A "Real Social & Political Revolution": Nativism, Class Conflict, and Urban Reform in Portland, Maine (1840-1923)

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A “REAL SOCIAL & POLITICAL REVOLUTION”: NATIVISM, CLASS CONFLICT, AND URBAN REFORM IN PORTLAND, MAINE (1840-1923)

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BA, Clark University, 2009

A THESIS

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In 1923, Portland, Maine voters approved passed a ballot measure that jettisoned the nearly century-old Council-Mayor plan in favor of a Council-City Manager form of governance. This dramatic alteration was supported by the Portland Chamber of Commerce and the Ku Klux Klan; it allowed the centralization of political power in the hands of an appointed City Manager and a City Council dominated by business interests. Taking this campaign as its focus, the following study incorporates nativism, class conflict, and urban reform in Portland, Maine with a focus on the period of 1840-1923. It blends ethnic, political, and urban history to analyze several periods of heightened class conflict between the city’s largely Yankee business elites and the workers and ethnic communities which challenged their dominance. Special attention is given to the later portion of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era (1886-1916) as well as the subsequent backlash (1917-1923). During each crisis, Yankee business leaders maintained their dominant social and economic position by building cross-class alliances through religious and ethnic appeals to Yankee workers and professionals. These alliances proved necessary for
business elites in their efforts to overcome challenges posed by radical workers and ethnic communities.

One of the favored tools for suppressing increased demands for democracy on the municipal level was municipal charter reform. This study demonstrates that such reforms were aimed at suppressing the threat of radical democracy to preserve ethnocentric capitalist hegemony. The latter portion of this thesis focuses on increased xenophobia during World War I and the first Red Scare, before examining the rise of the Ku Klux Klan (1920-1923). Portland’s Ku Klux Klan was somewhat dissimilar from other incarnations of the Klan; rather than oppose big business and embark on a campaign of terror and violence, it preferred to engage in political struggle, often alongside the Chamber of Commerce. With the Chamber providing the policy and the Klan providing an emotional appeal to drive turnout, the two groups defeated a disorganized opposition to institute a Council-City Manager proposal in Maine’s largest city.
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CHAPTER I:

Introduction

“...in short, the native born white middle class dominates the situation.”

- Edward F. Dow and Orren Hormel, City Manager Government in Portland, Maine, 1940.¹

"Big capital used the middle class organized in the Klan to do its dirty and lawless work, to form the pickhandle brigades and the citizens' committees and the packed juries but, when it came to material rewards, the Klan had to be satisfied with hollow words of praise, a cheap monkey money which buys nothing in the market."

-Hubert Langerock. The Industrial Pioneer, 1924.²

Municipal charter reform in small New England cities rarely made headlines outside of the local press. However, the movement to reform Portland, Maine’s charter and to institute a Council-Manager system in 1923 was not a run of the mill change; the story attracted national press when the Ku Klux Klan emerged as a vital pressure group. The Klan, which had attracted attention since its emergence as a nationally organized force three years earlier, absorbed the attention of readers around the country. Because of this, major newspapers such as the Boston Herald and New York Times sent reporters to Maine’s largest city in 1923 to monitor the campaign. When the votes were counted, the pro-City Manager campaign, which the Klan

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supported, won by a sizeable margin and the Klan received the credit. When the national media left town and the newly-elected City Council got down to business, a new era was born in Portland: no longer were elites the least bit constrained by the political opposition of organized labor, ethnic communities, or radicals. The new system effectively shut those groups out of power for decades to come.

Despite the headlines, it was widely acknowledged locally that the Ku Klux Klan was neither the originator of the charter reform movement nor was it the same sensational Klan that existed elsewhere. Though they adopted the same rituals and fear-inducing symbolism as their brethren did elsewhere, Maine’s Klansmen mostly avoided the violent campaigns which earned the group scorn in other locales. Instead, it focused on influencing public opinion, aiding the Chamber of Commerce’s City Manager campaign and engaging in the Yankee tradition of local government. Both the Maine Ku Klux Klan and the City Manager movements were a product of

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4 The Portland Chamber of Commerce, which initiated the charter campaign five years prior to its successful passage, desired to institute a “businessmen’s government” which lowered taxes, removed political parties from involvement in city affairs, and reduced municipal debt.

5 Despite its best efforts to appear wholesome and fraternal, the Klan had a reputation for lawlessness that preceded its entry into the state. Nancy MacLean argues that Klansmen continued and, in some places, reignited the Southern tradition of public lynching. The Klan “did not use violence simply because it was effective. They used it because they believed they had a right to use it.” Because they did not entirely trust institutions controlled by elites, “the Klansmen sought to build a white-sheeted militia to enforce their values and combat threats to their standing.” The Klan’s national leadership drew upon previous instances of vigilantism such as the Boston Tea Party and opposition to Reconstruction following the Civil War. (Nancy MacLean, Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 158-159). In Maine, elites like Percival Baxter loudly voiced concerns about the Klan that were based on actions elsewhere. In his inaugural address as governor in 1923, Baxter expressed his belief that the Klan would not abide the law and would act contrary to traditional Yankee openness. As such, he proposed anti-masking and other legislation to curb its spread. Lawrence Moores writes “this defiant attitude of Mr. Baxter was not singular, for many Maine folk vociferously disapproved of this clandestine organization (prior to its arrival)” (Lawrence W. Moores, “The History of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine, 1922-1931.” University of Maine, M.A. thesis, 1950., p. 31).

6 By Yankee, this thesis means the community of ethnically English and religiously Protestant colonizers of New England who arrived prior to the American Revolution, their descendants, and those who otherwise identified as such. The terms Yankee and New Englander were usually synonymous. Yankee identity often manifested itself as an identification with New England regionalism. In a 1920 address, James Phinney Baxter, the former mayor of
decades of nativist conservatism. The Chamber of Commerce attempted to cloak its decision to pursue the undemocratic City Manager system in progressive and even liberal language. Despite this, there had been multiple previous attempts, often involving the economically and politically powerful Baxter family, to ‘clean-up’ city government by centralizing power into the hands of an executive. The manifestation of the Klan in post-World War I had its basis in frequent and sometimes violent conflicts which pit nativists and capitalists on one side and workers and immigrant communities on the other. These conflicts included competition for control of the workplace, public space, and urban development, as well as access to alcohol and the ballot box. During these conflicts, business elites appealed to Yankee workers, small business owners, and professionals to form cross-class alliances. These alliances included both ideological and material inducements and were necessary because elites were increasingly unable to defend their hegemonic position without the assistance of middle and lower strata Yankees.

During certain periods, such as the decade or so prior to United States involvement in World War I, organized workers and ethnic communities were able to make impressive social and economic gains. During periods of backlash, as was the case during the intense xenophobia generated during the First World War and the subsequent businessmen’s crusade, both workers and ethnic communities faced severe governmental repression. It was in this historically-regressive moment that the City Manager system and Ku Klux Klan were able to gain social acceptance in Portland, Maine. Alliances based on appeals to shared ancestry and values were

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Portland, Maine and then-President of the New England Historic Genealogical Society maintained of New Englanders "...history makes evident the fact that the spirit of New England is the true Americanism which is to-day the spirit of the Nation, for it has been aptly said of these pioneers that God sifted the best seed of Old England for planting New England. (James P. Baxter. "A New England Temple of Honor by Hon. James Phinney Baxter, delivered in Boston on March 18, 1920", Portland, ME, publisher unknown, 1926, pp. 74-75). In 1922, novelist Robert Herrick wrