use of spectacle

---

155 Rotan Manuscript, 47.

156 Republican National Committee, The Republican Campaign Text-Book for 1884 (New York: Republican National Committee, 1884), 100, 205. While campaign literature should be taken with a grain of salt, the RNC does insinuate that the Democratic Party appeared somewhat unreasonably attached to the spoils system. At the same time, discussion of spoils should be tempered with an acknowledgment that many in both parties benefitted from the system. Civil Service reform also served to protect Republican appointees during a period in which the party controlling the White House switched hands no less than four times in four presidential elections.

lynching came from an ad-hoc improvisation by Democrats to deal with a massive political mistake made by the mayor of Paris, Texas – and important swing area in the former conservative stronghold of East Texas. Once started, nobody possessed the ability to end the killings. Ironically, while an effective political tool for mobilizing white voters, lynching failed to break the Populists Party. The later years of the 1890s would instead see more unambiguous, and expertly targeted, attacks on Populists.

No commonly accepted definition of lynching exists. One of the most popular formulations, put forth by the NAACP in 1940, requires:

1. There must be evidence that a person was killed;
2. The person must have met his death illegally;
3. A group of three or more persons must have participated in the killing;
4. The group must have acted under pretext of service of justice or tradition.

This definition excludes several common forms of lynching. Legal lynching occurred when a mob gathered outside of a courthouse during a trial. All involved understood that if a conviction and execution failed to immediately follow, the accused would be dragged from custody and subject to some torturous form of death. In response, the accused accepted a rapid trial, failed to put on a defense and waived any appeals. This allowed execution, by less painful means than that offered by the mob, to take place immediately. The NAACP definition also fails to label labor disputes between African Americans and white employers or landlords that escalated into mob death under no pretext except simple greed as lynching. Newspapers and other media accounts often failed to list these more prosaic forms of racial killing. Lynching of Hispanics and other individuals not falling into the black/white binary of the South are particularly likely to be undercounted. As a result, multiple conflicting estimates exist as to the number and extent of

lynching in America. In almost all cases, the actual extent of violence – lynching and other racially motivated killings – is likely worse than indicated by formal statistics.[157]

Spectacle lynching represents a subset of NAACP defined lynching. Lynching pre-existed the Populist movement. The late nineteenth century saw two major changes to extra-judicial execution. Killings began to take on an increasingly racialized overtone. Spectacle lynching – appearing for the first time in the 1890s – brought with it a marked escalation in violence and brutality. Several features distinguished the new form of lynching. Victims were often executed in broad daylight in public places with political figures in attendance. Railroads provided word of mouth advertising for the event and ran excursion trains to ensure a large crowd. The tie between lynching and the railroads would leave one commentator to quip that the lynching formed "a neglected feature of railroading." With the involvement of the railroads also came an increase in the pain that lynching victims suffered prior to their deaths. Where earlier forms of lynching often executed victims by gunshot or hanging, spectacle lynching focused on methods of execution likely to produce a slow and painful demise. Burning alive and slow strangulation in a "botched" hanging saw widespread use in spectacle lynching. (See, Figure 14).[158]

157 C. Waldrep, The Many Faces of Judge Lynch: Extralegal Violence and Punishment in America (New York: Springer, 2002), 2. William D. Carrigan and Clive Webb, *Forgotten Dead: Mob Violence Against Mexicans in the United States, 1848-1928* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 6–14. Under Brundage's typology, spectacle lynching would qualify as a mass mob. *See*, William Fitzhugh Brundage, *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930* (University of Illinois Press, 1993), 36–38.

158 Grace Elizabeth Hale, Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940 (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2010), 206–8.

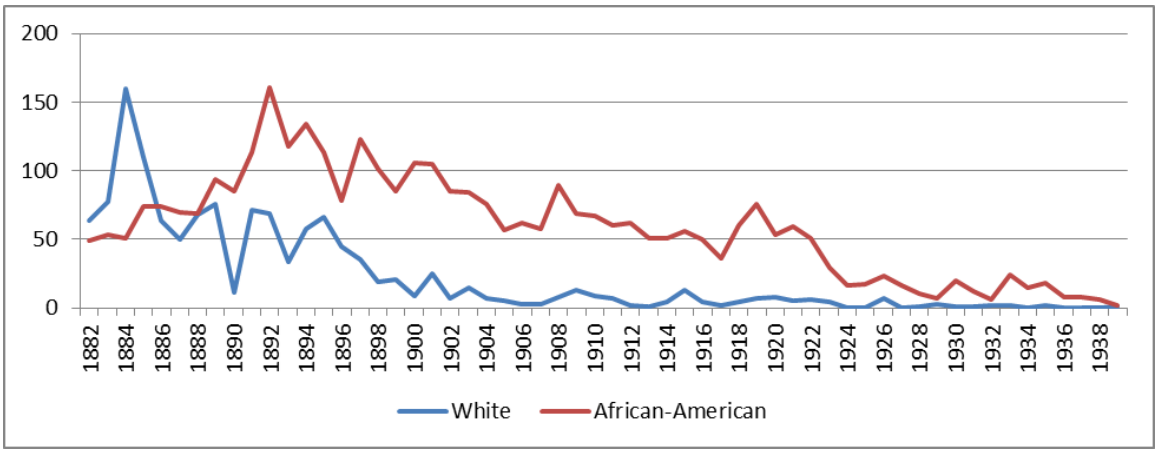

Figure 14: Lynchings In America, 1882-1938.
While numerous estimates of the number of lynching exit, general agreement exists on the spike in lynching around 1892 and the increasingly racialized nature of the violence. The Chestnut dataset has been selected due to its relatively early start date compared to other compilations of lynching statistics. *Source:* Charles Chestnutt, "Lynchings, By Year and Race, 1882-1968," The Charles Chestnutt Digital Archive, accessed September 26, 2015, http://www.chesnuttarchive.org/classroom/lynching_table_year.html.

At least at the local level, spectacle lynching formed a political act. A high profile event took place in the community. Residents of the community held opinions on the desirability of the event. Spectacle lynching could not take place without the cooperation of local leaders. The use of excursion trains defines early spectacle lynching. Local law enforcement could easily halt the arrival of such trains – simply notifying the railroad that the conductor of any excursion trains faced arrested for inciting riot would likely have sufficed in many instances. Moreover, some reason must have existed for local politicians to favor lynching over trial. A clearly guilty defendant from an unpopular racial minority accused of an infamous crime represented an easy conviction. Why not allow a local prosecutor to advance his career by trying the case and securing the death penalty?

Spectacle lynching existed in a local political matrix that can prove difficult to decipher. The May 1916 death of Jesse Washington in Waco Texas forms one of the most infamous examples of spectacle lynching in American history. According to NAACP accounts of the 1916 Waco lynching "they bought the boy [Jesse Washington, the victim] back to Waco because a lynching was of political value to the county officials that are running for office. . . All the elements that took part in the lynching will vote for the Sheriff." NAACP reports presume an understanding of a critical fact. By 1916, Texas Democrats were almost certain to win all local offices in the November election. Instead, events in Waco sought to influence the July 22, Democratic primary. Taking place a little over sixty days from a contested election, the political context of the Waco lynching would have been clear to many involved.[159]

159 W.E.B. Dubois, "The Waco Horror," The Crisis, July 1916, 3, http://library.brown.edu/pdfs/1292363091648500.pdf. Due to time and local circumstances the 1916 lynching

Proximate cause provides a vital element in understanding the intersection between lynching and Populism. Lynching is and was a crime. In describing crimes, lawyers have long differentiated between cause and proximate cause. The birth of an offender is part of the chain of causation of a crime, but it is not a proximate cause to which the law can offer redress. Whatever insult or offense – real or imagined – that a lynching victim offered as well as the circumstances that led local officials to conspire to bring about the victim's death form part of the proximate cause of the lynching. The broader social context of lynching falls into the category of cause. Spectacle lynching might reflect the outgrowth of a pre-existing lynching culture, a way for groups to claim whiteness or an outgrowth of patriarchal ideas. Proximate cause indicates causation so tied to a specific event that those involved could be charged with conspiracy to commit murder. Broader forms of causation go to social and sociological causes of lynching. In most instances, the broader cause of lynching – lynching as a social phenomenon – will be of greater interest to modern scholars. When dealing with the Populists Party, proximate cause – lynching as a specific criminal endeavor planned and undertaken by a group of individuals – provides a key pivot in understanding the mounting tide of violence against Populism. [160]

The first generally accepted spectacle lynching in the United States occurred in 1893 with the burning at the stake of Henry Smith in Paris Texas. Paris, the largest town in Lamar County

---

differed from earlier lynching in that a jury commission selected the county's grand jurors. Control of this commission proved one of the given reasons for the lynching.

160 Cynthia Skove Nevels, Lynching to Belong: Claiming Whiteness Through Racial Violence (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007). Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). William D. Carrigan, The Making of a Lynching Culture: Violence and Vigilantism in Central Texas, 1836-1916 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

existed as a community under significant political stress. Members of the Paris Farmers' Alliance, along with those of neighboring Red River counties, voted against the 1886 Cleburne demands. In 1892, Lamar County elected a Populist sheriff but failed to oust Democrats from town government. Several surrounding counties would send Populists to the state legislature between 1892 and 1898. (See, Figure 15).[161]

The presence of the railroads in Lamar County added to the communal stress. Paris formed a minor rail nexus. The Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe; and Paris & Great Northern – both branch lines connecting to other major railroads – met the mainline Texas & Pacific at Paris; The Knights of Labor emblazoned its presence on the map of Lamar County. At some point prior to gaining its first post office in 1888, a small settlement in central Lamar County adopted the name Powderly after Terrance Powderly, the president of the union that presided over the 1886 rail strike.[162]

---

161 Texas Secretary of States Election Returns – Lamar County, 1890-1900, Texas Depart of Archives and History, Austin, Tx. Anonymous, "The Election in Lamar," Honey Grove Signal, June 12, 1896, http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth346511/m1/3/zoom/?q=%22D.%20S.%20Hammond%22%20Lamar%20%22People%27s%20Party%22.A.W. Neville, "Today 100th Anniversary of the Creation of Lamar County," The Paris News, December 17, 1940, http://gen.1starnet.com/100th.shtm. (In 1916 a fire leveled Paris Texas, destroying many of the records from this era. The Party affiliation of D.S. Hammond was derived by comparing the names in "The Election in Lamar," a report of the outcome of a primary election, with Neville's report of elected officeholders. So few of the primary candidates later took office in 1896, not a good year for Populists at the local levels, that it compels the conclusion that the reported primary was for the People's Party. The conclusion that Democrats controlled Paris arises from the low levels of urban support for Populists found throughout the 1892 election).

162 Handbook of Texas Online, Christopher Long, "Powderly, TX," accessed June 28, 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hlp46.

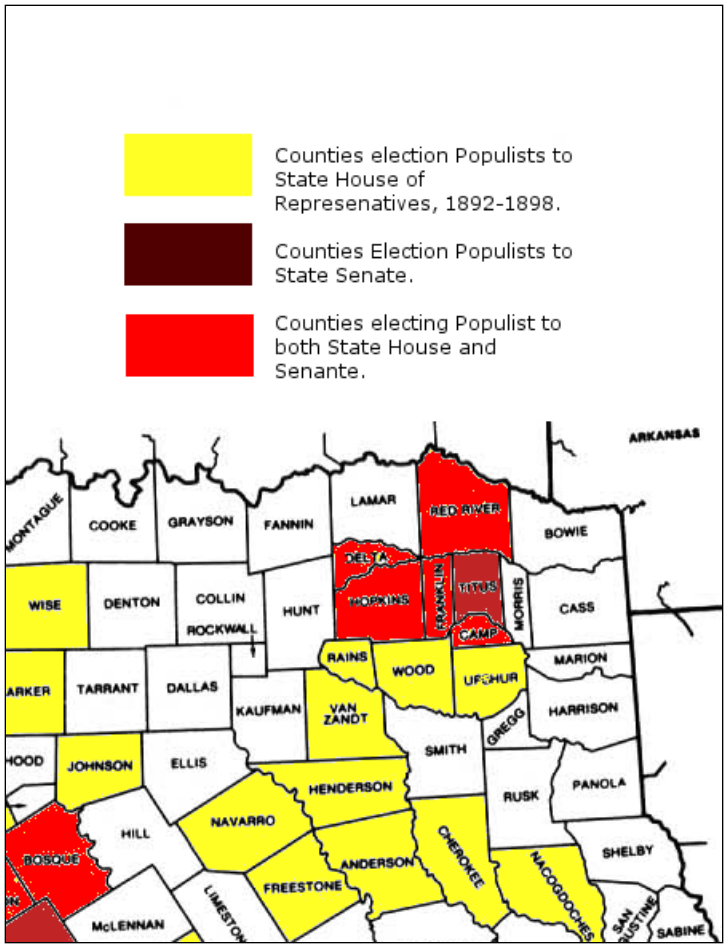

Figure 15: East Texas Counties Electing Populists To State Office.
Source: Legislative Reference Library of Texas, "Legislators & Leaders: Texas Legislators Past and Present," http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legeLeaders/members/lrlhome.cfm. Jensen, *Legislative Apportionment in Texas*..

The 1892 national People's Party platform called for the nationalization of the railroads along lines similar to what would soon be adopted by many European countries. The Texas Populist Party went one better calling for the state government to construct a line – to compete with privately owned railroads – from the Gulf Coast to the Red River, in essence from the coast, most likely Houston, to Texarkana through Paris. If carried through, Texas Populists threatened to create a major competitor for some of Paris's biggest employers. The national party threatened to put those employers under government control.[163]

The election of a Populist Sheriff in Lamar County demonstrated the fragility of local Democrats hold on the county. Texas law allowed the local Sheriff to pack juries with hand-picked individuals. Jury decisions, no matter how obviously wrong, are far less likely to be overturned on appeal than rulings of the presiding judge. Handpicked juries allowed local leaders to ensure any legal outcome they wished. For many lawyers, the Sheriff – the person who controlled the jury pool--represented the most powerful elective office in the county. As such, the Sheriff's office formed a critical nexus in the patronage network.[164]

---

163 "Lamar County Texas Trains. Railroad Resources with a History of Railroads in Lamar County Texas," County Station, accessed June 10, 2016, http://lamar.countystation.com/lamartrain.html..James A. Henretta, Kevin J. Fernlund, and Melvin Yazawa, "The People's (Populist) Party National Platform (1892)," in Documents for America's History, Volume 2: Since 1865 (Boston: Bradford/St. Martin's, 2011), 138–39. Winkler, Platforms of Political Parties in Texas, 299.

164 Vernon Sayles, ed., Vernon's Sayles' Annotated Civil Statutes of the State of Texas: With Historical Notes, Embracing the Revised Statutes of the State of Texas Adopted at the Regular Session of the Thirty-Second Legislature, 1911 ; Incorporating Under Appropriate Headings of the Revised Statutes, 1911, the Legislation Passed at the Regular and Special Sessions of the Thirty-Second and Thirty-Third Legislatures, to the Close of 1913 (Austin: Vernon Law Book Company, 1914), 3403–4. (The statute and relating case law allows the sheriff to pick a jury if the court appointed jury commissioners fail to do so. The statute also makes the sheriff responsible for notifying the commissioners of their appointment. It seems that, as a practical matter, jury commissioners were never notified of their appointments and jury commissions often existed only on paper, if at all).

Control of the Sheriff's office represented a vital goal of the Populist coalition. African-American Texans sought to end the practice of trial by all-white juries. All white juries could not be relied upon to provide justice for racial minorities. African-Americans in Texas viewed access to jury service as a prerequisite of obtaining or exercising their civil rights. L.N. Barbee, a Populist member of the Texas State Legislature, summed up the party's appeal telling a gathering of African-American constituents that "you have the same privilege [as whites] and ought to be allowed a voice in selection a jury of your equals." With the power Texas law gave local sheriff's in shaping the jury pool, African-American Populists focused on forming coalitions to elect the sheriff and securing jury representation. With the sheriff's office secured, the Populists presence in the country stood ready to expand.[165]

Violence followed on the heels of Populist success in Lamar County. In late January of 1893, the body of three-year-old Myrtle Vance was found beaten to death in a shallow grave outside of town. Her father, Henry Vance worked as a member of the Paris police force and possessed a reputation for brutality. A close family member with a history of violence by modern standards, Henry Vance would be the prime suspect in the crime. Vance, as a municipal police officer, also held a politically appointed position. Implicating a patronage holder in the murder risked further weakening establishment control in a county already heading Populist.[166]

---

165 Cantrell, Failure of Bi-Racial politics, 666

166 Texas Secretary of States Election Returns – Lamar County, 1890-1900, Texas Depart of Archives and History, Austin, Tx. Anonymous, "The Election in Lamar."Neville, "Today 100th Anniversary of the Creation of Lamar County." (In 1916 a fire leveled Paris Texas, destroying many of the records from this era. The Party affiliation of D.S. Hammond was derived by comparing the names in "The Election in Lamar," a report of the outcome of a primary election, with Neville's report of elected officeholders. So few of the primary candidates later took office in 1896, not a good year for Populists at the local levels,that it compels the conclusion that the reported primary was for the People's Party. The conclusion that Democrats controlled Paris arises from the low levels of urban support for Populists found throughout the 1892 election). Anonymous, "HORROR OF HORRORS," Austin Daily

Henry Smith, a large, mentally retarded, African-American man had been beaten severely by Officer Vance during an arrest several months before Myrtle Vance's disappearance. Soon after the body was found, the town's mayor remarked that he had seen Henry Smith carrying the child over his shoulder through the center of town the day before. The accusation stretched credibility to the breaking point. The 1890 census put Lamar County with a population of only about thirty-seven thousand. An African-American man walking through the center of a small Texas town, in broad daylight, carrying the daughter of a local police officer with whom he had no other connection stretches believability. Had Smith ever gone to trial, a defense attorney could easily have wondered if the mayor stated that he saw "Henry" carrying the child through town only to later substitute Henry Smith for Henry Vance.[167]

A massive manhunt formed with railroads helping to spread word of the killing up and down the line. Fueled by the railroads, the manhunt apprehended Vance over a hundred miles away in Hope, Arkansas. With the arrest of Smith, authorities in Paris faced a dilemma. When taken into custody, Smith professed to have no idea what was going on. Reports indicate that Smith claimed to have left town on "some fool ideas that struck him while drunk."[168]

Smith's arrest placed the crime in two arenas, one legal and one political. A trained attorney would have a number of questions about the situation. Leaving town made Smith

---

Statesman, January 28, 1893, http://lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1621488939?accountid=7082.

167 Anonymous, "HORROR OF HORRORS." Anonymous, "Burned at the Stake Horrible Punishment Inflicted upon a Texan Negro Fiend.," Idaho Statesman, February 2, 1893. University of Virginia, "Historical Census Browser," http://mapserver.lib.virginia.edu/php/county.php.

168 Anonymous, "DIED BY FIRE!," Austin Daily Statesman, February 2, 1893, http://lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1621186488?accountid=7082. Anonymous, "ANOTHER NEGRO BURNED," New York Times, February 2, 1893, http://lib-ezproxy.tamu.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/95080681?accountid=7082.

immediately suspicious; it also subjected Smith's travel to the rail schedule. Among the four men apprehending Smith were two African-Americans from Lamar County. The unusual involvement of the mayor, who thought nothing of seeing Henry Smith carrying Henry Vance's daughter out of town, and the presence of African-Americans in the posse that apprehended Smith, open up an intriguing possibility. If Smith hoped a train while drunk, his drinking companions may have seen him do so. Being on an outbound at the time he allegedly carried Myrtle Vance through the heart of downtown would offer Smith a powerful alibi. Even if Smith were guilty, the situation offered enough ambiguities to render a trial risky – assuming Smith could find a lawyer to represent him.

Guilty or innocent, the crime represented an impending political disaster for Lamar County Democrats. The mayor admitted to the press that he saw Henry Smith carrying Myrtle Vance to her death and did nothing to stop it. Few politicians could hope to have their careers survive such spectacularly poor judgment. In an area with a surging Populist Party, the mayor's involvement represented a crisis that might sink Democrats running up and down the ballot. Something drastic needed to take place to change the political situation.

Drastic action came at the hands of the *Dallas Morning News.* In1893, the paper – along with the Galveston News – served as the leading mouthpiece for the state's Democratic establishment. Where the rival *Austin Statesman* reported that "[t]he Negros was also seen by Mayor Cate with the child, but he thought nothing of it" the *News* simply stated that "he was seen passing the mayor's office." On February 1, after the capture of Vance and the day before the lynching, the *News* featured reports of widespread calls for excursion trains to watch Smith's lynching. Smith's lynching represents the first known instance in American history where such trains were used to ship in a crowd. No other surviving Texas newspaper made mention of calls

for excursion trains on that day. After the event, the *News* would carry multiple articles of support for the lynching. The death of Henry Smith was in no small part advertised and organized in the pages of the *News*.[169]

Acting in what appeared genuine outrage and concern, James Hogg, the Democratic Governor of Texas elected with African-American support, acted to stop the killing. Hogg telegrammed Hammond, the Populist Sheriff, to stop the lynching and instructed the Assistant District Attorney to make sure that the train carrying Smith offloaded the prisoner prior to reaching Paris. Smith should have been relatively safe. B.B. Sturgeon, the County Attorney – a Democrat who would later hold an appointment as District Attorney from the same governor who oversaw the passage of the poll tax – appeared among the four arresting Smith. Prior to arrival in Paris, twenty-five additional armed men boarded the train on Sturgeon's orders to protect the prisoner. Upon reaching Paris, the County Attorney made a brief political speech, then turned Smith over to the waiting mob. After the lynching, Governor Hogg would demand that the County Attorney prosecute all parties involved in the lynching. The *Galveston Daily News* would report that, in Lamar County, Hogg's order to Sturgeon was "looked upon by many as a joke".[170]

---

169 Anonymous, "HORROR OF HORRORS." "An Atrocity in Lamar," Dallas Morning News, January 28, 1893. "Capture of Smith," Dallas Morning News, February 1, 1893. No other mention of excursion trains appears in papers searchable in either Readex's America's Historical Newspapers collection or the extensive collection of local papers found at the University of North Texas's Portal to Texas History.

170 Anonymous, "DIED BY FIRE!" Anonymous, "Public Sentiment," The Galveston Daily News, February 3, 1893, The Portal to Texas History, http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth468333/m1/2/zoom/?q=Hammond%20Paris%20Vance. Anonymous, "The Governor's Telegrams," The Galveston Daily News, February 3, 1893, The Portal to Texas History, http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth468333/m1/2/zoom/?q=Hammond%20Paris%20Vance.

Smith's lynching became a carnival of death and pain. After aiding in Smith's capture, railroads ran excursion trains to ensure a good turnout for his execution. The mayor of Paris ordered schools and saloons closed for the day. Learning of his fate, Smith begged his captors to shoot him and was refused. Arriving in Paris, Smith was seized by a mob estimated at up to ten thousand persons. The crowd paraded their victim through town on a float before taking him to a scaffold and tying him to a stake. There, following the delivery of a series of speeches from local leaders, Myrtle Vance's male relatives proceeded to torture Smith with hot irons. Smith's torturers demanded that he confess to the crime. After initially denying involvement, Smith became willing to say anything to end his pain. The victim confessed to the crime and begged his tormentors to kill him. When Smith eventually became unresponsive, the stake was set alight and the victim burned alive.[171]

171 Anonymous, "HORROR OF HORRORS."

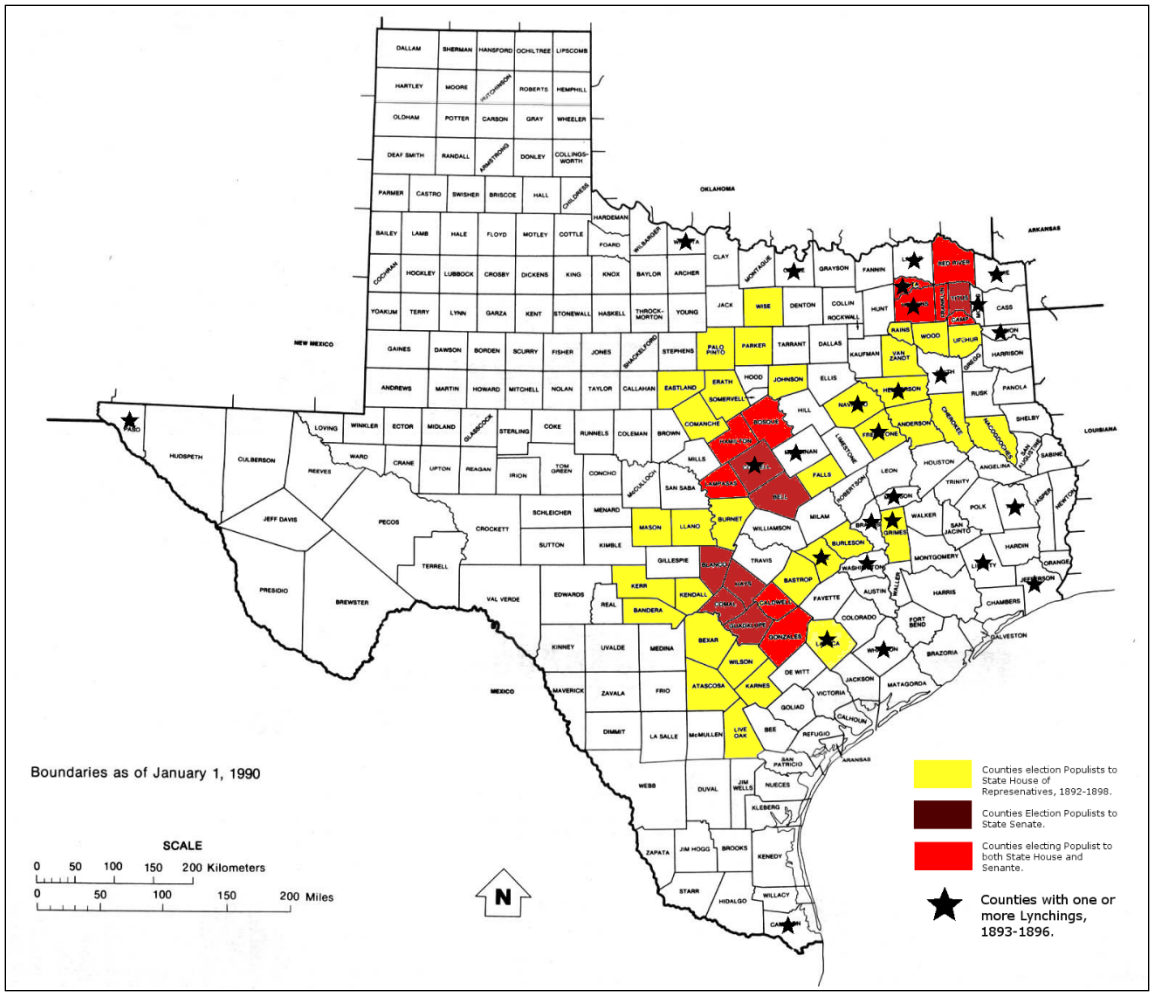

Figure 16: Lynching In Texas With Zones Of Populist Support, 1893-1896.
Source: David Chapman, "Lynchings in Texas" (Texas Tech University, 1973), 99–103. Please note that the location of several executions remains unknown due to insufficient detail in contemporary press reports.

Paris became a model for other counties where African-Americans helped contest the sheriff's race. In Brazos County, a coalition of whites and African-Americans joined together to elect the sheriff beginning in 1890. In 1896, with the sheriff out of town, a mob associated with the prior sheriff – a faction of the local political scene that believed in an all-white electorate – lynched three African-Americans. Upon returning to the county, the sheriff arrested the ringleaders of the mob. For their part in a triple murder, the mob's leaders spent a weekend in jail before being released on bail. Nothing further came of the case.[172] A roughly similar occurrence took place in Nacogdoches in 1902 as A. J. Spradley – a Populist Sheriff who lost office in 1898 only to regain it two years later – faced reelection. As in Paris, events in Brazos and Nacogdoches sent a clear message: African-Americans could help elected a sheriff but they could expect no protection in return. (See, Figure 16).[173]

Responses to spectacle lynching focused on holding someone accountable. The involvement of the local power structure made criminal prosecution unlikely. In some instances, lawsuits against municipalities on behalf of lynching victims showed a level of deterrent effect. A suit against individual participants in a lynching possessed almost no chance of success. At the same time, being named in a lynching suit could prove politically and economically embarrassing. Elites quickly began to adapt. In his 1933 treatise on the law surrounding lynching, a work intended for practicing lawyers as well as scholars, James Chadbourn noted the

---

172 It should be noted that a political basis does not negate Nevels' lynching to belong thesis. Politics influenced the choice of victims and timing. Racial dynamics within the Brazos community helped fuel the mob.
173 Nevels, Lynching to Belong, 31–63. Gary B. Borders, A Hanging in Nacogdoches: Murder, Race, Politics, and Polemics in Texas's Oldest Town, 1870-1916 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 80–84.

difficulty of seeking civil penalties or injunctions against known leaders of a lynch mob. Those most visibly involved in the violence, seizing the victim and bringing him to his execution, tended to be propertyless young men. Those involved in carrying out the killing served to hide the identities of those organizing it. While propertyless men possessed little to lose in a civil suit, excursion trains do not run for spontaneous outbursts by the poor.[174]

With time, the ruse that local leaders remained uninvolved in lynching wore thin. The 1916 lynching of Jesse Washington in Waco Texas took place during a meeting of prominent local political leaders in the mayor's office. The mayor's office offered an unobstructed view of the execution, including the scaffolding set up to burn the victim alive. Contemporary reports indicate that the crowd seized the victim, first taking him to a bridge with the intent to hang him before moving to City Hall when informed of the location of the stake. Years later, during a 1972 oral history interview, one of the local preachers attending the mayor's meeting explained his presence:

> I witnessed the event itself. I was present at City Hall within a few feet of where the Negro was burned, entirely helpless because five thousand monsters participated and who was I, a lone individual, to do anything about it?

Several days prior to the lynching, a local paper announced the informant's intention to attend a Baptist Convention in South Carolina on the day the lynching took place. When pressed on this point, the informant evaded. Further, pre-agreed, interviews took place at the office of the informant's attorney and did not touch again on the lynching.[175]

---

174 James Harmon Chadbourn, Lynching and the Law (The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 2008), 54,123-124.
175 Joseph Dawson, Oral Memories of Joseph Martin Dawson, interview by Thomas Charlton, Oral History, January 18, 1971, 53–54, Baylor Oral History Project, http://digitalcollections.baylor.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/buioh/id/1353/rec/1. Dubois, "The Waco Horror," 5. (Location has been inferred from Dawson's description of being within feet of the burning, and The Crisis's note

Spectacle lynching represented a problematic political tool. In Paris, it represented an ad hoc solution. Political operatives will often look for pre-existing cultural elements to achieve their purposes. Lynching formed one such element. Paris politicians repurposed this element by fomenting a, for the time, particularly large and spectacularly barbaric execution. This served to move public discourse away from local politician's inaction as Myrtle Vance was, reportedly, carried to her death. Instead, the execution emphasized the crime and the criminal. As a long-term political tool, spectacle lynching might fail to achieve the desired goal.

By its very nature spectacle lynching had to exist in a local political context. Using it to send a political message required an awareness of the context. Crowds shipped in from out of town to bolster the spectacle were unlikely to know the local context. Even among local members of the mob, awareness of the subtleties of the situation might remain fleeting. Surveys of voters have constantly shown the electorate to have far less awareness of issues and events than those deeply involved in the political process. The mob might know the larger context of reasons for the event, its broad causation. Any message arising from its proximate cause could easily be lost. Breaking up the Populist Party, as opposed to simply having an effect on turnout as NAACP reports indicate the 1916 Waco lynching was designed to do, required more targeted measures.[176]

---

that they mayor watched the lynching from the window of his office within feet of the burning. While Dawson might have been elsewhere in the building, his political connections and the account in The Crisis of the political nature of the killing make this unlikely).

176 Angus Campbell and University of Michigan Survey Research Center, The American Voter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

Targeting Populists

With the failure of broad-based violence, leaders turned to targeted acts of intimidation and murder. Candidates themselves were rarely targeted. Instead, Conservatives sought to destroy the support network surrounding Populist candidates. Conservative Democrats targeted midlevel operatives, especially those who acted as go-betweens for the white and African-American communities, for violence and intimidation. With its midlevel specialists gone, the Texas Populist Party experienced a rapid decline.

Cementing a political alliance between whites and African-Americans fell to a group of specialists. Conservative Democrats referred to these individuals as n____r men. Populists and Republicans – both parties that routinely sought African-American votes – normally used party titles, such as lecturer or precinct chair, when referring to interracial specialists. Specialists often took the form of white men with connections in the African-American community. In both the Republican and Populists Party, African-Americans also held go-between roles. John B. Rayner, an African-American Populist lecturer, and Texas People's Party executive committee member from Robertson County, proved one of the most well-known and influential interracial go-betweens of the era.[177]

Treating African-Americans with respect proved one of the keys to obtaining their votes. William Andreas Trenckmann, a Texas German Democrat and Clarke supporter, remembered future governor James Stephen Hogg's visit to Austin County:

---

177 Martin, The People's Party in Texas, 136.For more of John B. Rayner see, Gregg Cantrell, Kenneth and John B. Rayner and the Limits of Southern Dissent (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993). Note that the term used within the Democratic Party, for Democratic Party Opperatives, was n_____ men, not n_____ lovers. While the more derogatory term might be used informally, the need to attract and retain these specialist seems to have given rise to some restraint.

> Hogg got an unexpectedly big vote in Austin County, not only most Anglo-Americans but also the Negroes voted for him solidly, in spite of the fact that the Negroes of that time were rated as Republicans and the Republican State Convention had given its support to Clarke. Hogg had won the Negro vote with a few words in Bellville. When he was to speak in the Turner Hall in which every seat and standing place was taken, half a dozen Negroes were standing in the entrance door. Hogg called to them, "Come on to the front, boys. You shall hear what I have to say." The fact that these Negroes took places near the stage in front of white women lost him a few white votes but brought him the solid Negro vote. I am convinced that the colored vote getters, who were paid by the Clarke Club to win votes against Hogg and gave assurance that they were succeeding, all voted for Hogg.

Symbols of tolerance as simple as placement at an event could shift election outcomes.[178]

Owl meetings proved a pivotal tactic for bringing African-Americans to the Populist cause. Every political party in Texas utilized owl meeting. The meetings formed an all-night combination picnic and family barbecue held for African-American voters. Lasting until sunrise, participants could attend owl meetings without fear of attack while walking home in the dark. Populists modified the owl meeting tradition to cement cooperation between the white and African-American communities.[179]

Owl meetings served as one means of encouraging unity between white and African-American Populists. Larger owl meetings, held in advance of Election Day, could reach several hundred participants. Election eve meetings averaged around twenty to twenty-five attendees. These smaller gatherings were put together by the county's white Populist leaders and were noted for their excellent food and moderate drinking. The next morning, attendees brought many of the party's African-American voters to the polls early, then spent the rest of the day rounding

178 William Trenckmann, Autobiography of William Andreas Trenckmann, ed. Walter Buenger and Walter Kamphoefner (Pre-Publication Draft, 2016).
179 For an example of a Populist Owl Meeting see, "Local News," Brenham Daily Banner, October 22, 1896. Martin 180-182.

up votes. The simple act of white and African-American volunteers sitting down and holding a barbecue together the day before the election proved a powerful symbol of the biracial Populist alliance in Texas and one of the more sought-after invitations in the African-American community.[180]

The election of 1896 spelled the beginning of the end for the Populist coalition in Texas. Political infighting among Populists over fusion with Bryan's Silver Democrats would split the party politically. While political divisions made headlines, a wave of political violence would sweep the South. Intimidation and death of People's Party campaign workers and low-level candidates rendered the upstart political movement non-functional. Losses of key personnel made it impossible for Anglo Populists to maintain their alliance with African Americans. These losses provided one of the major factors for the failure of Texas Populism.

Political infighting fractured the People's Party. The Democratic candidate for president, William Jennings Bryan supported free silver; unlimited creation of silver currency at a ratio likely to drive gold from the money supply. Midwestern Populists saw opportunity in fusion with the Democratic ticket. Populists would support the Bryan and divide up state and local offices with the Democrats. In areas of Republican domination, this made eminent sense. By combining their votes, the two parties could elect candidates where neither could alone. For Southern Populists, the deal was akin to a death sentence. Tom Watson, the vice-presidential candidate on the Bryan-Watson Populist ticket, would describe Democrats idea of fusions as "we

---

180 Martin 180-182. Writing in the 1930s Martin made use of oral history accounts that have now been lost. The details of election eve Owl meetings are taken from Martin's account. That so much more could be said about this practice, had Martin only properly recorded and transcribed the interviews he undertook, should act as a caution for future historians on the need to preserve oral history accounts. For notice of an election eve owl meeting see "Untitled Notice, Page 3", Brenham Banner, November 1, 1896.

play the part of Jonah and they play the part of the whale" As one reporter noted, describing the opposition of Texas Populists to the national fusion deal, "more than silver, more than anti-monopoly, the issue with [Texas Populists] is the elementary right to political manhood. The issue in many parts of the South is even more elementary -- the right to life itself, so bitter is the feeling of the Old Democracy against these upstarts from the despised masses of the whites."[181]

Texas Democrats refused to honor the fusion deal entered into by the national party. The rejection came just as the Texas Republican Party became embroiled in its own internal conflict. Lily White Republicans, who wished to drive African-Americans from the party, threatened a split in 1896. Infighting over race and office stood poised to tear the Republicans apart. To prevent events from coming to a head, Texas Republicans offered Populists a deal. In return for Populist support for McKinley, a hard money Republican, the Republican Party would fail to field a state level ticket and instead adopt the Populist ticket. Local offices would be divvied up by agreement.

Chaos reigned. McKinley supported the gold standard. The Democrats, under Bryan, called for silver. For a party formed around currency reform, supporting a hard money Republican became a tough sell. As a result, the state saw Bryan/Democrat, Bryan/Populist, straight Populist without Bryan and McKinley/Populist tickets in the field. With the People's Party fractured, Democrats capitalized on the resulting confusion to slam the door on any chance of a Populist resurgence.

---

181 Miller and Ulbig, "Building a Populist Coalition in Texas, 1892-1896." Robert C. McMath, American Populism: A Social History 1877-1898 (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 201.

Violence served as a primary tool in suppressing Populism. Election Day in Robertson County, Texas saw African-American Populists marching with a brass band to vote. As they crossed the bridge over the Little Brazos River masked riders accosted the group, casting the band's instruments into the river. Elsewhere in the county, an armed white mob "quietly deposed" the African-American town marshal in Franklin. After forcing out the marshal, the mob allowed only white Democrats to vote in the election. O. D. Cannon, a Democrat, and local judge remembered the chaos of Election Day. "I went down to the polls and took my six shooter." According to the sitting judge, "I stayed there until the polls closed. Not a Negro voted. After that they didn't [vote] any more in Robertson County."[182]

Events in Robertson County coincided with the rise of a paramilitary movement – the White Man's Union – aimed at securing the polls for the Democratic Party. The White Man's Union movement began in Wharton Texas in 1889. Eighty percent African-American, Wharton possessed one of the largest non-white majorities in the state. In the early years, the group might have acted more as a political party than a terrorist organization. Wharton voted for Republican presidential candidates from the end of the Civil War to 1896. Starting in 1900, coinciding with the period of militarization of the White Man's Union, Wharton County commenced a long string of support for Democratic candidates.[183]

---

182 Cantrell 239-240.

183 Gaither, *Blacks and the Populist Movement*, 250. Handbook of Texas Online, Merle R. Hudgins, "Wharton County," accessed March 12, 2016, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hcw06. Horton Foote, Farewell: A Memoir of a Texas Childhood (Simon and Schuster, 1999), 32.

White Man's Unions existed openly in at least seven Texas counties. Another two, probably, hosted open chapters.[184] The organization almost certainly existed in other counties under more innocuous names. As one commentator described the group's genesis in a neighboring county "Colorado county has organized a white man's union and isn't afraid to call it by its proper name." Even where formal chapters failed to exist, the possibility of one forming remained a potent threat. In 1902, the Democratic Chairman of – forty-six percent African-American – Montgomery County published an open letter threatening black voters with a Union:

> The fact is that I have been instrumental in keeping this thing down so far, but I have stated to some people of your race that if your race voted as a whole and forced corrupt officers on the citizenry of this county, that it would be impossible to keep down a White Man's Union two years hence, and I think I am correct about it. So to avoid such a contingency exercise your right of citizenship against corruption. Turn away from the blandishments of the paid politician whether be he in the person of your school teacher, preacher, or old broken down white Republican, and stand and vote with the best citizens of your county, and by your vote show that you to are against corruption in office. Such an action alone will advert the threatened Union in the future, and such action can alone advert it.

Even where an active chapter proved lacking, Democratic officials believed the threat of establishing one could intimate African-American voters.[185]

The White Men's Union aimed at ending cooperation between Whites and African-Americans. Organizers in Caldwell County argued that the group would put a halt to "the disgraceful and degrading owl meeting that begin every two years about six months before the election." The group expressly targeted whites who would work with African-Americans. As the same organizer put it "[w]hy not get together in the different neighborhoods and organize. If

184 Wharton, Matagorda, Grimes, Jackson, Fort Bend, Marion and Colorado with possible chapter in Burleson and Goliad.

185 "Untitled Article Page 2," Caldwell News-Journal,

nothing else, we can at least have the consolidation of knowing – if there is such a thing – those who would sacrifice caste to hold an office [by working with African-Americans]." Presumably, those found "sacrificing caste" would find themselves in for rough treatment from the notoriously violent group.[186]

At the same time, Caldwell organizers were calling for identification of "those who would sacrifice caste" Grimes County moved towards one of the most infamous confrontations between the Union and Populists of the period. In Grimes, a fusion of Populists and Republicans successfully took many local and county offices, including the sheriff, and held them until 1900 when a disputed sheriff's race turned bloody. Following the assassination of the African-American County Clerk, Union members besieged the sheriff in the county courthouse for five days. The siege ended only with the appearance of state troops who escorted Garrett Scott, the now heavily wounded Populists sheriff, and his deputies, out of the county. Seeing which way the political winds were blowing, Scott, defeated at the polls but still serving out the remainder of his term, resigned and retired from politics soon thereafter.[187]

Both Grimes and Robertson Counties hold numerous similarities. In each case, Populists leaders were targeted as well as Populist voters. African-American interracial go-betweens, the Franklin town marshal in Robertson County and the County Clerk in Grimes found themselves targeted for intimidation or. The Grimes siege, taking place at a time of conservative consolidation, featured the added element of a direct attack on Populist leaders and subordinate patronage holders. These constituted attacks directly upon Populist voters and upon Populist

---

186 A White Citizen, "The White Man's Union," Caldwell News-Chronicle April 27, 1900.
187 Cantrell, 245. Goodwyn, "Populist Dreams and Negro Rights."

organizers capable of bringing voters to the polls. These, along with other action by the White Men's Union movement helped cement a return to conservative control in Texas.

The Problem with Success

Destruction of the Populist Party left Democrats facing a dilemma. Many Populists voters were former Democrats now likely to return to the party. Destruction of Populism didn't so much end the fight as transfer it to an internal struggle between Conservatives and Bryan Democrats. With its chief aim accomplished, continued political violence risked economic or personal harm for little reward. Disfranchisement would offer an opportunity to both deal with returning Populists and transition to less violent means of retaining power than men with guns at polling places.

CHAPTER VI

A MEETING IN MONTGOMERY

In May of 1900, the great, and possibly the good, of the Southern Democratic Party converged on Montgomery, Alabama for the first and only meeting of the Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South. Among the attendees were Joseph Sayers, the governor of Texas; five other current or former Southern governors; the former ambassadors to Russia and Spain; numerous state legislators; at least two former cabinet members, a future president of the American Bar Association, and lawyers for several prominent railroads. These luminaries came to Montgomery not to alleviate the plight of African-Americans but to solidify the system of disfranchisement and segregation sweeping the South. Of the organization's known officers, most were gold standard Democrats who had supported Grover Cleveland and held high ranking positions in the Democratic Party. At Montgomery, the Southern Democratic Party establishment wed itself firming to the poll tax.[188]

Montgomery set the scene for the enactment of the poll tax in Texas. Texas politics in 1900 featured a split between three factions, rural Radicals, Conservatives and Progressive reformers. With the passage of the poll tax two factions, Conservatives and Progressives, came together to force the third from the body politic. Progressives supported the tax for racial, economic and strategic reasons. Conservatives, the establishment wing of the party, backed the poll tax in adherence with regional political leaders. With both factions backing the measure, it stood an excellent chance of passage, much to the detriment of Radicals.

---

188 Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, Race Problems of the South: Report of the Proceedings of the First Annual Conference Held Under the Auspices of the Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, at Montgomery, Alabama, May 8, 9, 10, A.D. 1900 (Richmond: B.F. Johnson Publishing Company, 1900), 3,6,8.12.-13.

The Road to Montgomery

The party leaders at Montgomery represented a group who found their authority under attack. Political parties carry a central contradiction. Local leaders often control access to volunteers and infrastructure. High-level party leaders hold power and influence, but lack a base of support. Instead, they claim a position based on the ability to raise money or access some other vital yet scarce resource. Organized racial violence shifted the balance between local party leaders and those holding higher ranking positions in the state party.

A major difference exists between the county chair having –volunteers and voters at conventions – and the local party chair having an armed paramilitary group. Putting armed men at the polls proved an effective means of controlling the electoral process. Those armed men were under local, not state, party control. State party leaders could, at best, rail impotently against the violence or pretend to endorse it. In order to regain control, the Conservative counterrevolution would need to be enacted into law in a manner that returned power to the state party. The poll tax and implementing laws would become the vehicle to reach a settlement between competing power centers.

A meeting to discuss the tax was necessary. Colloquially the term poll tax contains several components. At its most basic, the poll tax represented a capitation tax. Every person, or often simply every male of voting age, became liable for a set annual payment to the state, regardless of income. In practice, those paying other taxes – for example property tax – paid the poll tax while all others avoided it. Poll tax laws made payment of the tax a requirement to vote. While some states required cumulative payment of all overdue poll taxes, others simply required the tax be paid for the past two years or for the year of the election. Coming to agreement on the

best form of poll tax, one that would not disfranchise white Conservative voters, required an exchange of ideas and experience.[189]

Various forms of literacy requirements supplemented the poll tax. Male African-American illiteracy rates hovered between forty and sixty percent in the South. Among white males, illiteracy rates only topped fifteen percent in Louisiana and North Carolina, and nowhere exceeded twenty percent. Literacy requirements formed a means of disproportionally denying the vote to African-American voters – with the added bonus of also removing some poor white former Populists from the mix. Literacy tests formed a popular way of disfranchising voters. This could include requiring voters to pass some form of literacy test to vote. Often a grandfather clause, a clause allowing anyone to vote if their grandfather could before the Civil War, accompanied literacy provisions. Not all grandfather clauses were permanent. In some states, voters were required to admit their illiteracy and claim the exemption within a certain number of years or lose the ballot. Even without literacy tests, a number of maneuvers, from secret ballots – without the option for illiterate voters to receive assistance – to multiple ballot boxes could keep the illiterate from voting. Navigating the added complications generated by literacy requirements further argued for a meeting. (See, Table 8).[190]

189 For various disfranchisement schemes see, Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*, 2001.

190 J. Morgan Kousser, The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 55.For various disfranchisement schemes see, Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*, 2001. For detailed illiteracy rates by decade and race see: "National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL)," accessed March 1, 2018, https://nces.ed.gov/naal/lit_history.asp.

South Carolina	1898	Expiration of time-limited grandfather clause.
Louisiana	1900	First year implementing poll tax.
North Carolina	1899 and 1900	Disfranchising amendment passed in 1899. First election implementing poll tax and literacy requirements in 1900.
Alabama	1901	Passage of disfranchisement amendment.
Virginia	May 1900 - 1902	State Constitutional Convention authorized in 1900. Disfranchising amendment passed in 1902.
Maryland	1901	First attempt at disfranchisement passed in 1901 election law. Over the next decade, voters would reject various disfranchisement amendments to the state constitution.
Texas	1901 and 1903	Disfranchisement amendment passed by state legislature in 1901, Ratified by voters in 1903.
Georgia	1899 and 1901	Disfranchisement measure introduced in legislature but failed due to almost complete disappearance of African-Americans from the electorate prior to 1899.

Table 8: States Considering Or Implementing Disfranchisement Provisions, 1898-1901.
Source: Michael Perman, *Struggle for Mastery, Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1901* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

The Makings of a Conference

Montgomery represented a toxic clash of political expediency and idealism. The Montgomery Conference started out with the idealistic hope that bringing African-Americans, liberal whites, and the most ardent segregationists together would open a dialogue capable of curbing the rising tide of lynching. Segregationists saw something far different. With the United States Supreme Court ruling in *Williams v. Mississippi* legalizing the poll tax and literacy tests – of which would form common methods of disfranchisement – a need existed for a gathering to discuss both the legalities and practicalities of limiting the vote. Gathering for that express purpose risked drawing hostile attention in the national press, perhaps resulting in Federal legislation overturning *Williams*. To avoid the potential bad press, conservatives seized control of the Montgomery Conference and bent the proceeding to their own end.

The Montgomery Conference began as the brainchild of Edgar Garner Murphy. Murphy – an Episcopalian priest – quickly attracted two other ministers to the project: Neal L. Anderson, a Presbyterian, and George B. Eager, a Baptist minister. Together, the three comprised the leading progressive clergymen of Montgomery. After meeting the three, Booker T. Washington would endorse the movement noting that "[a]lmost nothing in the last dozen years has given me as much hope and encouragement as this movement. The three ministers to whom I have referred have the most earnest and satisfactory convictions regarding the elevation of our people." The ministers were soon to lose control of their own movement.[191]

191 Booker T. Washington to Francis Jackson Garrison, February 3, 1900 in Booker T. Washington, *The Booker T. Washington Papers: 1899-1900*, ed. Lewis R. Harlan (University of Illinois Press, 1977), 428.

A meeting at Montgomery held symbolic importance. Montgomery was a place where things happened. The Confederacy began – officially – with the Confederate Congress meeting in Montgomery. The city served as the first capital of the Confederacy and the drafting place of the rebel government's constitution. Washington would note that "[t]o have this movement start in Montgomery, Alabama, which is perhaps one of the most conservative towns in South and former headquarters of the Confederate government, means a great deal." The birth of a civil rights movement at the origin place of the Confederacy held great symbolic meaning. A conference at the birthplace of the Confederacy to lay out a future of segregation and disfranchisement could also tap into the city's Confederate past.[192]

Co-opting the conference offered conservatives an opportunity to meet with limited political price. A true political convention of segregationist Democrats risked a profound political backlash. The threat of Henry Cabot Lodge's 1890 bill to allow Federal oversight of Southern elections remained a fresh memory. To secure breathing space, the Southern Society issued a series of press releases stressing the body as deliberative. In accordance with Murphy's vision, the Society would provide a means for Southerners to formulate a path to greater equality. Instead, it burst like a sudden lightning bolt of hate. In the days after the conference, correspondents of Booker T. Washington held out the forlorn hope that the Northern media backlash might impose a cost on segregationists at the gathering. It was not to be. Without a run-up in the press, the conference formed simply a blip on the public imagination, soon forgotten.[193]

---

192 Washington to Garrison, February 3, 1900, Booker T. Washington Papers.
193 The Montgomery Conference named as its Chair, Hilary Hebert. Herbert, Secretary of the Navy during the second Cleveland administration, led the resistance to the Lodge bill while member of Congress in 1890. Editor of Why the Solid South – a history of Reconstruction written by numerous current or former Southern Senators and

By the time the ministers met with Booker T. Washington, their control over the Southern Society was tenuous. Early material by the Society indicated that Washington planned to speak at the meeting. Washington remained, at best, noncommittal. By 1900, a pattern of disfranchisement had developed in the South. Conservatives would call a state constitutional convention. The convention empowered to change the state constitution without submitting amendments to the voters, enacted disfranchisement provisions. Once disfranchisement became inevitable, the state's African-American leaders would endorse the change in return for salvaging minor concessions. Washington himself would later strike just such a deal, endorsing disfranchisement for minor concessions on school funding, near the conclusion of Alabama's 1901 constitutional convention. While Washington may have indicated a prior verbal, agreement to appear at the 1900 gathering, he proved unwilling to commit to appearing at a meeting where disfranchisement might be discussed.[194]

Unable to secure Washington's attendance, Murphy found himself without leverage. Control of the group fractured. Nominally, a committee of a hundred local business people ran the organization. In theory, a nine-member executive committee – on which the founders sat – controlled the proceedings. In reality, a separate committee, the committee on state and inter-state organization, held the actual power in the body. Sitting on the organization committee were

---

Congressmen – Herbert framed the argument that a return of Federal oversight risked igniting a second Civil War. The politicians involved in such a choice would have had a grasp on the importance of Northern public opinion. Hilary Abner Herbert, Why the Solid South? Or, Reconstruction and Its Results (Baltimore: R. H. Woodward, 1890). For examples of the use of press releases see, "The Race Problem, Conference Called in May to Exchange Ideas, Southern White Men Realizing the Importance of Definite and Tangible Plans to Solve the Negro Question," Philadelphia Public Ledger, January 17, 1900. "The Southern Society, An Organization for the Study and Discussion of Race Problems in the South-Good Progress Made," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, February 3, 1900. Timothy Thomas Fortune to Booker T. Washington, May 10, 1900;Francis Jackson Garrison to Booker T. Washington, May 4, 1900 (last minute awareness of conference objectives) Booker T. Washington Papers. .

194 Edgar Garner Murphy to Booker T. Washington, January 13, 1900, Booker T. Washington Papers. Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*, 2001, 191.

the current governor of the state, the former governor of Alabama, the State Superintendent of Education, the Montgomery School Superintendent, the Judge Advocate General of the Alabama State Militia and one of the ministers other than Murphy. Invitations to attend the meeting were sent to other political luminaries throughout the South by the organizing committee.[195]

A Meeting

Like many political conventions, much of the work of the Montgomery Conference took place behind closed doors. Instead of one gathering, the Montgomery conference became three. The conference served mainly as a public gathering of segregationists. A small group of reformers – initially invited to secure Washington's attendance – also spoke briefly after eight in the evening on the second day of the conference. With the official program of the conference not listing a dinner break between the four o'clock and eight o'clock sessions, attendance at the reformers speeches would have been limited. Finally, a private conference. In rejecting the names of other African-American speakers suggested by Washington, Murphy let a key fact slip. Not outright rejecting the leaders, the minister suggested that "[t]he names of the colored men I will file, and I have no doubt that they will be acceptable to the Committee as appropriate representatives in the private conference." While the society published transcripts of the public speeches, the contents of the private gathering remain opaque. (See, Table 9).[196]

---

195 Murphy to Washington, January 13, 1900 and Washington to Garrison, February 3, 1900. "A Southern Conference," Edge Gardner Murphy Papers, 1893-1913, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, accessed January 7, 2017, http://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/01041/#folder_11#1. Francis G. Caffey to [redacted; most likely Joseph Sayers], February 12, 1900, Alexander Dienst Papers, University of Texas at Austin.

196 Washington to Murphy, February 2, 1900; Murphy to Washington, February 7, 1900, Booker T. Washington Papers. Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, Race Problems of the South, 15. .

Organizational Officers				
Name	State	Position At Convention	Political Position	Notes
Hilary A Herbert	D.C.	President	Sec of Navy under Cleveland, Former U.S. Rep from Alabama	
James Weatherly	AL	VP For AL	Legal Scholar	
Clifton R. Breckenridge	AR	VP for AR	Former Congressman Former Minister to Russia (Cleveland)	
J. L. M. Curry (LL.D).	D.C.	VP for D.C.	Former Congressman Former Ambassador to Spain (Cleveland Administration)	
W. A Blount	FL	VP for FL	Florida State Senate, Future President American Bar Association (1921).	
Rev. Charles Craik	KY	VP for KY	Unknown	
J.R. Ficklin	LA	VP For LA	Tulane Faculty	Historian. Wrote against reconstruction.
Chancellor R.B. Fulton	MS	VP For MS	Chancellor University of Mississippi	
Rev. John F. Cannon	MO	VP For MO	Unknown	
Henry E. Fries	NC	VP For NC	Mayor of Salem, Member Democratic National Committee	
J.C. Hemphill	SC	VP For SC	Newspaper Editor	

Table 9: Known Attendees And Speakers At The Montgomery Conference.

Name	State	Position At Convention	Political Position	Notes
Charles W. Dadney	TN	VP For TN	Assistant Sec of Agriculture under Cleveland, President of the University of Tennessee.	
Joseph D. Sayers	TX	VP For TX	Governor Of Texas	
J. Hodge Tyler	VA	VP For VA	Governor Of Virginia	
William A. MacCorkle	WV	VP For WV	Former Governor WV	Invited to Speak on the Request of Booker T. Washington.
Edgar Garner Murphy	AL	Secretary	Minister	Organizer.
Members Committee on State and Interstate Organizing				
Francis G. Caffery	AL	Organizing Committee	Judge Advocate General, Alabama Militia; Federal Judge (1929)	
John W. Abercrombie	AL	Organizing Committee	State Superintendent of Education; Later Congressman (1912)	
Neal L. Anderson	AL	Organizing Committee	Minister	
Charles L. Floyd	AL	Organizing Committee	School Superintendent, Montgomery	
Joseph F. Johnston	AL	Organizing Committee	Governor of Alabama; Future U.S. Senator (1907)	
William C. Oates	AL	Organizing Committee	Former Governor of Alabama	

Table 9: Known Attendees And Speakers At The Montgomery Conference – Continued.

Name	State	Position At Convention	Political Position	Notes
Major Speakers				
Note A number of Speakers have been left out as either they held other positions or were nominated by Booker T. Washington and compacted together into one evening session.				
Alfred Moore Waddell	NC	Speaker	Mayor of Wilmington	Became Mayor of Wilmington after leading a coup against the city's African-American government.
Alexander C. King	GA	Speaker	Railroad Attorney, Future U.S. Solicitor General and Federal Judge	
John Temple Graves	GA	Speaker	Editor Atlanta Daily Georgian,	Calls for segregation. Ida Wells-Barnet IDed his paper as a major supporter of lynching (The Patriot, 1909).
Paul B. Barringer	VA	Speaker	Physician, Chairman of the Faculty, University of Virginia	A eugenicist, Barringer calls for the elimination of African Americans by denial of public health services.
Booker T Washington	AL	Spectator	Educator	Observed part of proceedings from "Jim Crow" Box. Booker T. Washington Papers.

Table 9: Known Attendees And Speakers At The Montgomery Conference – Continued.

Source: Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, *Race Problems of the South: Report of the Proceedings of the First Annual Conference Held Under the Auspices of the Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, at Montgomery, Alabama, May 8, 9, 10, A.D. 1900* (Richmond: B.F. Johnson Publishing Company, 1900), 1, 12, 13 and Francis G. Caffey to [redacted most likely George Pendleton], February 12, 1900, Alexander Dienst Papers, University of Texas at Austin.

Speakers concerned themselves primarily with healing the rift between the upper echelons of the Democratic Party and local leaders empowered by racial violence. While leaders who held formal roles in the Southern Society came mainly from the upper echelons of the political class, many speakers represented local leaders. The first speech given at the Conference, outside of initial welcoming addresses, went to Alfred Moore Waddell. A former United States Congressman, Waddell came to national prominence leading a group of white supremacists to seize the government of the Wilmington North Carolina from African-American office holders. Waddell's actions in Wilmington remain the only known actual coup d'état in American history. Waddell assumed the office of mayor of Wilmington during the coup. Given the stage, the mayor called for the repeal of the Fifteenth amendment reasoning "[i]t has been, and will continue to be, made of no effect by methods which are themselves necessarily injurious and demoralizing, and therefore it is doubly disastrous. . . [U]ntil some better way out of our trouble is provided, the [disfranchisement scheme] adopted in Louisiana and proposed in North Carolina seems to give the only hope of relief."[197]

John Temple Graves, an Atlanta newspaper editor, spoke next. Graves adamantly support lynching. In 1903, Graves would shock many by publically defending lynching as necessary to avoid even greater racial violence. At Montgomery, Graves called for segregation: "[s]eparation is the logical, the inevitable and the only way. . . We have come in God's providence to a parting of the ways. . . We can make it peaceably now. We may be forced to

197 "The Southern Society, An Organization for the Study and Discussion of Race Problems in the South-Good Progress Made," 44, 47.

accomplish it in blood hereafter. . . There is not a hope in fact or reason for the Negro outside of separation." Graves's speech represented a blunt demand: oppression or genocide.[198]

Waddell and Graves presented a threat, a deal, and a political strategy. Both men adamantly insisted that any return to normality be accompanied by disfranchisement and further segregation. Failure to do so risked escalating violence. Each indicated that the Southern wing of the Democratic Party could return to an even keel if local elites no longer felt themselves under threat from African-American voters. Finally, it offered a rhetorical strategy. Without disfranchisement and segregation--programs that would disfranchise both sides of the Populist coalition of African-Americans and poor white farmers and make it extraordinarily difficult to rebuild the bloc--genocide might erupt. Oppression could be sold, politically, as a means of limiting further violence by the oppressors.

The idea that any action recognizing African-Americans as citizens possessed of rights risked genocide was quickly adopted by leaders at the Conference. Once called to order, the gathering elected Hilary Herbert as its chair. As a Congressman from Alabama, Herbert led the opposition to Henry Cabot Lodge's 1890 proposal for Federal oversight of Southern elections. Editor of *Why the Solid South* – a history of Reconstruction written by numerous current or former Southern Senators and Congressmen – Herbert framed the argument that a return of Federal oversight risked igniting a second Civil War. Success in blocking the Lodge bill brought Herbert to prominence. Herbert served a secretary of the Navy during Grover Cleveland's second term. In later years, Herbert would reprise his role as spokesman for the South.[199]

---

198 Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, *Race Problems of the South*, 55–56.
199 Herbert, *Why the Solid South?*

For Herbert, the threat of genocide proved a potent political tool. After the 1904 election, hopes rose that Roosevelt would help enact a Federal anti-lynching act. Herbert and Roosevelt possessed a prior history. In 1894, Theodore Roosevelt – somehow – came into possession of an undisclosed European nation's detailed report on the performance of early battleships during the First Sino-Japanese War. Roosevelt forwarded the document to Herbert, who undoubtedly wondered how a minor politician from New York came into possession of a major piece of military intelligence. Playing on this exchange[200], in 1904 Herbert wrote Roosevelt

> It is now my turn to congratulate you. . . [L]et me make some suggestions which I hope you will not find unworthy of your consideration.
> . . .
>
> The present unfortunate antagonism between the races in that section is growing daily more intense. Is it to be a duel to the death of one or the other race, or will present conditions pass away and whites and blacks learn to live together?
> . . .
> I am not calling these facts to your attention for the purpose of suggesting Federal intervention when lynchings occur, either in North or South. I do not believe that the remedy is found in that direction. What I am concerned about in this discussion is the rapidly growing antagonism between the races in the South. Sullen and angry discontent everywhere prevails. The two races are almost ready to separate themselves into hostile camps.

After indicating the danger, Herbert suggested that the best thing the Federal government could do was nothing. The safest course, according to Herbert, would be for the "country to make up its mind to leave the solution to this problem, intricate, delicate and dangerous as it is, to those

---

200 Herbert invokes an 1893 letter from Roosevelt and not the 1894 memo. While Herbert saved the 1894 letter in his papers, he did not retain the 1893 note. Unfortunately, the Theodore Roosevelt papers have only spotty coverage before the late 1890s. It is the author's belief that Herbert simply misremembered the date of the letter that he had retained. *See*, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, *Index to the Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Volume 2 H-O* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1969), 507.

states and communities in the South most interested in it." The best course – one that avoided bloodshed – lay in doing nothing.[201]

Despite the ability of conservatives to dominate the gathering, moments of discord took place. Southern politicians realized the potential danger inherent in the African-American church and attempted to control it through licensing. Speakers calling for disfranchisement were followed by calls for a licensing system for African-American preachers. These plans were scrapped after Baptist and Methodist representatives refused to attend. The representative of the Episcopalian church, expected to indicate his denomination's backing in a speech entitled "Should We Advise the Raising of the Standard of Ordination for the Negro Clergy," answered the question with a flat refusal. The Episcopal – and presumably also the Catholic – church would not allow lay interference in the ordination of priests. More than a generation later, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other Montgomery area African-American clergy played a pivotal role in ending formal segregation and disfranchisement. The initial plan of the conference sought to use clergy licensing, by then a legally questionable maneuver, to head off the threat of activism by the African American church.[202]

As important as the speakers were the attendees. Many of the luminaries appearing on the conference's program were opponents of William Jennings Bryan. Grover Cleveland insisted that his appointees support the gold standard. In selecting Herbert as Conference chair, the

---

201 Theodore Roosvelt to Hilary Herbert, December 12, 1894, Hilary Herbert Papers, Southern History Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Hilary Herbert to Theodore Roosevelt, November 12, 1904, Hilary Herbert Papers, Southern History Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

202 Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, *Race Problems of the South*, 15, 114, 141–46. On licensing see Cummings v. Missouri, 71 US 277 (1867). It should be noted that Cummings as an *Ex Post Facto* case dealing with reconstruction era oath requirements. It's applicability to licensing of African American clergy is unclear.

gathering chose a staunch gold Democrat and political insider. The same could be said for the former ambassadors to Russian and Spain, both in attendance, as well as the former Assistant Secretary of Agriculture – by 1900 the President of the University of Tennessee. Two speakers would go on to run against Bryan. Joseph Johnson, the Governor of Alabama involved in organizing the gathering, attempted – unsuccessfully – to contest Bryan's third presidential nomination in 1908. At the time Johnson was known for his continuing support of the gold standard. John Temple Graves ran against Bryan as the Independent Party's vice-presidential candidate in 1908.[203]

Populist leaders were, as a practical matter, excluded from the conference. The dates of the meeting, May 8th through the 10th, conflicted with the People's Party's national convention – held May 9-11 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. With the Democratic National Convention scheduled for July, similar concerns did not hamper Democratic attendees. A meeting of "middle of the road" Populists – who refused to endorse William Jennings Bryan, took place in Cleveland on the same dates as the national convention. With the Populist Party fracturing, major Populist leaders were unlikely to skip their party's gatherings in order to attend a meeting in the Deep South.[204]

Montgomery and Texas

Passage of the poll tax turned on the weakness of the Texas political establishment. Prior to the loss of Farmers' Alliance members to the Populist Party, Texas Democratic Party politics turned on three factions. Conservatives, urban Progressives, and rural Radicals. With events

---

203 "The Disgruntled Ones," *The Literary Digest*, May 1893. "Untitled Address on Johnston's 1908 Candidacy." 1908, John Johnston Collection, Alabama State Archives.
204 Thomas Hudson McKee, *The National Conventions and Platforms of All Political Parties* (The Friedenwald Company, 1901), 330, 347, 353,.

weakening the hand of conservatives, and elements of the Progressive faction still forming, the return of former Populists to the Democratic Party fold threatened to upset the balance of power in the state. Disfranchisement offered a means to preserve power and secure assistance from Democrats outside of Texas.

Only two sitting governors, J. Hoge Tyler of Virginia and Joseph Sayers of Texas were named as organizational vice-presidents at Montgomery. For a sitting governor, little could be gained by publicly aligning with the Southern Society. Should the Conference come to be viewed as advancing civil rights, known participants risked a backlash from racially motivated voters. Conversely, if the public viewed the Conference as hostile to the voting rights of African-Americans, known participants faced not the only difficulty with racial liberals but potential hostility from Democratic machines securing power – fairly or fraudulently – on the basis of African-American votes. Unsurprisingly, neither governor participated from a position of strength. Instead, both sought to position themselves in their state's factional struggles.

Tyler sat between two competing groups. In the southern portion of Virginia, a powerful political ring controlled voting in the state's predominately African-American black belt. Members of the ring backed the unpopular United States Senator Thomas Martin. Martin' opponents, called the May Movement, sought to disfranchise African-Americans as a means to remove Martin's power base. Members of the movement favored a constitutional convention to alter Virginia's governing structure. Tyler preferred a small legislative committee to consider proposed changes. Despite Tyler's desires, the initiative to call a convention would pass less

than two weeks after the Montgomery Conference. Becoming involved in the society offered Tyler the support of Democratic Party elders in navigating the coming political turbulence.[205]

Texas, like Virginia, would involve political factions. Unlike in Virginia, the governor of Texas faced factional conflict on two fronts. By 1900 the state's Progressive faction, quiet since the failure of prohibition, began showing signs of life. The Texas Federation of Women's Clubs formed in 1897. The Texas Local Option Association would organize in 1903. Along with a renewed push to Progressivism, former Populists threatened to return to the party. Between urban Progressives and returning rural radicals – in the state that gave birth to the Famers' Alliance – Conservatives risked marginalization.[206]

The involvement of Sayers own – Conservative – faction also argued for him to take a leadership role at the Conference. Conference organizers sent invitations not only to Sayers but also numerous other Texas politicians. Recipients were informed that "the committee feels that this is a movement of greatest interest to the South and that you will be interested in it. We have the honor of informing you that you have been nominated for membership in the society. There is no initiation fee. We shall be pleased to have your prompt reply." The signature line listed all members of the organizing committee, including the current governor of Alabama. An enclosed pamphlet announced that the conference would discuss disfranchisement, limiting African-Americans to industrial education, regulating the black church and, finally, lynching.[207]

---

205 A.H. Blanchard to J. Hoge Tyler, June 26, 1901, J. Hoge Tyler Collection, University of Virginia. Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*, 2001, 199–202.

206 Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*, 229–42.

207 Francis G. Caffery to Redacted but most likely former Congressman George Pendleton, February 12, 1900, Alexander Dienst Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin. (While the addressee has been redacted, a partial address line identifying Belton, Texas has not. Most likely it was meant for Pendleton, a resident of Belton. An outside chance exists that the letter might have been directed at a young James Ferguson. The letter was unlikely to have been addressed to Governor Sayers, a resident of Bastrop. Perhaps most interesting, Dienst, a

The Montgomery Conference represented a turning point for Texas. In 1875, delegates to the state's constitutional convention rejected making payment of a poll tax a prerequisite to voting. Similar poll tax measures failed in 1879, 1881, 1883, 1891 and 1899. In 1900, Governor Sayers became the Southern Society's vice-president in Texas – charged with passing the poll tax into law in the state. The next legislative session would see a poll tax amendment adopted by the legislature and finally adopted by statewide referendum in 1902. [208]

Progressives

The still-forming progressive faction of the Texas Democratic Party helped provide legitimacy for the poll tax. Close links existed between Texas Progressives and the women's movement in the state. While women were never totally absent from the political scene, the decade after the failure of the 1887 state prohibition amendment represented a low point for women's participation in Texas politics. Where found, women were most often involved with the Farmers' Alliance and Populist Party. Middle-class women lacked a similar outlet in the Texas Democratic Party. Frustration with this state of affairs would boil over into the formation or politicization of a number of women's groups between 1891 and 1903. Along with the Texas Women's Press Association and the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs formed one of the chief progressive organizations of the era – and a major supporter of the poll tax.[209]

---

document collector, filed the letter in a section of his collection comprising incriminating nineteenth century political documents). "A Southern Conference."

208 Perman, *Struggle for Mastery*, 2001, 272–75.

209 For women in the Farmer's Alliance and Populist Party *see*, Marion Knox Barthelme, *Women in the Texas Populist Movement: Letters to the Southern Mercury* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997). Lack of documentation forms one of the main problems in working with Farmers' Alliance members – both male and female. The forms of paper used in the 1880s and 1890s simply did not survive conditions on most farms well. Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*, 229–42.

The early Federation attempted to maintain a veneer of conservative womanhood. Launched in 1897, the Federation began as a collection of women's Shakespeare and literary clubs. The group formed out of a series of meeting held at the Texas State Fair beginning in 1894. From the start, the Federation attempted to adopt a façade of non-political Southern womanhood while providing a forum for politically active members. Early organizers sought to limit male attendance at planning meetings. As a result, session titles were designed to indicate some of the dullest subject matter possible. Male attendees "having attended the opening session and found themselves breathing a familiar atmosphere of flowers, silks [and] perfumes . . . and observing the trend of the topics discussed was educational, the men slipped quietly away for the most part and took in the fair. . . Left to themselves the women present gained courage from each other and brought out careful cherished ideas and plans."[210]

The Federation served as an outlet for women with political ambitions but lacking direct power in the Democratic Party. Federation meetings often took forms similar to a political convention. After the fact, minutes were sanitized and official recollections emphasized comity. In 1901, the contest for control of the presidency of the Federation became heated. One faction of the Federation backed Anna Pennybacker – an Austin woman of relatively modest means. The other favored rich, wealthy San Antonio socialite Mary Eleanor Breckenridge. The results were an extended floor fight going so far as to dig into the minutia of the organization's bylaws, with Pennybacker eventually come out on top. Frustration with official club documents' coverage of such disputed proceedings led Judith McArthur, one of the leading scholars of the

210 Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, *The History of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs* (Houston: Dealy-Adey-Elgin Company, printers, 1919), 6.

Progressive women's movement in Texas to conclude that "[c]lubwomen suppressed evidence of such disputatious proceedings; minutes reported outcomes without elaboration and club written reports emphasized consensus and goodwill." Often documents simply "conveyed the impression that several thousand proper ladies had simply conducted a large parlor meeting" irrespective of press reports to the contrary.[211]

For all their protestations of being non-political, no one believed it. As Sarah Calloway, writing under the pen name Pauline Periwinkle in a well-read column in the *Dallas Morning News* explained it:

> In the South it is stated with painstaking care that the club movement has no political significance whatever. In fact the shrinking guardians of the sanctity of the home deeply deplore the introduction of political methods in club campaigns. In the North . . . club women stand pat on the proposition that whenever politics meddles with them, or the interests that concern them, they will be found up and doing. In the few states where women have the ballot, this defensive attitude is magnified into aggressiveness. In spite of what they say for publication, the way of doing things North and South, East and West, differs in name only.

Starting with the 1901 legislative session, the Texas Federation began actively pursuing political goals. Often this took the form of circular letters – printed form letters sent to members or chapters – encouraging some form of political action. As the club's president explained in a 1902 *Dallas Morning News* article:

> Following out this policy no 'lobbying' would be permitted, but when one considers that the husbands, fathers, brothers and sweat hearts of clubwomen were men of influence in the affairs of state, it was conclusive that clubwomen were not without ways and means of influencing legislation. Hence the custom was adopted, that the president should issue circular letters to each club asking that in the home and social circles the influence of each member should be used

211 Judith N. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas, 1893-1918* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 24–25.

> with voters who could directly influence legislation. Thus was created a great, silent, force for the enactment and enforcement of good laws.

Occasional copies of the group's circular letters would appear in the press. Contents of the few surviving letters indicate a political subject matter, often related to the most visible women's issues of the day.[212]

Members of the Texas Federation existed outside the national gold/silver – or in the case of Texas politics railroad commissioner opponent/supporter – axis that defined the conservative and radical wings of the Democratic Party. Club women demanded that state politicians pay less attention to the cotton harvest and more to public health. In the early years of the twentieth century, Texas suffered an 18% child mortality rate. The loss of a child represented a common experience even among upper-class women. Members of the Federation were motivated by the desire to stop seeing their children die. Progressive women sought to improve health, sanitation, and education. By encouraging both public hygiene and educating women in the most recent research on sanitation and nutrition, the Federation sought to reduce the death rate.[213]

While motivated by different concerns than their male colleagues, Federation members were not alienated from the conservative power structure that controlled the Democratic Party. Club women represented a middle and upper-class group with much to lose if currency changes hurt those with established wealth. The organization began with Kate Rotan, wife of Waco wholesale merchant and Democratic Party elder Edward Rotan, as president. Following Rotan, Mary Terrell, wife of successful Tarrant County attorney Joseph Terrell, became president.

---

212 Pauline Periwinkle, "Clubs and Politics," *Dallas Morning News*, October 26, 1903. Bass to Pennybacker, June 16, 1902, Texas Federation of Women's Clubs Papers, Texas Women's Univerity. *Dallas Morning News*, "Club Women and the Poll Tax," September 15, 1902. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 15, 18, 24..

213 McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 33–36.

Joseph Terrell's brother, Alexander Watkins Terrell had served as Grover Cleveland's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, and acted as a leader of the conservative faction of the Texas Democratic Party, promoting disfranchisement measures that came to bear his name. In 1901, Anna Pennybacker, the widow of the deceased president of the Texas State Teachers Association, became president of the group. All had close ties to the state's political establishment.[214]

Under Pennybacker the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs would openly support the poll tax. One of the students in the first class to attend Sam Houston Normal Institute, now Sam Houston State University, Anna Hardwicke tied the recognized valedictorian with a 99 average. Soon after graduation she married Percy V. Pennybacker, passed over for salutatorian with a 98 average. In 1895, Anna Pennybacker published one of the early grade school textbooks on Texas History. Not content simply to write the book, the Pennybackers would form a publishing enterprise to see it in print.[215] Percy's death in 1899 left Anna with three young children and the proceeds of several life insurance policies which she used to buy a house in Austin. Anna continued to run the company, replacing her husband as publisher. Many clubwomen ran some form of business or practiced a profession. Along with the Federation and Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the Texas Woman's Press Association formed part of the triumvirate of

---

214 For general biographies *see*: *Handbook of Texas Online*, Margaret Irby Nichols, "Terrell, Mary Peters Young," accessed January 12, 2017, **http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fte36**. *Handbook of Texas Online*, Roger N. Conger, "Rotan, Kate Sturm McCall," accessed January 12, 2017, **http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/froaf**. For relation with Edward Rotan *see* Edward Rotan and Kate Strum McCall Rotan Papers, Baylor University. *Handbook of Texas Online*, Stacy A. Cordery, "Pennybacker, Anna J. Hardwicke," accessed January 12, 2017, **http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpe30**. "The Dead Educator," *Dallas Morning News*, May 17, 1899.

215 Actually a partnership or sole proprietorship, not a corporation.

leading progressive organizations in the state. At the same time, Pennybacker lacked the large, inherited, wealth or rich husband that often characterized the upper echelons of club leadership.[216]

Pennybacker proved a brilliant political organizer and strategist. Prior to becoming president of the Federation, she served as a traveling organizer helping to set up new Federation chapters and advising those already in existence. During her tenure, the Federation would reorganize into five subdistricts. Fundraising directly from members replaced bake sales and other similar means of raising money. Without the need for some intermediary event, it quickly became apparent that several thousand women could raise very large sums simply through small individual donations.[217] After the expiration of her term in 1903, Pennybacker would go on to rise through the ranks of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, becoming President of the national body in 1912. In later years, she served as a Democratic National Committee member and political advisor to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt campaign. [218]

Taking over the presidency of the Texas Federation in May 1901, Pennybacker's terms would see stunning legislative victories. The movement of the Federation into politics started apace in early 1901. The Texas branch of the Colonial Dames of America nominated the bluebonnet as the state flower. With the death of the founder of the Texas Dames, the group lacked the ability to move the bill through the legislature. Absent leadership, the open cotton

---

216 Anna Pennybacker, United States Census, 1900, District 5, Sheet 4B. Reidt, "The Texas Cyclone," 35–47, 103–6. Mrs Percy V. Pennybacker, *A History of Texas for Schools: Also for General Reading and for Teachers Preparing Themselves for Examination* (Austin: Mrs. P. V. Pennybacker, 1907).

217 Subdividing the state and seeking small dollar donations made the early twentieth century Texas Federation of Women's Clubs arguably better organized that the Texas Democratic Party, circa 2017.

218 Clubs, *The History of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs*, 80–90."Pennybacker, Anna J. Hardwicke," accessed January 12, 2017, **http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpe30**.

boll stood an excellent chance of becoming the state flower. For the Federation, this formed a major insult. Clubwomen argued that the state should pay more attention to child mortality and less to cotton – the state's main crop. Making cotton the state flower formed a very direct and personal insult to every club woman who had lost a child. The sudden and abrupt end of the political career of the legislator proposing the Cotton Boll would continue to be remembered in Texas political circles for decades not least of all because the offending legislator[219] found himself forced to publically apologize for his actions in verse.[220]

Fights over flowers garnered attention. More concrete successes would come in the following special sessions of the legislature. Ten days after the bluebonnet vote the *Austin Daily Statesman* reported a meeting of leading women, and the wives of leading politicians, at the University Literary Club. Attendees included Pennybacker, not yet president of the Texas

---

219 ("Oh, hist to my sonnet
Of the bonnie blue bonnet,
That grows to perfection in Mills,
With its red, white and blue,
All mingled in hue,
It beatifies valleys and hills.

When first song of bird
In springtime is heard,
We hail the sweet breath of the flower,
Sweeter far than the rose,
Wherever it grows,
On hilltops, in valleys or bower.

Sweet flower now "legal,"
Though cotton's more regal,
I bow to the will of the many,
When ladies and lover
Resolve for the clover- [Buffalo Clover, alternative name for the Texas Bluebonnet, which like clover is a legume]
I'll amend it again-not any.")
"Apology Sufficient," *Fort Worth Registrar*, March 7, 1901.
220 "The South's Floral Emblem," *Fort Worth Star Register*, January 31, 1901. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 33-36. "Blue-Bonnet as State Flower Twenty-Three Years Old Today," *San Antonio Express*, March 5, 1924.

Federation of Women's Clubs, Terrell and the wives of Governor Sayers, H.M. Kirby – president of Kirby Lumber Company – and E.M. House, master political strategist, and leader of the state's conservative political machine. After the luncheon, the Federation would soon see a marked improvement in its political fortunes.[221]

Federation members hoped to both to bring the most recent pediatric and sanitary knowledge to Texas. Early in the year, outgoing president Mary Terrell issued a circular letter expressing a somewhat amorphous hope that the coming legislative session might accomplish something for women in higher education. Under incoming president Anna Pennybacker, the legislature would approve both the establishment of the first women's dormitory at the University of Texas and the creation of what would later become known as Texas Women's University. Other minor victories, such as increased spending for public health, also followed. Altogether 1901 would mark major legislative successes for the Federation.[222]

With their legislative success, the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs became strong supporters of the poll tax. The organization's executive committee went so far as to establish a committee on constitutional amendments charged with working to see the poll tax referendum passed. Support for schools formed a major selling point for the tax. Prior to being a requirement to vote, the poll tax provided one of the major funding sources for education. The

---

221 "Of Social Interest," *Austin Daily Statesman*, March 17, 1901, http://ezproxy.library.tamu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.tamu.edu/docview/1612844143?accountid=7082.

222 For more on the 1901 session see Legislative Reference Library of Texas, "House Journal: 27th Legislature, Second Called Session" and "Senate Journal: 27th Legislature, Second Called Session," http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/collections/journals/journals.cfm (accessed January 25, 2017).

Federation, at least publically, hoped that tying payment of the poll tax to voting would increase the amount of money available for schools.[223]

Not all supporters of the tax believed that it meant better schools. In 1902, Pennybacker issued a circular letter urging club women to support and campaign for the poll tax. In response the State Superintendent of Schools chided her that:

> You speak of the amendment as one to "enforce the payment of the poll tax." On the contrary, the devout hope of enlightened citizens ought to be that the poll tax would be very little more paid than at present. The amount of money involved is really trifling and could well be thrown into the sea, if the law as proposed could be enforced. Do you not understand that everybody who pays any tax at present pays his poll tax and that the hope and purpose of the law is that the ignorant negroes, and Mexicans, and corrupt whites in the large cities should cease to determine elections in Texas by their purchased votes?

While passage of the poll tax referendum might improve school finances, it did not form the primary motivation of many of the tax's supporters.[224]

The exchange with Pennybacker includes a significant revelation: public discussion of the poll tax would often turn on the "purity" of the ballot. This represented a response to a particular kind of fraud. Harrison County methods – discussed in more detail in the next chapter – turned on stuffing ballot boxes while adding fraudulent entries to the official tally of voters. Under such a system minorities stopped being voters and instead were voted. Without any form of registration, nothing stopped non-voters' names for being used in the fraud. Disenfranchisement then became necessary to keep these fraudulent ballots from being cast against the public interest as well as the best interests of the voters who found their franchise

223 McArthur, *Creating the New Woman*, 68.
224 Kelley Marie Reidt, "The Texas Cyclone: The Life of Educator-Activist Anna J. H. Pennybacker" (University of Texas, 2006), 178.

stolen. Requiring a poll tax made any large-scale attempt at ballot stuffing prohibitively expensive. Ballot purity saw minorities – principally African Americans – as so politically weak that the best they could hope for was disenfranchisement to prevent their stolen ballots from being turned against them.

In seeking to enact the poll tax, leaders sought to purge "undesirables" from the electorate. Besides shared economic interest and white supremacist beliefs, Texas Progressives possessed tactical reasons for supporting the tax. By 1902, the Populist Party was largely extinct in the countryside. As a largely upper middle class, white and urban faction, Progressives had little in common with the African Americans, Hispanics and poor whites that continued to vote in Texas's urban centers. While violence could silence voters in the countryside, applying similar tactics in an urban area amounted to starting a small war. The poll tax offered a way to make these voters disappear from the electorate. In addition to changing the electorate, voting reform promised to increase the influence of women in the political process.

Primary Elections

Progressive women hoped that legislation implementing the poll tax would give rise to statewide primary elections. Absent the right to vote, women looked to other means to influence the political process. Providing funding for candidates or working on campaigns offered routes to power and influence. Statewide primaries enhanced these forms of political participation. In 1902, the Federation's current and immediate past president – the first a resident of Terrell's district and the second his sister and law –

possessed ties to Alexander Watkins Terrell, the legislator who would draft the revised election laws implementing the poll tax. While club women backed the poll tax for a variety of reasons,

support for some version of the Terrell Election Law – the act which implemented the new poll tax in 1903 – represents the most likely cause for the group's formal endorsement of the tax.

Prior to the Terrell Election Law, political parties lacked a solid basis in Texas law. No official ballot existed. In theory, a voter could cast a ballot by taking a sheet of letter paper, writing the name of preferred candidates on it, and giving the ballot to a receiving judge to be placed in the ballot box. When the time came to count the ballots, the handwritten piece of paper would be unfolded, the names read, and the various votes counted. In practice, candidates banded together to have their names placed on preprinted ballots printed in newspapers or handed to voters at polling places. While all candidates on the same ticket often came from the same political party, no law required this practice. During various fusion deals, both Democrats and Republicans appeared as candidates on the Texas Populist Party ballot.[225]

Choosing which candidates a party selected could be a highly informal process. By 1900 two methods of selection existed. The cheaper method involved conventions. Local gatherings of party members selected whom to place on the ticket. Failing to secure the nomination, disappointed candidates could print rival tickets. George Clark, who failed to secure the Texas Democratic Party nomination for Governor at the 1892 state Democratic Convention, proved one of the most high-profile disappointed candidates of the era. Absent the nomination, Clark went on style himself an independent Democrat. Illustrative of the problems with this system, the Clark campaign noted that "[an] effort is being made by Culberson, McCall and Wortham to

225 *Revised Civil Statutes of the State of Texas* (Austin: E. von Boeckmann, 1895), 361.

induce Clark men to scratch their ticket and vote for them. These men were asked to accept a place on the Clark ticket but refused. I urge upon all of our friends to vote the ticket straight."[226]

Primaries represented the more expensive means of choosing candidates. Under a primary, an election selected the nominee. Organizing and running a primary represented a significant expense. How much respect this process might garner depended on local circumstances. Despite these drawbacks, primaries became steadily more popular throughout the late nineteenth century. Texas law would first recognize the practice in 1895 with an act making it illegal to vote multiple times in a primary or carry out any of several other forms of basic electoral fraud. The women of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs possessed good reason to back a poll tax amendment if the legislation implementing the change might lead to statewide primaries.[227]

Texas women found their political options limited both by male resistance and the threat of violence. During the 1887 prohibition election, women openly canvased to ban alcohol in the state. As one writer put it, this was:

> when women have laid aside the modesty of women – the purity of womanly dignity – in order to become professional politicians. To lead the fight for prohibition and spread the vilest lies against people who are different from them. Women in whom nothing more of womanhood is left but their underskirts – have forfeited all respect due to women, and deserve no better treatment than to be served as unscrupulous male politicians.

After the failure of the 1887 prohibition referendum, women would continue to participate in local option – county level prohibition – elections. The forms of participation changed in

---

226 A. L. Matlock, "Circular Letter," October 31, 1892, Alexander Dienst Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.
227 Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*, 203–4.

response to the threat of violence. During a 1902 local option campaign in Red River County, reports indicated that:

> Grandville Jones will make several speeches for the pros. The latter are enlisting the services of the women and children for active work on Election Day. Arrangements are already being made for a street parade by many ladies with children carrying banners.

By 1902, organizers arranged for a male leader to take the most visible role. Women with children helped reinforce the feminine aspect of the undertaking. Use of parades also reinforced a communal aspect, discouraging the targeting of individual women. Ironically, in the case of Red River County, these procedures were felt necessary in a section of Texas likely to support prohibition.[228]

Women possessed little chance of influencing a county convention. Resistance to women in politics made it difficult to openly lobby delegates. Leading newspapers in the state regularly voiced their editorial disapproval for women in politics. Robert's Rules of Order limited the ability to formally address or influence members of an assembly. Lack of the vote barred women from membership at conventions limited to voters. Soft power could only go so far in a convention setting. While women could seek to influence voting members going into a convention, changing circumstances risked nullifying any attempt of lobbying. Shifting alliances,

228 "The State Press," *Dallas Morning News,* July 31, 1887. (The original excerpt comes from the *Victoria Deutche Zeiting.* Perhaps unsurprisingly one of the longest standing ethnic grievances in Texas History – prohibition – was fueled by two subaltern groups placed at odds by the political system. Texas Germans felt their culture under attack by prohibition votes. Women involved in the prohibition movement looked for a cause that would give them greater political voice at a time most avenues were closed to them). "Red River County Stirred, Prohibition Fight Most Exciting Ever Known There," *Dallas Morning News,* June 4, 1902.

the emergence of a dark horse candidate or the failure of a frontrunner threatened to derail even the best-laid plans.[229]

Compared to a convention, primaries offered greater ability to influence outcomes. Primaries limited the ability for new candidates to suddenly enter contention. Further, they required a greater expenditure of resources by candidates. Modern campaign management recognizes three basic resources: time, money and people. Information, especially that provided by modern big data, is sometimes listed as a fourth resource.[230] The need to secure money to wage a primary campaign increased the importance of middle and upper-class women with independent means – a description that applied to many clubwomen. A primary meant that even in a state fast moving to a one-party system, candidates still needed to win at least one election. While women collectively lacked the vote, individual women could influence events by providing needed resources.[231]

The combination of poll tax and primary also offered women greater roles as volunteers for political campaigns. Federation tactics focused on a form of moral suasion – influencing voters through moral or social pressure – aimed at "husbands, fathers, brothers and sweat hearts." This emphasized contact with multiple individuals throughout a social sphere. Such contacts could function as a form of canvassing. While not as efficient as knocking on a large

229 Henry Martyn Robert, *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies: Rules of Order. A Compendium of Parliamentary Law, Based upon the Rules and Practice of Congress. Organization and Conduct of Business...* (Chicago: S.C.Griggs and Company, 1893). For opposition to women in politics *see:* "Untitled," *Dention County News*, April 15, 1897. "Rabbi Says 'Women in Politics Horrid,'" *Dallas Morning News*, February 7, 1909. "The Kingdom of Home," *Dallas Morning News*, September 8, 1900. For an example of shifting alignments at a county convention *see*, "One Hundred Ballots Taken—Still No Nominatin," *Austin Daily Statesman* July 4, 1902.
230 Republicans tend to view information as a fourth resource while Democrats keep to the more traditional three.
231 Jeff Blodgett and Bill Lofy, *Winning Your Election the Wellstone Way: A Comprehensive Guide for Candidates and Campaign Workers* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 2008), 23.

number of doors, the immediacy of moral suasion may have meant that the Federation's tactics could influence a higher percentage of voters that were contacted. A smaller electorate in which a greater percentage of voters comprised upper and middle-class individuals with the wealth to pay the poll tax meant an increase in influence for upper and middle-class women.[232]

Poll taxes and primaries also made traditional methods of canvassing less effective. Canvassing comes in two forms. Untargeted canvasing attempts to knock on every door in a defined area – normally a precinct that has historically shown heavy support for a party, candidate or issue. Targeted canvasing attempts to speak only with supporters, or persuadable voters. Targeted canvasing forms a time-intensive undertaking. Canvassers need to travel from one targeted door to another. By limiting the number of potential voters to only those who paid their tax, the poll tax transformed blanket canvassing into less time efficient targeted door knocking. This coupled with the need to identify voters willing and able to vote in a primary imposed a significant time burden on canvassers. Less effective canvassing increased the political value of tactics utilized by women's groups.[233]

A Confluence of Interests

Both Conservatives and Progressives possessed interrelated reasons to seek the passage of the poll tax. Both sides would work diligently toward its passage – and the exclusion of the troublesome third faction from Texas politics. With two of the state's three factions in agreement, the stage was set for a campaign to do whatever it took to get the poll tax passed and implemented into law. Ironically for a measure publicly represented as curbing ballot fraud, the

232 "Club Women and the Poll Tax," *Dallas Morning News*, September 15, 1902.
233 Catherine Shaw, *The Campaign Manager: Running and Winning Local Elections* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2013), 179–80.

passage of the poll tax and its later implementation would enable widespread fraud in the 1902 and 1904 elections. While failing to clean up the state's elections, the passage of the tax would succeed in formally solidify the conservative counterrevolution against Populism into law.

CHAPTER VII

COUP

The poll tax transformed Texas politics. It required an unprecedented level of electoral fraud to pass the poll tax referendum in 1902 which continued into the 1904 elections, but thereafter Texas politics settled into a regime giving Conservatives systematic advantages. The new system required candidates to run in a Democratic primary where, in most instances, only whites could vote. Of the white population, only those who paid a poll tax could cast a ballot. Candidates for lower offices faced unknown registration fees set by local parties often dominated by conservatives. Together this allowed Conservatives control of the pipeline of elected officials for higher office. In conjunction with the threat of violence against other parties, the resulting framework systematically advantaged Conservative candidates.

Harrison County Methods

The poll tax amendment did not pass in a free and fair election. With Progressives and Conservatives – two of Texas's three Democratic political factions – backing the tax, there was little to deter vote rigging. Returning Populists, the rural radical faction, lacked the institutional infrastructure and support of the other groups. With radicals largely unable to resist, fraud could be used to secure the passage of a measure widely touted as combating fraud with little worry about public outcry.

Poll tax supporters claimed that the tax would eliminate various forms of fraud. Campaign slogans calling for voters to "purify the ballot" reflected both the measure's racist intentions – pushing the racially impure out of the electorate – and the hope that the tax would limit fraud. By requiring each purported voter to make a payment, the tax also stood to make

blatant ballot stuffing expensive. Requiring poll tax payment stood to make attempts at vote buying uneconomical.[234]

In Texas, the most well-known form of ballot fraud consisted of "Harrison County methods." Harrison County, a majority African-American county, routinely produced large Democratic majorities. State law required the number of ballots cast to match the number of voters appearing on official tally sheets. Luminaries such as Robert E. Lee and Grover Cleveland regularly appeared on lists of voters casting their ballot in Harrison. Populist Congressional candidate James H. Davis observed that, in Harrison County, a dog voted against him six times in one election. Poll tax supporters hoped that making payments a prerequisite for voting would eliminate this form of fraud by putting a cost on each name fraudulently added to the voter rolls.[235]

Harrison County methods were, most likely, carried out by making false returns. Vote totals were selected, with names then added to the tally of those voting in the election. Faking returns required a community willing to accept the results. This presented a paradox. A county in which residents believed in a party or candidate to a degree that they would accept blatant electoral fraud also formed a community likely to give that party or candidate a large margin of victory. As a result, Harrison County methods could only be carried out in an area where the majority of voters lacked power and were unlikely to receive aid from outside authorities. Unsurprisingly, similar accusations of fraud would arise in majority African-American counties throughout much of the South.

---

234 "The 'Poll Tax' Question," *The Southern Mercury*, March 20, 1902.
235 Robert Miller Worth, "Harrison County Methods: Election Fraud In Late Nineteenth Century Texas," *Locus: Regional and Local History* 7, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 111–28. .

Despite their infamy, Harrison County methods proved more an embarrassment than an aid to Texas Democrats. Successful election manipulations go unnoticed. Harrison County got caught. Harrison routinely produced Democratic majorities so large that providing names for purported voters taxed the imaginations of local officials. Punch-drunk conspirators, racking their brains for names to list on the voting roster, offered up dogs and former presidents. The county's reputation grew to the point that George Clark's 1892 gubernatorial campaign used the possibility that it might be subjected to Harrison County methods to motivate volunteers in other parts of the state. While party leaders undoubtedly appreciated the votes – Harrison County produced the ninth largest margin for the poll tax of any county in the state – Harrison County methods proved so blatant that only a limited number of counties could employ them.[236]

Vote Buying

Poll tax supporters also hoped to end the practice of vote buying. As the name implied, vote buying exchanged money for support. Absent a secret ballot, it remained relatively easy to ensure that purchased ballots were actually cast before payments were made. A poll tax would escalate the price of ballots. Payment of the tax could be required before the election entered a stage where vote buying would take place. Doing so rendered paying the poll tax, in the hopes of later selling a voter, a financially risky proposition. While vote-buying took place in some nineteenth-century elections, it would have been unlikely to play a factor in any large-scale race. Instead, allegations of vote buying likely arose for misunderstanding of voter turnout efforts.[237]

---

236 Matlock, "Circular Letter."A. L. Matlock, "Circular Letter," October 31, 1892, Alexander Dienst Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

237 Vote buying can also combine with the public memory of later poll tax fraud. Texas law would outlaw paying the poll tax of another. This allowed candidates to secure an advantage by, illegally, providing poll tax money to supporter groups. This process was akin to trying to shape the electorate through voter registration today. Such frauds would only become useful as the number of individuals paying the poll tax dropped after 1904. For an

Along with Harrison County methods, vote buying proved one of the most well-known forms of electoral fraud in nineteenth-century Texas. Vote buying represented a practice that existed only on a small scale. The few nineteenth-century sources that give details on vote buying schemes put the cost of a vote at between three and ten dollars in the 1890s. Converted to 2016 dollars, the price of a vote ranged between eighty and two hundred fifty dollars. While a potentially useful tactic in small, local elections, the high price of votes made any form of large-scale vote buying impractical.[238]

Nineteenth-century campaigns had better things to spend their money on than vote buying. In recent years political scientists have produced an array of studies on the cost-effectiveness of nineteenth-century style campaigning. Canvassing, face to face meetings with voters common in the nineteenth century, represents one of the most cost-effective means for a modern campaign to increase its vote. For a modern campaign, each new voter-generated by canvassing costs around sixteen dollars. For the votes generated, knocking on door represented a much more cost-effective means of generating support than buying votes.[239]

Outside of cost and risk, vote buying presented a problem of scale. Any election tactic must account for how long it will take and how many people it will require. Many ideas simply

---

example of this kind of poll tax fraud *see* David Richards, *Once Upon a Time in Texas: A Liberal in the Lone Star State* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010).

238 Gerald H. Gaither, *Blacks and the Populist Movement: Ballots and Bigotry in the New South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 146. Unanimous agreement exists among the current politicians, consultants and party officials that the author has talked to that giving out alcohol at the polls would be a wonderful way to boost turnout – if it were not illegal. By the late nineteenth century the use of alcohol as a get out the vote technique had already led to the closure of saloons on election days in some locations. For more on the use of alcohol as a Get Out The Vote technique *see* W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981).

239 Donald P. Green and Alan S. Gerber, *Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout* (Brookings Institution Press, 2015), 155–84. (It would be hard to overstate the importance of Green and Gerber's work on modern campaign practices).

become impossible when applied to thousands or tens of thousands of people. Scaling problems become even more pressing if the tactic requires the time and attention of a skilled individual. In the waning days of a campaign, a candidate and his or her team are likely to find themselves with more complex tasks than they physically have time to cover. Anything that would require attention from experienced staff must be justified in light of all the other demands a campaign faces.

Buying votes represented a very inefficient use of resources. A campaign worker bribing one voter every thirty minutes, and working ten hours a day for the thirty days before the election, could purchase six hundred votes, at a minimum cost of $1,200 – about thirty thousand dollars in 2016 funds. A person that could be entrusted with substantial sums of money, and be relied upon to work long hours, could be better employed than by buying a limited number of votes. Rich and desperate candidates for local or municipal office might resort to vote buying. The practice failed to form a winning strategy for candidates faced with a larger electorate.[240]

If buying of votes was rare, tipping of voters was common. Tipping grew out of the eighteenth-century practice of candidates providing alcohol to their supporters at the polls. With prohibition a live issue in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, tapping a keg to encourage supporters to come out could backfire. In response campaigns focused on a number of alternatives, from providing food to simply giving supporters ten cents – the price of a drink –

240 Morgan Friedman, "Inflation Calculator," April 2, 2015, http://www.westegg.com/inflation/. The best known example of modern vote buying comes out of Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s. Voters appear to have been paid $5 to vote in local elections. Despite Mayor Richard Daley's fearsome reputation as a political boss, known reports appear more the actions of an incompetent system on autopilot than a well thought out plan. Jack C. Doppelt and Ellen Shearer, *Nonvoters: America's No-Shows* (London: SAGE, 1999), 93.

to do with as they pleased. Vote buying aimed to persuade voters to select a certain candidate. Voter tipping sought to encourage supporters to come out to the polls by paying them to vote. [241]

Voter tipping, especially with alcohol, proved so pervasive as to go largely unnoticed. Historian Roscoe Martin, working in 1933 from unpreserved oral history accounts, concluded that "white voters could rely on a candidate to provide them with 'something to drink' occasionally, and especially on or just before election day." In South Texas, the Democratic Blue Club was known to engage in voter tipping – both with money and alcohol. Blue Club members took the process one step further – corralling voters by holding an owl meeting the night before the election, then herding participants to the polls first thing in the morning.[242]

Ironically, researchers looking into nineteenth-century campaign methods have found that holding a fair, carnival or concert at a polling place represents the most cost-effective way of turning out the vote in a modern election. Unlike a renewed emphasis on canvassing – the ground game of modern elections – campaigns have been hesitant to utilize concerts and fairs at polling locations. Laws dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth century – aimed at curbing voter tipping – often make polling place carnivals legally questionable. Given its effectiveness, voter tipping – in money, alcoholic beverages or by providing entertainment to attract supporters to polls – proved a common practice in the nineteenth century.[243]

---

241 W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 152.W. J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 152. Gaither, *Blacks and the Populist Movement*, 146.

242 Roscoe Coleman Martin, *The People's Party in Texas: A Study in Third Party Politics* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970), 180. Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas*, 16.Evan Anders, *Boss Rule in South Texas: The Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013), 16.

243 Green and Gerber, *Get Out the Vote*, 155–84.

Louisiana Methods

The referendum to pass the poll tax – a measure meant to limit fraud – saw some of the most sophisticated forms of fraud known at the time used to secure its passage. Congressional investigations into the 1888 Louisiana governor's election documented forms of ballot tampering far in advance of Harrison County methods. Tactics aimed to intercept and remove ballots before they were cast, replace ballots already cast or, where control was strongest, simply replace returns wholesale. All would appear during the poll tax referendum.

Like many criminal undertakings, the possibility of jail time if discovered discouraged perpetrators from committing details to paper, but not from committing the underlying fraud. Accusations of voter fraud plagued most Southern elections from Reconstruction through the mid-twentieth century. Unlike the rumors of fraud that occasionally grow around elections in modern western democracies, well-accepted cases of fraud exist in the nineteenth-century American South. Examining election returns and documented cases of fraud offer some idea of where votes were manipulated. Exceptional data may also give some insight as to how manipulation took place. While various broad types of fraud can be identified, the exact details of a successful attempt to manipulate an election will often remain obscure.[244]

Although exact details may remain obscure, forensic accounting provides some tools to identify that fraud took place. Benford's Law – named after the physicist who discovered it – deals with sequences of numbers. In a natural sequence, the last digit (or second to last digit of

244 For a counterpoint see: Richard J. Jensen, The Winning of the Midwest: Social and Political Conflict, 1888-1896 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971). Jensen argues that allegations of fraud where false or greatly exaggerated in the mid-West. In doing so he specifically distinguishes the region from the South and identifies Southern elections of the time as likely marred by fraud.

zero), will fall between one and nine in a pattern. About thirty percent of numbers should end in one and five percent in nine. By contrast, an artificial sequence, a series of numbers created at random, will lack this distribution. The observation that the last digit in a natural sequence of numbers should fit a pattern makes Benford's law useful for forensic accountants. A wrongdoer is unlikely to know to conform their entries to Benford's law while fabricating entries. Codified by Frank Benford in 1938, nobody would have been aware of the property in 1902. While a useful tool in forensic accounting, intense scholarly debate rages on Benford's Law's applicability to election returns.[245]

245 Joseph Deckert, Mikhail Myagkov, and Peter C. Ordeshook, "Benford's Law and the Detection of Election Fraud," Political Analysis 19, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 245–68, https://doi.org/10.1093/pan/mpr014.Joseph Deckert, Mikhail Myagkov, and Peter C. Ordeshook, "Benford's Law and the Detection of Election Fraud," Political Analysis 19, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 245–68, doi:10.1093/pan/mpr014. Walter R. Mebane, "Comment on 'Benford's Law and the Detection of Election Fraud,'" Political Analysis 19, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 269–72, https://doi.org/10.1093/pan/mpr024.Walter R. Mebane, "Comment on 'Benford's Law and the Detection of Election Fraud,'" Political Analysis 19, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 269–72, doi:10.1093/pan/mpr024. The author's view is that controversial premise that some American elections fail Benford's Law arises from the use of outdated tabulation equipment.

Distribution of Last Digit Under Benford's Law									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Benford's Law	30.10 %	17.61 %	12.49 %	9.69%	7.92%	6.69%	5.80%	5.12%	4.58%
Votes For the Poll Tax	13.70 %	12.33 %	8.22%	11.42%	7.76%	9.13%	10.05%	15.07%	12.33%
Percent of Expected Value	**54.49** %	70.01 %	65.79 %	117.80 %	98.04 %	136.41 %	173.23 %	**294.58** %	**269.44** %
Dice Game Probabilities (2D6)	NA	2.77%	5.55%	8.33%	11.11 %	13.88%	16.66%	13.83%	11.11%

Table 10: Analysis Of Vote For The Poll Tax Under Benford's Law.
Returns for 209 counties were analyzed. *Source: Biennial Report of the Texas Secretary of State, 1902*, 17-18.

The poll tax referendum violates Benford's Law, badly. Analyzing poll tax referendum results from 209 counties shows an almost even distribution of last digits. Assuming that at least some counties reported legitimate results, a stark pattern emerges. Numbers absent or with a low probability of being generated in a dice game are underrepresented as the last digit of election returns. The greatest shortfall is found with the last digit of one, a number that cannot be generated by rolling two six-sided dice. It is as if a group of gamblers fabricated the final digit of a series of election returns based on their betting patterns. (See, Table 10).[246]

The end of reconstruction saw rampant election fraud throughout the South. The poll tax referendum, in 1902, shows the markers of several forms of fraud known to have been used in Louisiana in the late 1880s. Instead of stuffing boxes with additional ballots, Louisiana methods turned on making votes disappear, or replacing ballots after they were cast. Evidence suggests that a number of these methods were employed during the Texas referendum, in at least some counties.[247]

Vote interception offers one explanation for the questionable accuracy of poll tax referendum returns. Interception often consisted of no more than palming ballots. According to reports from Louisiana:

> Two or three gentlemen (Democrats) sat upon the table by the [ballot] box from the time the polls opened until they closed. When a Republican voted, in nearly every case, one of the commissioners would take his ballot to put it in the box. Very few, if any, were put in the box. They were generally put on the table behind the box. Toward the close of the polls, the floor under the table was covered with the tickets taken from the colored voters by the commissioners to

246 Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas* (Austin: State Printing Office, 1903), 17–18.

247 Robing the ballot, simply stealing ballot boxes by force, could also be used. However, this tactic does not seem to appear after its use led to Congressional investigation of a shootout and lynching in Washington County, Texas in the mid-1880s.

> put in the box, which they failed to do. There were but few colored men allowed to deposit their vote.

Ballot interception held the promise of being nearly undetectable. As long as the conspirators controlled the record of who voted, opposing voters vanished into a sea of non-voters.[248]

Concerns about similar forms of fraud circulated in Texas. In order to prevent ballot box stuffing by sleight of hand, Texas law required voters to give their ballot to a receiving election judge who would then pass it to a second judge for deposit the ballot box. In 1892, Democrat James Stephen Hogg faced a general election challenge from Independent Democrat George Clark. Ironically, as the candidate of the Conservative faction of the Texas Democratic Party, the Clark campaign was aligned with the group most often associated with electoral fraud. Facing opposition from the party apparatus after Hogg's nomination as the party candidate, Clark's campaign chairman sent a letter to county organizers. According to the letter:

> This is IMPORTANT and MUST be DEMANDED and NOT NEGLECTED. Select some good and true Clark men for [election] Judge and Clerk at each polling place. Demand of the presiding officer, before the day of the election, their appointment.
>
> . . .
>
> The law further requires "the presiding judge to designate two of the judges to be counting judges and that the presiding judge and remaining judge shall be receiving judges . . . You must have good men for these positions who will see that there is a fair count.

Unlike the other letters sent by this campaign, the fraud warning was individually addressed to local leaders involved in the campaign. The Clark camp believed that fraud was a real

248 "George Y. Kelso to Congress, April 20, 1888," in *The Congressional Record* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888), 7823.

possibility. Placing importance on receiving judges indicates ballot intercept formed one of the several types of fraud that worried the campaign.[249]

The nineteenth-century system of ticket voting complicates attempts to identify ballot interception. Under the nineteenth century system of party tickets, outside groups printed ballots with the names of candidates they supported. A voter unhappy with these choices could scratch the ticket, striking out a disfavored name and writing in a new name. Depending on the system used, multiple ballots may have been required for differing elections. In the case of the poll tax, this raises the possibility of an undervote. Voters may have had their ballots cast in one election, but had their vote in the poll tax referendum – on a separate piece of paper – intercepted.

Examining the undervote between the 1902 Governor's race and the poll tax election shows remarkable results. On average, counties saw a twelve percent undervote between the Governor's and poll tax election. The median value, of which half of the entries fall above and half under is fourteen percent. The standard deviation, exemplifying the range of results, is slightly over **forty** percent – a huge variation. Approximately one-third of counties reported an undervote of more than twenty percent. The range of result varies so widely and strikingly that it compels the conclusion that something, either interception or lack of ballots, thwarted voters from making their will known during the election.

249 A.L. Matlock to W. W. Hair, October 20, 1892, Alexander Dienst Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

County	Votes For Governor	Votes for the Poll Tax	Votes Against the Poll Tax	Total Votes in Poll Tax Election	Undervote
Starr	1779	200	1264	1464	18%
Hidalgo	1020	125	218	343	66%

Table 11: Comparison Of Votes Cast In Starr And Hidalgo Counties.
Returns for 209 counties were analyzed. (No poll tax referendum return was available for Hopkins or Hunt counties. No results from the Governor's race are available in Zapata County).
Source: Biennial Report or the Texas Secretary of State, 1902, 17-18.

The clearest argument for ballot interception comes from two neighboring counties in the southern Rio Grande Valley. Both Starr and Hidalgo counties were home to large Hispanic populations. In Starr County, approximately eighteen percent of voters chose to sit out the poll tax referendum. In Hidalgo, two-thirds neglected to cast a ballot. Give the two counties' close geographical proximity, similar demographics and roughly similar number of voters, the drop-off is striking. Something made a large number of poll tax referendum ballots vanish in Hidalgo County. Ballot interception, the inability of voters to cast poll tax referendum ballots, offers an explanation for the shortfall. (See, Table 11).

Ballot interception schemes were supplemented by ballot substitution. In a vote substitution scheme, at the conclusion of the election ballot boxes were swapped out with boxes prestuffed with a set number of votes. Use of prestuffed boxes ensured that changes could be made quickly, while still preserving some fiction of a legitimate election. In Louisiana:

> At Cheneyville, Mr. Barrett, the Republican candidate for State senator, distributed 180 votes to colored men, and they voted the tickets he gave them and about half pasted 5' o'clock in the evening Mr. Batter went to get a drink of water. He was absent from the poll about five minutes, and when he returned he saw a small crowd of white men entering the room where the ballot-boxes were. And when he inquired what was the matter, he was told the polls had closed and the commissioners were about to commence the counting of the votes. Mr. Barrett stayed until 9:15 p.m.; up to that time 300 votes had been counted, all straight Democrats and not one Republican vote. . . Mr. Barrett could not understand, as he and a friend had kept a tally all day, and had been absent but five minutes and according to their tally there were but 260 votes cast, and 180 of them Republican.

Unlike in Harrison County, participants made at least an attempt to keep the number of votes counted in line with the amount of votes cast.[250]

In theory, ballot substitution could allow for elaborate frauds. Boxes could be stuffed with fewer ballots that the expected minimum turnout. After the election, ballots from the actual boxes could be scoped into the fake boxes to make up the difference. Doing would not only match the number of ballots in the box to the number of votes actually cast but also give the election a patina of legitimacy. Moving ballots from a legitimate to a fraudulent box meant that returns would bear some resemblance to the actual election. This maneuver would have readily suggested itself to anyone who had ever done an analysis of precinct-level voting returns for use in a campaign.

Complex ballot stuffing schemes required multiple moving parts to come together properly. Stuffed ballot boxes would need to contain fewer fake ballots than the number of actual ballots cast. Participants would need an accurate tally of ballots, time alone to make the swap, and an ability not to botch the math under pressure. Unsurprisingly, reports of ballot substitution schemes during the 1888 Louisiana election turned on instances where those involved may have attempted a fraud but lacked the skills to carry it out.

In Texas, the most likely case of ballot substitution originates in Burleson County. Official returns filed with the Texas Secretary of State indicate that, in Burleson, 1554 voters favored the poll tax. Brazos County reported 1553 – a remarkably similar number – of votes for the poll tax. Burleson County records relating to the election brings up a surprising discovery.

---

250 "George Y. Kelso to Congress, April 20, 1888."

An election took place on November 11, 1902 – the date of the general election where the poll tax appeared on the ballot. County commissioners duly certified that an "election of state, district, county and precinct officers," took place. No mention appears of the poll tax referendum and, more importantly, no precinct-level results are listed. Review of other entries in the same volume, and discussion with the current Burleson County Clerk produce the conclusion that poll tax returns should have appeared in the 1902 entries.[251]

Given the similarity between returns in Burleson and neighboring Brazos, one interpretation would be that stuffed ballot boxes were prepared for each county. Due to unfamiliarity with ballot substitution, each county received fake boxes with almost exactly the same number of pro-poll tax ballots – possibly the result of reading the same number twice off a list. The stuffed boxes were wheeled into polling places without any attempt to include ballots from the legitimate box. When the mistake became apparent, Burleson County commissioners declined to commit perjury by certifying a clearly erroneous result.

Ballot interception and ballot substitution turned on a need to preserve the illusion of legitimacy. Both schemes required only a limited amount of time and control. After the election, ballots found in the box created the desired total. By contrast, simply miscounting ballots or faking reported election results could produce the desired result. Four years before the contested 1888 election Bossier Parish Louisiana witnessed a clear-cut case of counting fraud.

> Colonel J.A. Snider and Judge R.C. Druse were both candidates before the people at the general election of 1884, and the Republican tickets were divided between them equally. Out of 6000 tickets order for the parish, 3,000 were Snider, judge

---

251 Brazos and Burleson in "Texas Secretary of State's Election Returns.," 1902, Texas State Library & Archives. "Election Returns, November 11, 1902, Record of Election Returns, 1892-1910," n.d., Burleson County Clerk's Records. Returns for Brazos are not currently in the custody of the County Clerk.

> and 3,000 for Druse, judge. It was hoped that when these tickets were taken from the ballot-box they would be counted for Stevenson as governor, as well as for Snider or Druse, whoever was so lucky at to get the Republican ticket voted with his name on, but this was not done. The friends of Snider and Druse watched closely for Druse and Snider names and counted every one voted for them, whether it was on the Republican or Democratic ticket, at some of the boxes, and at others they divided the Republican ticket equally between Snider and Druse, and threw away the Republican tickets and put in Democratic tickets, These facts are made known publically in contending for the claims of Druse and Snider by their friends. I simply state these fact to show that combination cannot amount to much for the Republican ticket, and a fair count where the Republicans are so largely in majority and their success so certain, if a fair chance is given.

With a sufficient amount of control, any need for legitimacy could be simply done away with. In Ascension Parish, Louisiana Democrats simply swapped the number of votes reported for the Democratic and Republican candidate. In an act of particular brazenness, the Ascension Parish election records – the location of the precinct level returns, vital information to any future candidate – reflected the correct vote.[252]

Counting frauds were widely used in Texas prior to the poll tax referendum. The clearest example of counting fraud originated with the 1896 Presidential race. Due to William Jennings Bryan's refusal to name a Populist as a running mate, voters could cast ballots for either Arthur Sewall, a Democrat, or Thomas Watson, a Populist as vice-president. In applying statistical analysis to the election, historian Gregg Cantrell noticed an interesting pattern. Despite Watson running as a friend to African-Americans, almost no African-Americans ballots were counted for the Bryan-Watson ticket. Instead, approximately twenty percent of African-American voters in Texas had their ballots counted for the Bryan-Sewall ticket. In the same

252 "B. F. O'Neal to Congress, April, 1884," in *The Congressional Record* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888), 7823.

election, an estimated 42,000 former Populists voted for both Bryan-Sewall and the conservative Democratic candidate for governor – an unlikely pairing. Ballots for Bryan were counted as straight ticket votes for the Democratic Party regardless of what the voter chose in down-ballot races.[253]

The push to pass the poll tax at any cost created chaos. On December 12, 1902, the Dallas morning news included a brief article:

> Several Counties has [sic] not yet sent in their election returns to the Secretary of State. It is imperative that the returns should be forwarded at the earliest possible moment as the vote for all district offices must be canvassed next Monday by the Secretary of State, in the presence of the Governor.

The deadline found counties with work still to be done. Hopkins and Hunt, two counties each providing the incoming governor with lopsided margins of victory, failed to certify their vote for the poll tax referendum. The poll tax passed, but the election was far from smooth.[254]

Implementation

With the Texas constitution now recognizing payment of a poll tax as a prerequisite for voting, attention turned to implementation. Evidence suggests that leaders intended some form of compromise between Progressives and Conservatives in implementing the law. Instead of a compromise, the final version would overwhelmingly favor Conservatives, both systematically shutting down the opposition and creating opportunities for fraud. Once implementing laws took effect, the incentive to involve minority ethnic groups in Texas politics evaporated. With one

---

253 Gregg Cantrell and D. Scott Barton, "Texas Populists and the Failure of Biracial Politics," The Journal of Southern History 55, no. 4 (1989): 659–92, https://doi.org/10.2307/2209044.Gregg Cantrell and D. Scott Barton, "Texas Populists and the Failure of Biracial Politics," The Journal of Southern History 55, no. 4 (1989): 659–92, doi:10.2307/2209044.

254 "Election Returns Slow, Vote Must be Canvassed in the Presence of the Governor Monday," Dallas Morning News

faction's victory all but guaranteed, no reason existed for any group to risk retaliation by attempting to form a multi-ethnic coalition.

Alexander Watkins Terrell

Drafting the law implementing the poll tax fell to Alexander Watkins Terrell. Terrell. Terrell, the brother-in-law of the immediate past president of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs, held connections to both the state's Progressive and Conservative factions. After the Civil War, Terrell rose to leadership among the state's Conservatives. Terrell, a long-time supporter of the poll tax, originated many of the prior – unsuccessful – attempts to make its payment a prerequisite to voting. After serving in the Texas State Senate for a number of years, Terrell's party connections allowed him to secure an appointment as United States ambassador to the Ottoman Empire.[255] Having already retired once from public life, Terrell represented a leader too old to have ambitions to higher office. [256]

In 1902, Terrell emerged from retirement to seek election to the Texas House. This formed an unusual step. Politicians rarely seek election to lower offices than the one they formerly held. Terrell's bid enjoyed heavy Progressive backing. Anna Pennybacker, the current president of the Federation, resided in the same Travis County district Terrell sought to represent. One letter from the Federation urging candidates for office to publicly embrace the poll tax referendum read:

> For comprehensive views on [the poll tax] I call your attention to Judge A. W. Terrell, one of our most distinguished men – a statesman, scholar and diplomat. . . To the patriotic man, ever alive to the interests of the children of Texas, our citizens of the future, no argument is needed to determine his course of action on this question.

---

255 Terrell's proper diplomatic title was Minister to the Ottoman Empire.
256 Gould, Alexander Watkins Terrell, 151–52. Lewis L. Gould, Alexander Watkins Terrell: Civil War Soldier, Texas Lawmaker, American Diplomat (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 151–52.

Terrell would prove a poor choice to guide the new election law through the legislature.[257]

Alexander Watkins Terrell represented a throwback to another era. Part of the generation that fought the Civil War and saw the end of reconstruction, Terrell would have been referred to as a Bourbon or Redeemer. Terrell, a Conservative, opposed big business, favored agriculture and adamantly supported white supremacy. In a time when big business meant Northern interests, agriculture still favored the antebellum Southern elite, and the future course of race relations had yet to be charted, this made Terrell a Conservative. By 1902, Terrell's anti-business leanings put him at odds with the rising generation of Conservatives. As an honored party elder, Terrell might be allowed to sponsor the legislation he had long championed. The ambassador simply no longer had the connections or influence to get that legislation through intact.[258]

More problematic than the ambassador's lack of a political base was his lack of loyalty to anyone other than himself – and perhaps the cause of white supremacy. In the aftermath of the Civil War, Terrell – a former Confederate officer – traveled to the Court of Emperor Maximillian in Mexico. At the time, Maximillian's reign depended on French support. Terrell became an officer in the French army in order to recruit disaffected former Confederates to the French cause. Publicly resigning his French commission, Terrell promised to raise a guerrilla force against the United States should war break out between the United States and Mexico. The future ambassador quickly abandoned the French cause, using the funds advanced him for forming a guerrilla insurrection to travel to Washington and seek a pardon for his Confederate

---

257 "Report of Committee on Poll Tax Amendment," *Dallas Morning News,* December 22, 1902.
258 Gould, *Alexander Watkins Terrell*.

service. In order to secure the pardon, Terrell offered up information on the French naval detachment at Vera Cruz. The remainder of the French gold went to establishing Terrell's law practice in Austin. In later years, Terrell would continue to prove himself a survivor drifting between the conservative Redeemers and James Stephen Hogg's anti-business agrarians before the appointment to the Ottoman Empire took him out of the Texas political scene. Terrell's chameleon loyalties made him, at best, an unreliable ally.[259]

The Terrell Election Laws

Terrell betrayed his Progressive supporters. The original draft of the Terrell Election Law favored entrenched party interests and white supremacy. Little room existed for Progressives or women looking to broaden their role in the political process. Ironically, Terrell's loss of control of the final bill helped shield him from the consequences of his actions. Terrell would later point to the most objectionable parts of the legislation and claim that they resulted from others amending his bill. While a bald-faced lie, Terrell correctly gambled that the convoluted procedural history of the bill would discourage fact checking.

Both the original and final version of the new election laws gave political parties new legal recognition. Under the old system, forming a political party required printing and passing out ballots to voters. Candidates losing their party nomination could simply add themselves to an alternative ballot. The new law created an official ballot. Failure to secure a nomination meant the loss of access to the ballot. The new system meant that parties now held an official legal status. No longer could an influential candidate like George Clark declare his faction the true Democratic Party, recruit candidates, and distribute ballots. This change possessed obvious

259 Gould, 50–55.Ibid., 50–55.

appeal to conservatives currently holding power but expecting a challenge from rural Radicals.[260]

The new law partisanized almost every race in the state. A handful of offices, generally in districts so small that no level of gerrymandering would keep a declared Republican out of office, remained non-partisan. Doing so gave the party greater control over the pipeline of future candidates for higher office. Under the old system, not all positions were dealt with through a party nomination. In Fayette County, an outlier, the Democratic Party did not endorse candidates for county or precinct level offices. Other counties possessed various offices deemed non-partisan by local tradition. Under the new law, any party nominating a ticket for these offices could lock all candidates without a party endorsement off the ballot. With local races now requiring a partisan endorsement, candidates from outside the Democratic Party – most often Republicans and Prohibitionists – could not access lower level offices to develop backing for higher level races.[261]

The new law also did away with protections for counting the ballot. Originally, Terrell allowed observers to object to voters' qualifications to cast a ballot – a tactic still employed in the twenty-first century to slow down the balloting process in key opposition precincts. No provision was made for observers to watch the counting of the ballots – a substantial change from the prior law. After legislative amendments, almost all outside observers disappeared from Texas polling places. Only the election judges, clerks, and voters could be within the room

---

260 Alexander Watkins Terrell, "An Act to Regulate Elections and to Prescribe Penalties for Its Violation.," Pub. L. No. 45 (1903). "Text of the Terrell Election Law," *The Southern Mercury*, May 7, 1903.
261 J.F. Wolters, "Letter to the Editor," *The Schulenburg Sticker*, March 30, 1904. H.P.N. Gammel, ed., *The Laws of Texas, 1822-1897*, vol. 9 (Austin: Gammel Book Company, 1898), 819.

where ballots were cast. During primaries, two additional objectors could be present to enforce the white primary – if all candidates agreed.[262]

By restricting election observers, the new law formalized a recipe for fraud. The law laid out in excruciating detail the layout of a polling place, down to the placement of voting booths and wooden bar between voters and those waiting to enter the ballot area. It also called for four ballot boxes. Boxes one and two would be rotated. After counting, ballots would be placed in box number three. Voters who mismarked a ballot could request replacements up to two times, for a total of three ballots. Any spoiled on misprinted ballots – not used in the election – would go in ballot box number four. Apparently, unused tickets from parties for which the voter did not cast a ballot would also go into ballot box number four. [263]

Without any observation of the counting, this system rendered elections almost strictly for show. Everything appeared highly detailed and controlled, except for the fact that no outside observers reviewed the counting of votes. Judges could easily deposit ballots for a disfavored party or candidate into the spoiled ballot box. Box number 3, the good ballot box, would only contain ballots that election judges wished to place within it. The final count of box number three, if anyone desired to make one, would show exactly what the election judges wished it to show.

In 1904, the number of poll tax payers vastly outnumbered the number of votes counted. Bond markets required the Texas Comptroller's office to offer an honest accounting of state finances. The Comptroller's report allows an estimation of the number of individuals paying the

262 "Text of the Terrell Election Law."
263 "Text of the Terrell Election Law."

poll tax. The resulting count places the number of poll-tax payers in 1904 – those that paid the tax to vote but did not necessarily turn out at the polls – only slightly lower than the actual turnout in the 1892 Presidential elections. [264]

Prior to making the poll tax mandatory for voting, only about sixty percent of Texans paid it. The first election where payment became required to vote, saw a massive jump in interest in paying the tax. While modern voters might register but not show up to vote, making a substantial monetary payment indicates some intention the turn out to the polls. The ratio between poll-tax-payers who did not vote and counted votes – approximates 234:372 (2:4) – approaches the 1:2 ratio of allowable spoiled ballots under the new election law.[265] The difference between poll tax payers and voters looks similar to what one would expect if almost the maximum number of ballots went into the spoiled ballot box. (See, Table 12).

---

264 Texas Comptroller's Office, *Annual Report of the Comptroller of Public Accounts of the State of Texas* (Austin: Gammel-Statesman Publish, 1905), 170. Texas Comptroller's Office, *Annual Report of the Comptroller of Public Accounts of the State of Texas* (Comptroller of Public Accounts., 1893), 54.United States Census, "Persons of School Militia and Voting Ages by Sex, General Nativity and Color by Counties: 1890, " (1890). United States Census, , "Persons of School Militia and Voting Ages by Sex, General Nativity and Color by Counties: 1900, " (1900). State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*, 1884.Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas* (Austin, 1884). Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*, 1899. Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*.Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas* (Austin: State Printing Office, 1903).

265 606,000 poll tax payers – 234,000 voters = 372,000 non-voters. For every one ballot cast, approximately two voters did not vote.

Year	Paid Poll Tax (not required to vote in 1892)	Voted (President or Governor)	Voting Age Population	Percentage Paying Poll Tax	Voter Turnout
1892	291,451	422,145	481,923	60%	88%
1900		423,706	737,768		57%
1902		309,150	737,768		42%
1904	606,081	234,008	737,768	82%	32%

Table 12: Comparison Of Persons Paying The Poll Tax To Number Of Votes Cast.
Source: Texas Comptroller's Office, Annual Report of the Comptroller of Public Accounts of the State of Texas (Austin: Gammel-Statesman Publish, 1905), 170. Texas Comptroller's Office, *Annual Report of the Comptroller of Public Accounts of the State of Texas* (Comptroller of Public Accounts., 1893), 54.United States Census, "Persons of School Militia and Voting Ages by Sex, General Nativity and Color by Counties: 1890, " (1890). United States Census, , "Persons of School Militia and Voting Ages by Sex, General Nativity and Color by Counties: 1900, " (1900). State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*, 1884. Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*, 1899. Texas Secretary of State, *Biennial Report of the Secretaryy of State of the State of Texas* (Austin: State Printing Office, 1903).

In 1904, a very good reason existed for a number of Texas ballots to go missing – Theodore Roosevelt was running for reelection. Roosevelt won every region of the country but the South, which remained solidly Democratic. Roosevelt recruited many of his famous Rough Riders in Texas. The regiment trained in San Antonio. The battle of San Juan Hill found Roosevelt on his horse – named Texas. The President's trust-busting may also have appealed to many Texans. Fears of Standard Oil taking over the nascent Texas oil industry were rife after the discovery at Spindletop in 1901. Absent good polling from the time, most political logic would suggest that Roosevelt should have made a showing in Texas. While Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican, might not have won the formerly Confederate state, nor should he have suffered a major blowout.[266]

Roosevelt got blown out in Texas. The President secured only about twenty percent of the vote. It is extremely unusual for a major party candidate to pull less than thirty percent of the vote in an election with only two major parties. The Presidential vote reiterates a truism of electoral fraud: a successful fraud renders it almost impossible to know what would have happened had it not taken place. Roosevelt possessed enough connections to Texas that a high turnout and somewhat close race should have been expected. Poll tax receipts indicate a high degree of interest in voting. Election day saw a surprisingly low turnout in a state with a history of electoral problems after passing a law making interception of ballots easier. While it is impossible to say if Roosevelt would have won Texas absent fraud, with up to two-thirds of the ballots missing, the election may well have been much closer than official reports indicated.[267]

---

266 *Handbook of Texas Online*, Thomas W. Cutrer, "First United States Volunteer Cavalry," accessed September 26, 2017, **http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qlf01**.

267 Edgar Eugene Robinson, *The Presidential Vote 1896-1932* (Los Angeles: Stanford University Press, 1938).

Even before the November election, Texas leaders acknowledged that the new law opened the door for fraud. During his reelection bid in 1904, Terrell would acknowledge the defects in the law. According to the former ambassador "my original bill provided for watchers from each political party to stay with the judges and ballot boxes and sworn to report all crooked work to the grand jury; and also judges and also judges at every polling place selected from rival parties, and an official ballot for independent candidates. All of these provisions were in the cause of honesty, but the sections requiring them were stricken out." While Terrell engaged in some politically expedient selective memory, his comments indicate an awareness of deep defects in the new law.[268]

New Deck, Same Deal

A major overhaul of the election law took place in 1905. Changes to the state election laws returned observers to polling places. Candidates not endorsed by a major party found their ballot access limited. With the amendment, primaries became mandatory and the whites-only primary became widespread. The results were a system where electoral victory required winning a Democratic Party primary, only whites could vote in the primary, and only those with the money to pay the poll tax could register to vote. This system vastly advantaged richer Conservative white supremacists while making a multi-ethnic agrarian coalition all but impossible.

The amended statute aimed to keep fraud from becoming a noticeable embarrassment. It barred members of state, district or county party executive committees from holding a position as an election judge. Judges were to be from two parties "where practicable." Each party could

---

268 "Judge A. W. Terrell Wants Pure Politics," *The Austin Statesman*, June 26, 1904.

appoint an election supervisor if "he were a reputable citizen, but not otherwise," to oversee both the balloting and counting. Candidates themselves, if one-fifth of those running could agree to do so, could appoint additional election supervisors. The new law made an ostentatious display of assuring the integrity of the general election. It provided great theater but had little real effect.[269]

The 1905 amendment narrowed the opportunities for candidates to appear on the ballot without the blessing of a major party. Prior to 1905, alliances between candidates played a pivotal role in Texas politics. While securing the Democratic Party nomination gave a candidate an undoubted advantage, a disappointed rival could simply print up tickets substituting his name for that of the nominee. To circumvent the new rule that all candidates be nominated by their party, every minor grouping of candidates formed its own party. Voters were handed a handful of potential tickets and asked to pick one. As one Texas newspaper put it "the amendment to the constitution, simply requiring the voter to have paid the poll tax before the first February proceeding the election, is sufficient without having him testify to age, sex, color, nativity and previous condition of servitude and, in addition, confusing him with tickets of obscure parties of which he has never before heard."[270]

The 1905 amendments limited the ability to create minor parties. Under the amendments, parties not having a statewide organization could only nominate candidates for local offices. Independent candidates could appear on the ballot for higher office, but could not form a separate ticket. Local coalitions could not dispute the party endorsement for state legislature or

---

269 F.C. Weinert, *Election Laws of Texas: Including All Acts of the Legislature Governing Elections, Both General and Primary, to Date* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Company, printers, 1914).Ibid.
270 "News from Neighboring Towns," *The Refugio Revier*, November 18, 1904.

higher office. Nor could local coalitions force a nominee for high office to make concessions in order to access a local ticket. These rules rendered a successful challenge to Democratic Party nominee difficult to impossible.[271]

The amended law made primaries mandatory, opening the door for a system of whites-only primaries. The original version of the Terrell Election Laws made primaries an option but did not require them. The provision encountered strong pushback at the county level. Few county chairs wanted to hold a primary. Organizing elections – finding election judges and poll workers, as well as organizing the mechanic of the enterprise – represents an extremely stressful and deadline prone and costly endeavor for all involved. In Orange County, rumors swirled that the party might call a primary in 1904 at the last moment allowed by law – twenty days before the election. The county Democratic Party chair, acting quickly, called the county executive committee into session and obtained a formal declaration – months before the deadline – that the county would hold a convention instead. The amended law stopped such reticence by making primaries mandatory for any party getting above a certain number of votes in the last gubernatorial election – with a number set high enough that only the Democrat Party was likely to qualify.[272]

A mandatory primary allowed the exclusion of non-whites from the ballot. The 1903 law the law stated that "the executive committee of any party for any county may prescribe additional qualifications for voters in such primaries, not inconsistent with this title." Travis County, the county Alexander Watkins Terrell represented, routinely held primaries before the

271 Weinert, *Election Laws of Texas*, 57.
272 "Primaries or a Convention, Chairman Sholars Decides Upon the Latter," *Orange Daily Tribune*, April 5, 1904.

adoption of the new election laws. The question of the abilities of illiterates and African-Americans to vote in the primary proved a recurring issue in Travis. The new law allowed the county parties to decide for themselves if African-Americans could vote.[273]

Provisions limiting primary participation to whites only swept most of the counties in the state. The change to a system of whites-only primaries did not go unopposed. Under the old system, parties sought to court every vote they could. In Travis County in 1902, only illiterates were forbidden to vote in the Democratic primary. African-Americans could and did vote in the Travis County Democratic Primary – though higher rates of illiteracy likely disqualified more African-Americans than whites. In 1904, Travis County went to an all-white primary. A significant portion of the county executive committee unsuccessfully opposed the action. The changes in Travis County in 1904 would be repeated throughout many of the remaining counties of the state after the 1905 amendments.[274]

Further financial burdens stood in the way of any candidate wishing to participate in the primary. The new law provided that the various local candidates appearing on the primary ballot would pay the cost of the election. The local party received the ability to judge how much of the cost of the election each office should pay. An upstart seeking a critical local office, such as county sheriff, could find themselves suddenly facing a very large bill to appear on the ballot. Those running in districts comprised of multiple counties – all statewide, most federal and state Senate and some State House races – could be assessed no more than a dollar to appear on the

273 Weinert, Election Laws of Texas, 41.Ibid. "Committee Decided to Hold Primaries on June 14.," Austin Daily Statesman, March 23, 1902.
274 "Decided to Have White Primaries," Austin Statesman, May 22, 1904.

ballot in any given county. Taken together this system disadvantaged rural Radicals, who might have lacked the fundraising ability of Conservatives or Progressives.[275]

A One Party State

The Terrell Election laws solidified the process of establishing a one-party state. The Republican Party in Texas chose to collapse instead of risking violence by contesting elections. Instead, the Republican Party became almost an adjunct to the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party controlled the state, the Republican Party made sure that federal patronage under Republican Presidents continued to flow to Texas. Under this system, the Texas Republican Party possessed about as much chance of victory as the Washington Wizards of beating the Harlem Globetrotters.

Republicans failed to serious contest most races in the state. In later years, the period between 1900 and 1950 would become near legendary among the generation of Texas Republican operatives that engaged in the long work of flipping the state from Democrat to Republican. During these years, ambitious young Republican leaders were advised to leave the state. At one point Rentfro B. Creager, leader of the lily-white faction of Texas Republicans from the 1920s through the 1950s, advised a potential Republican operative that "what's best for Texas is for every state in the Union to have a two-party system and for Texas to be a one-party state. When you have a one-party state, your men stay in Congress longer and build up seniority." Later Republicans operatives would see these actions by Creager as expressions of the corruption of the Republican Party. Given the attacks on Populist campaign workers –

275 Weinert, *Election Laws of Texas*, 41.. The author knows candidates running in local elections with fees $1000 fees to appear on the ballot in 2017. To put it mildly, high registration fees are an extremely large problem in local races. A high but variable and uncertain fee would, in many cases, completely discourage candidates from running.

detailed in chapter 4 – this modern view may be in error. Creager sent promising young Republican campaign workers out of state so that they would not be beaten or killed. While Republicans would never be completely absent from the Texas political scene, their presence would remain marginal until the second half of the twentieth century.[276]

Instead of seriously contesting most races, Texas Republicans turned to looking for political patronage. Republican Party rules allotted each state two convention delegates for each electoral vote the state possessed. A rapidly growing Texas possessed outsized sway in determining the Republican nominee. Republican leaders focused not on winning elections but on parlaying convention votes into patronage jobs. This new generation of "post office Republicans," so named because of the number of patronage jobs available in the postal service, would do little to contest Democratic control of the state.[277]

Systematic Advantage

The passage of the amended Terrell election law represented a return to a more stable form of politics. In response to the Populist political insurrection, Conservative Democrats first resorted to violence. As violence succeeded in removing the opposition's ability to object, fraud was used to shape electoral outcomes. Fraud then resulted in changes to election laws advantaging the faction most responsible for the fraud and violence. With the changes, the need to seize power by placing armed men at polling stations disappeared – as did any hope of realistically putting together a multi-ethnic political coalition. Given the need to appeal to an all

276 Wayne Thorburn, *Red State: An Insider's Story of How the GOP Came to Dominate Texas Politics* (University of Texas Press, 2014), 53.
277 *Official Report of the Proceedings of the ... Republican National Convention* (F.J. Hess, 1908), 93.

male, almost all white, primary electorate, an era of multi-ethnic politics in Texas came to an end.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

The end of the Populist era brought a seismic shift in Texas politics. Elites throughout the South forced the region's politics into a pattern less subject to random disruption. Removal of poor farmers from the electorate insulated the political system from sudden shocks due to drought or crop price fluctuations. African American disfranchisement removed a group capable of acting as a political wildcard. From the chaos created by random variations, politicians forced the world back into a more recognizable pattern, with democracy paying the price. While more stable, the vital substance of democracy had ceased.

The rituals of Texas politics would continue. The single-party state created by the Terrell Election Laws in 1903 and 1905 presumed that candidates would require the blessings of party elders to win in the primary. In 1914, James Ferguson would rock the Texas political world by building an organization outside of the party and securing the gubernatorial nomination by appealing to agrarian interests. Ferguson's term as governor would end with his impeachment. Unlike the Populists of the 1890s, Ferguson was known for both his racism and anti-semitism. With the electorate restricted, there was simply no reason to avoid playing to the extremes.[278]

The end of broad suffrage in Texas marked the end of a multi-ethnic society. During the 1880s and 1890s, politics acted as a moderating force. No faction of Texas politics could risk alienating one group so thoroughly that they migrated to another faction. After the Terrell laws, only those who could participate in the white primary mattered. Outlets for dissent – the ability

278 Patricia Bernstein, Ten Dollars to Hate: The Texas Man Who Fought the Klan (Texas A&M University Press, 2017).

to run outside of the Democratic party – were cut off. Politicians quickly discovered that race-baiting provided an ample way to generate votes. Voices that questioned the racial hegemony were simply not permitted.[279]

The alliance of Conservatives and Progressives against Agrarians that made disfranchisement possible would eventually fade. In the 1920s, the Klan saw both one of its quickest rises and most abrupt falls in Texas. The Klan so threatened the state's elites that an alliance with agrarians became possible. With a Klan candidate threatening to win the governorship, consensus formed behind Miriam "Ma" Ferguson as the choice of the anti-Klan coalition. Mariam Ferguson, the wife of impeached governor James Ferguson – would go on to become the first elected woman governor in the nation. The disintegration of the Texas Klan followed soon thereafter.

At the same time, the ghosts of the fall of Populism still haunts Texas. During the 2018 election, Democrats finally began to reengage in Robertson County after several years of absence.[280] During the 1890s both Franklin and Calvert, towns in Robertson County saw racial violence aimed at ending African American voting in the county. During the 2018 Democratic primary, candidates found Anglos in Calvert afraid of retaliation from their neighbors if they displayed Democratic yard signs. The climate in Franklin was deemed so hostile that no attempt to place signs was made. The past still is felt in the present.

---

279 Harry M. Wuzbach is one notable exception. Wuzbach served as the only Republican elected to Congress from Texas in the 1920s. Wuzbach is an anomaly. His victory came immediately after redistricting in 1920. The most likely explanation is that anti-immigrant and anti-German sentiment caused an unexpected shift in a new district with a heavy Texas-German population.

280 Chet Edwards, a Democrat, represented the area until 2010. Edwards managed to hold on longer than many other rural, conservative Democrats. After Edwards' defeat, the Republican Party demanded that Democrats in Robertson and Falls Counties either switch parties or retire. For the most part, they succeeded in their demands.

REFERENCES

Archival Collections

Alexander Dienst Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Alexander Watkins Terrell Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

A. J. Rose Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Burleson County Clerk's Election Records, Caldwell, Texas.

C.W. Macune Papers, Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas.

Edgar Garner Murphy Paper, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Edward Rotan Papers, Baylor University Archives, Waco, Texas.

Farmers Alliance Number One File, Lampasas Historical Society, Lampasas, Texas.

George Louis Crocket Papers, East Texas Research Center, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas.

Hilary Herbert Papers, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

J. Hoge Tyler Papers, University of Virginia.

John Johnston Papers, Alabama State Archives.

Local History Collection, Bell County Museum, Belton, Texas.

Oral Memories of Joseph Martin Dawson, Baylor Oral History Project, Waco, Texas.

Texas Federation of Women's Clubs Papers, Texas Women's University, Denton, Texas.

Periodicals

Austin Statesman

Bradstreet's

Brenham Weekly Banner

Brownsville Daily Herald

Dallas Mercury

Dallas Morning News

Denton County News

Fort Worth Daily Gazette

Fort Worth Registrar

Galveston Daily News

Honey Grove Signal

Houston Evening Telegraph

Houston Telegraph

Idaho Statesman

Literary Digest

National Economist

New York Times

Paris News

San Antonio Daily Light

San Antonio Express

Southern Mercury

The Crisis

Weatherford Times

Published and Secondary Sources

"A Review of Finance and Business: Important Changes of the Month." *Bankers' Magazine and Statistical Register*, October 1889.

"Agricultural Depression and Its Causes -- Why the Farmer Is Not Prosperous." *The Defender*. April 9, 1890.

Allen, Ruth A. "The Great Southwest Strike." Austin: University of Texas Publication No. 4214, April 8, 1942.

Alonzo, Armando C. *Tejano Legacy: Rancheros and Settlers in South Texas, 1734-1900*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998.

Anders, Evan. *Boss Rule in South Texas: The Progressive Era*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013.

http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth468333/m1/2/zoom/?q=Hammond%20Paris%20Vance.

Ariens, Michael S. *Lone Star Law: A Legal History of Texas*. Austin: Texas Tech University Press, 2011.

"B. F. O'Neal to Congress, April, 1884." In *The Congressional Record*, 7823. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888.

Barnes, Donna A. *Farmers in Rebellion: The Rise and Fall of the Southern Famers Alliance and People's Party in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984.

Barr, Alwyn. *Reconstruction to Reform: Texas Politics, 1876-1906*. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 2000.

Barthelme, Marion Knox. *Women in the Texas Populist Movement: Letters to the Southern Mercury*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997.

Bayard, T.F. "Rights of Foreigners in Mexico." In *Consular Reports: Commerce, Manufactures, Etc*, Bayard:199–200. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1885.

Benton, George H. *The Evolution of the Gold Standard.* Philadelphia: G. H. Benton, 1896.

Bernstein, Patricia. *Ten Dollars to Hate: The Texas Man Who Fought the Klan*. Texas A&M University Press, 2017.

Blodgett, Jeff, and Bill Lofy. *Winning Your Election the Wellstone Way: A Comprehensive Guide for Candidates and Campaign Workers*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 2008.

Blood, F. G. *Handbook and History of the National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union*. Washington D.C.: National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union, 1893.

Borders, Gary B. *A Hanging in Nacogdoches: Murder, Race, Politics, and Polemics in Texas's Oldest Town, 1870-1916*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Bowmer, Jim, and Daurice Bowmer. "The Unknown Bell County." Manuscript, 1980. Bell County Museum.

Boyles, James. "United States - Galveston." Diplomatic and Consular Reports. Annual Series. London: Foreign Office, 1892.

Brodsky, Alyn. *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Character*. New York: Macmillan, 2000.

Brundage, William Fitzhugh. *Lynching in the New South: Georgia and Virginia, 1880-1930*. University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Buenger, Walter L. *Secession and the Union in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013.

———. *The Path to a Modern South: Northeast Texas between Reconstruction and the Great Depression*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Byrne, James Patrick, Philip Coleman, and Jason Francis King. *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History : A Multidisciplinary Encyclopedia*. New York: ABC-CLIO, 2008.

Caldwell, Clifford R. *Guns of the Lincoln County War*. Mountain Home: Clifford R. Caldwell, 2009.

Calomiris, Charles W. *U.S. Bank Deregulation in Historical Perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Campbell, Angus, and University of Michigan Survey Research Center. *The American Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960.

Campbell, Randolph B. *Grass Roots Reconstruction in Texas, 1865-1880*. LSU Press, 1997.

Cannon, James Graham. *Clearing-Houses: Their History, Methods and Administration*. Neew York: D. Appleton, 1900.

Cantrell, Gregg. *Kenneth and John B. Rayner and the Limits of Southern Dissent*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

———. "'Our Very Pronounced Theory of Equal Rights to All': Race, Citizenship, And..." *Journal of American History* 100, no. 3 (December 2013): 663–92.

Cantrell, Gregg, and D. Scott Barton. "Texas Populists and the Failure of Biracial Politics." *The Journal of Southern History* 55, no. 4 (1989): 659–92. https://doi.org/10.2307/2209044.

Carrigan, William D. *The Making of a Lynching Culture: Violence and Vigilantism in Central Texas, 1836-1916*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006.

Carrigan, William D., and Clive Webb. *Forgotten Dead: Mob Violence Against Mexicans in the United States, 1848-1928*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Chadbourn, James Harmon. *Lynching and the Law*. The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 2008.

Chapman, David. "Lynchings in Texas." Texas Tech University, 1973.

Chestnutt, Charles. "Lynchings, By Year and Race, 1882-1968." The Charles Chestnutt Digital Archive. Accessed September 26, 2015. http://www.chesnuttarchive.org/classroom/lynching_table_year.html.

Clubs, Texas Federation of Women's. *The History of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs*. Houston: Dealy-Adey-Elgin Company, printers, 1919.

Commissioners, California Board of Bank. "Report of the Board of Bank Commissioners of the State of California." Sacramento: Office of the Board of Bank Commissioners, 1886.

Constitution and By-Laws of the Co-Operative Council of Beat No. 4 Bell Co. Patrons of Husbandry at Saledo, Texas. Belton: The Journal Job Office, 1875.

Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at Cleburne , 1886. Dallas: Dallas Publishing Company, 1886.

Constitution and By-Laws of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Adopted at The Session Held in Dallas, Texas, August, 1888. Dallas: Southern Mercury Publishing, 1888.

"Consumer Price Index (Estimate) 1800- | Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis." Accessed March 6, 2018. https://www.minneapolisfed.org/community/financial-and-economic-education/cpi-calculator-information/consumer-price-index-1800.

Cotner, Robert C. *James Stephen Hogg: A Biography*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1959.

Cummings v. Missouri, 71 US 277 (1867).

Dann, Martin. "Black Populism: A Study of the Colored Farmers' Alliance Through 1891." *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 2, no. 3 (Fall 1974): 58–71.

Davis, Angela, and Si Kahn. *Creative Community Organizing: A Guide for Rabble-Rousers, Activists, and Quiet Lovers of Justice*. San Fansisco: Berrett-Koehlar Publishers, Inc, 2011.

Deckert, Joseph, Mikhail Myagkov, and Peter C. Ordeshook. "Benford's Law and the Detection of Election Fraud." *Political Analysis* 19, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 245–68. https://doi.org/10.1093/pan/mpr014.

"Demographic Profile of Hispanics in Texas, 2011." *Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project* (blog). Accessed November 23, 2015. http://www.pewhispanic.org/states/.

Dewey, Davis Rich. *Financial History of the United States*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1918.

Doppelt, Jack C., and Ellen Shearer. *Nonvoters: America's No-Shows*. London: SAGE, 1999.

Dunning, Nelson A. *The Farmers' Alliance History and Agricultural Digest*. Washington D.C.: Alliance Publishing Company, 1891.

———. *The Farmers' Alliance History and Agricultural Digest*. Washington D.C.: Alliance Publishing Company, 1891.

Eckels, James Herron. *Statement of Hon. James H. Eckels, Comptroller of the Currency, Made Before the Committee on Banking and Currency, House of Representatives, (at the Request of the Committee) on the Existing Financial and Banking Situation and the Proposed Remedies, January 28, February 1, 2, 8, and 18, 1897*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1897.

Elwell, Craig K. "Brief History of the Gold Standard (GS) in the United States." Congressional Research Service, October 1, 2011.

Fama, Eugene F. "Efficient Capital Markets: A Review of Theory and Empirical Work." *The Journal of Finance* 25, no. 2 (1970): 383–417.

Foote, Horton. *Farewell: A Memoir of a Texas Childhood*. Simon and Schuster, 1999.

Foster, L. L. *Forgotten Texas Census: First Annual Report of the Agricultural Bureau of the Department of Agriculture, Insurance, Statistics, and History, 1887-88*. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2001.

Friedman, Milton, and Anna Jacobson Schwartz. *A Monetary History of the United States, 1867-1960*. New York: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Friedman, Morgan. "Inflation Calculator," April 2, 2015. http://www.westegg.com/inflation/.

———. "Inflation Calculator." Accessed April 2, 2015. http://www.westegg.com/inflation/.

"From Waco, The Belton Jail Massacre, Yet Another Account." *The Galveston Daily News*, May 28, 1874.

Gaither, Gerald H. *Blacks and the Populist Movement: Ballots and Bigotry in the New South*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005.

Gammel, H.P.N., ed. *The Laws of Texas, 1822-1897*. Vol. 9. Austin: Gammel Book Company, 1898.

Garvin, W.L., and S.O Daws. *History of the National Farmers' Alliance and Co-Operative Union of America*. Jacksboro: J.N. Rogers & Co., Steam Printers, 1887.

Geisst, Charles R. *Wall Street: A History : From Its Beginnings to the Fall of Enron*. Oxford University Press, 2004.

"George Y. Kelso to Congress, April 20, 1888." In *The Congressional Record*, 7823. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888.

Goodwyn, Lawrence. *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

———. *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

———. *The Populist Moment : A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1978.

———. “Populist Dreams and Negro Rights: East Texas as a Case Study.” *The American Historical Review* 76, no. 5 (December 1, 1971): 1435–56. https://doi.org/10.2307/1870515.

Gould, Lewis L. *Alexander Watkins Terrell: Civil War Soldier, Texas Lawmaker, American Diplomat*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. *Get Out the Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout*. Brookings Institution Press, 2015.

Gulf, C. & S. F. RY. CO. v. State, 72 Tex 404 (1888).

Hafer, Rik W. *The Federal Reserve System: An Encyclopedia*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2005.

Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2010.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd. *Revolt Against Chivalry: Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women’s Campaign Against Lynching*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Halter, Gary. *Government and Politics of Texas: Ninth Edition*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2013.

Hammond, Bray. *Banks and Politics in America from the Revolution to the Civil War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

———. *Sovereignty and the Empty Purse: Banks and Politics in the Civil War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.

Henretta, James A., Kevin J. Fernlund, and Melvin Yazawa. “The People’s (Populist) Party National Platform (1892).” In *Documents for America’s History, Volume 2: Since 1865*, 138–39. Boston: Bradford/St. Martin’s, 2011.

———. “The People’s (Populist) Party National Platform (1892).” In *Documents for America’s History, Volume 2: Since 1865*, 138–39. Boston: Bradford/St. Martin’s, 2011.

Herbert, Hilary Abner. *Why the Solid South? Or, Reconstruction and Its Results*. Baltimore: R. H. Woodward, 1890.

Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell. “The Path of the Law.” In *The Mind and Faith of Justice Holmes: His Speeches, Essays, Letters, and Judicial Opinions*, edited by Max Lerner, 71–89. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2010.

Howell, Kenneth Wayne, and James Smallwood, eds. “When the Klan Rode.” In *Still the Arena of Civil War: Violence and Turmoil in Reconstruction Texas, 1865-1874*, 214–43. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2012.

Hoyle. *The Game in Wall Street: And How to Play It Successfully*. New York: J.S. Ogilvie Publishing Company, 1898.

International Bureau of the American Republics. *Mexico*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1891.

Israel, Fred L., and Jim F. Watts, eds. “President Grover Cleveland’s Defense of the Gold Standard: 28 Janury 1885.” In *Presidential Documents: The Speeches, Proclamations, and Policies That Have Shaped the Nation from Washington to Clinton*, 176–81. New York: Psychology Press, 2000.

IVINS, WILLIAM M. *MACHINE POLITICS AND MONEY IN ELECTIONS IN NEW YORK CITY*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishing, 1887.

Jensen, James Russel. *Legislative Apportionment in Texas*. Houston Texas: Public Affairs Research Center, University of Houston, 1964.

Jensen, Richard J. *The Winning of the Midwest: Social and Political Conflict, 1888-1896*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971.

Jones, Richard. "POST OF LAMPASAS: FORGOTTEN RECONSTRUCTION ERA U.S. ARMY POST (1867-1870)." *Journal of Texas Archaeology and History* 1. Accessed October 18, 2015. http://jtah.org/2014/11/13/post-of-lampasas-forgotten-reconstruction-era-u-s-army-post-1867-1870/.

Jordan, Terry G. "A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change In Texas, 1836-1986." In *Texas Vistas*, edited by Ralph A. Wooster and Robert A. Calvert, 285–352. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1987..

Key, Valdimer Orlando, and Alexander Heard. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1949.

Klebaner, Benjamin. *American Commercial Banking: A History*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990.

Kousser, J. Morgan. *The Shaping of Southern Politics: Suffrage Restriction and the Establishment of the One-Party South, 1880-1910*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

"Lamar County Texas Trains. Railroad Resources with a History of Railroads in Lamar County Texas." County Station. Accessed June 10, 2016. http://lamar.countystation.com/lamartrain.html.

Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Crown/Archetype, 2018.

Livesay, Harold C. *Andrew Carnegie and the Rise of Big Business*. Third Edition. New York: Pearson, 2007.

Lubben, Stephen J. "Railroad Receiverships and Modern Bankruptcy Theory." *Cornell Law Review* 89 (2004): 1420–1519.

———. The Farmers Alliance. Transcript of Oral Interview, 1920. Vertical Files. Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Southwestern Historical Quarterly 90, no. 2 (October 1986): 139–58.

Magliocca, Gerard N. *The Tragedy of William Jennings Bryan: Constitutional Law and the Politics of Backlash*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

Malkiel, Burton Gordon. *A Random Walk Down Wall Street: Including a Life-Cycle Guide to Personal Investing*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999.

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. *Index to the Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Volume 2 H-O*. Washington: Library of Congress, 1969.

Markham, Jerry W. *A Financial History of the United States: From Christopher Columbus to the Robber Barons (1492-1900)*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2002.

Martin, Roscoe Coleman. *The People's Party in Texas: A Study in Third Party Politics*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970.

McArthur, Judith N. *Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas, 1893-1918*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998.

McCulley, Richard T. *Banks and Politics During the Progressive Era: The Origins of the Federal Reserve System, 1897-1913*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

McCurry, Stephanie. *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country*. New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1997.

McKee, Thomas Hudson. *The National Conventions and Platforms of All Political Parties*. The Friedenwald Company, 1901.

McMath, Jr., Robert C. *Populist Vanguard: A History of the Southern Farmers' Alliance*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975.

McMath, Robert C. *American Populism: A Social History 1877-1898*. New York: Macmillan, 1993.

———. *American Populism: A Social History 1877-1898*. New York: Macmillan, 1993.

Mebane, Walter R. "Comment on 'Benford's Law and the Detection of Election Fraud.'" *Political Analysis* 19, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 269–72. https://doi.org/10.1093/pan/mpr024.

Miller, Sean J. "Manafort's Resignation Highlights Risks Of International Work." Campaigns and Elections. Accessed June 28, 2017. https://www.campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/manafort-s-resignation-highlights-risks-of-international-work.

Miller, Worth Robert, and Stacy G. Ulbig. "Building a Populist Coalition in Texas, 1892-1896." *The Journal of Southern History*, no. 2 (2008): 255–96.

Miron, Jeffrey A. *The Economics of Seasonal Cycles*. Boston: MIT Press, 1996.

Missouri Bureau of Labor Statistics. *The Official History of the Great Strike of 1886 on the Southwestern Railway System*. Jefferson City: Tribune Printing Company, 1886.

Morgan, W. Scott. *History of the Wheel and Alliance and the Impending Revolution*. Fort Scott: J.H. Rice and Sons, 1889.

"National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL)." Accessed March 1, 2018. https://nces.ed.gov/naal/lit_history.asp.

Nevels, Cynthia Skove. *Lynching to Belong: Claiming Whiteness Through Racial Violence*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007.

"News from Neighboring Towns." *The Refugio Revier*, November 18, 1904.

Noblin, Stuart. *Leonidas Lafayette Polk: Agrarian Crusader*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1949.

O'Brien, Matthew. "The Most Expensive Election Ever: ... 1896?" The Atlantic, November 6, 2012. http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/11/the-most-expensive-election-ever-1896/264649/.

Office, Texas Comptroller's. *Annual Report of the Comptroller of Public Accounts of the State of Texas*. Comptroller of Public Accounts., 1893.

Official Report of the Proceedings of the ... Republican National Convention. F.J. Hess, 1908.

Parker, Matthew. *Panama Fever: The Epic Story of the Building of the Panama Canal*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2009.

Pennybacker, Mrs Percy V. *A History of Texas for Schools: Also for General Reading and for Teachers Preparing Themselves for Examination*. Austin: Mrs. P. V. Pennybacker, 1907.

"Peoples of Europe Guard Your Most Sacred Possessions." *The Bimetallist*, February 15, 1896.

Perman, Michael. *Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1908*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

———. *Struggle for Mastery: Disfranchisement in the South, 1888-1908*. Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).

Postel, Charles. *The Populist Vision*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

"Prairie Chapel Alliance." *The Rural Citizen*, September 10, 1885.

"Primaries or a Convention, Chairman Sholars Decides Upon the Latter." *Orange Daily Tribune*, April 5, 1904.

Proceeding of the 11th Regular Annual Meeting of the Farmers' Alliance, Held in the City of Dallas, Commencing Aug 19, A.D. 1890. Dallas: Robert T. Bibb, Printer, 1891.

Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Meeting Held at Cleburne, Texas, 1886. Dallas: The Dallas Mercury, 1886.

Proceeding of the Farmers State Alliance of Texas, Ninth Regular Session, Held at Dallas, Texas, August 22-26, 1888. Dallas: Circular Letter Office, 1888.

"Rabbi Says 'Women in Politics Horrid.'" *Dallas Morning News*, February 7, 1909.

Reagan v. Farmers' Loan and Trust Co., 154 U.S. 362 (1894).

Reidt, Kelley Marie. "The Texas Cyclone: The Life of Educator-Activist Anna J. H. Pennybacker." University of Texas, 2006.

"Report of the Statistician - Debts of Farmers." In *Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture. 1886*. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886.

Republican National Committee. *The Republican Campaign Text-Book for 1884*. New York: Republican National Committee, 1884.

Revised Civil Statutes of the State of Texas. Austin: E. von Boeckmann, 1895.

Richards, David. *Once Upon a Time in Texas: A Liberal in the Lone Star State*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Robert, Henry Martyn. *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies: Rules of Order. A Compendium of Parliamentary Law, Based upon the Rules and Practice of Congress. Organization and Conduct of Business...* Chicago: S.C.Griggs and Company, 1893.

Robinson, Edgar Eugene. *The Presidential Vote 1896-1932*. Los Angeles: Stanford University Press, n.d.

Rorabaugh, W. J. *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Rose, A.J. "Remarks." In *Minutes of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Texas Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry, Held in Casino Hall, Galveston, Texas August 3, 4 and 5, 1886*. Galveston: W.A. Shaw & Co., Printers, 1886.

Sanders, Elizabeth. *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State, 1877-1917*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Sayles, John, and Henry Sayles. *A Treatise on the Laws of Texas Relating to Real Estate: And Actions to Try Title and for Possession of Lands and Tenements in Two Volumes*. Vol. 2. St. Louis: Gilbert Book Company, 1890.

Sayles, Vernon, ed. *Vernon's Sayles' Annotated Civil Statutes of the State of Texas: With Historical Notes, Embracing the Revised Statutes of the State of Texas Adopted at the Regular Session of the Thirty-Second Legislature, 1911 ; Incorporating Under Appropriate Headings of the Revised Statutes, 1911, the Legislation Passed at the Regular and Special Sessions of the Thirty-Second and Thirty-Third Legislatures, to the Close of 1913*. Austin: Vernon Law Book Company, 1914.

Shaw, Catherine. *The Campaign Manager: Running and Winning Local Elections*. Boulder: Westview Press, 2013.

"Singular Coincidences." *Weekly Democratic Statesman*. December 4, 1873.

Smallwood, James, Barry A. Crouch, and Larry Peacock. *Murder and Mayhem: The War of Reconstruction in Texas*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2003.

Smith, E.W. “President’s Report.” In *Minutes of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Texas Co-Operative Association, Patrons of Husbandry, Held in Casino Hall, Galveston, Texas August 3, 4 and 5, 1886*. Galveston: W.A. Shaw & Co., Printers, 1886.

Sound Currency, 1895-1896: A Compendium of Accurate and Timely Information on Currency Questions Intended for Writers, Speakers and Students. New York: Reform Club Sound Currency Committee, 1895.

Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South. *Race Problems of the South: Report of the Proceedings of the First Annual Conference Held Under the Auspices of the Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South, at Montgomery, Alabama, May 8, 9, 10, A.D. 1900*. Richmond: B.F. Johnson Publishing Company, 1900.

Spratt, John Stricklin. *The Road to Spindletop*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1970.

Stapleford, Thomas A. *The Cost of Living in America: A Political History of Economic Statistics, 1880-2000*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

State, Texas Secretary of. *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*. Austin, 1884.

———. *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*, 1899.

Stevenson, Beatrice. Letter to Mrs. L. H. Baldwin, July 11, 1963. Texas Farmers’ Alliance Papers. Dolph Briscoe Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Terrell, Alexander Watkins. An Act to regulate elections and to prescribe penalties for its violation., Pub. L. No. 45 (1903).

“Texas -- Facts and Fancies.” *Weekly Democratic Statesman*, October 24, 1878.

Texas Comptroller's Office. *Annual Report of the Comptroller of Public Accounts of the State of Texas*. Austin: Gammel-Statesman Publish, 1905.

Texas, Freemasons Grand Lodge of. *The Masonic Jurisprudence of Texas*. Brenham: T. McGill & Company, printers, 1879.

Texas Secretary of State. *Biennial Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Texas*. Austin: State Printing Office, 1903.

"Texas Secretary of State's Election Returns.," 1902. Texas State Library & Archives.

The Mexican Constitution of 1917 Compared with the Constitution of 1857. Philadelphia: American academy of political and social science, 1917.

"The 'Poll Tax' Question." *The Southern Mercury*, March 20, 1902.

"The Race Problem, Conference Called in May to Exchange Ideas, Southern White Men Realizing the Importance of Definite and Tangible Plans to Solve the Negro Question." *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, January 17, 1900.

"The Southern Society, An Organization for the Study and Discussion of Race Problems in the South-Good Progress Made." *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, February 3, 1900.

"The South's Floral Emblem." *Fort Worth Star Register*, January 31, 1901.

Thorburn, Wayne. *Red State: An Insider's Story of How the GOP Came to Dominate Texas Politics*. University of Texas Press, 2014.

Trenckmann, William. *Autobiography of William Andreas Trenckmann*. Edited by Walter Buenger and Walter Kamphoefner. Pre-Publication Draft, 2016.

Waldrep, C. *The Many Faces of Judge Lynch: Extralegal Violence and Punishment in America*. New York: Springer, 2002.

Walker, Francis Amasa. *Political Economy*. New York: Henry Holt, 1888.

Washington, Booker T. *The Booker T. Washington Papers: 1899-1900*. Edited by Lewis R. Harlan. University of Illinois Press, 1977.

Weiner, Myron, and Michael S. Teitelbaum. *Political Demography, Demographic Engineering*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2001.

Weinert, F.C. *Election Laws of Texas: Including All Acts of the Legislature Governing Elections, Both General and Primary, to Date*. Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Company, printers, 1914.

Werner, Geroge C. "TEXAS AND PACIFIC RAILWAY." *Handbook of Texas Online*. Texas State Historical Association, June 15, 2010. http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/eqt0.

Wilcox, C.M. "The Farmers' Alliance Not In. The Organization Has Nothing to Do with the Mallory Boycott." *Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, February 2, 1886.

Williams, J.W. "A Statistical Study of the Drought of 1886." *West Texas Historical Association Year Book*, no. 21 (1945): 85–109.

Williams, Patrick G. *Beyond Redemption: Texas Democrats After Reconstruction*. Texas A&M University Press, 2007.

Williams, Talcott. "Party Government in the United States." In *Cyclopaedia of Political Science, Political Economy, and of the Political History of the United States*, edited by John Joseph Lalor. Rand, McNally, 1884.

Winkler, Ernest William. *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1916.

Wolters, J.F. "Letter to the Editor." *The Schulenburg Sticker*, March 30, 1904.

Woodward, C. Vann. *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1971.

———. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

"Workingmen's Column, Devoted to the Interests of the Laboring Classes. Correspondence Solicited." *The Sunday Gazetteer*. November 8, 1885.

Worth, Robert Miller. "Harrison County Methods: Election Fraud In Late Nineteenth Century Texas." *Locus: Regional and Local History* 7, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 111–28.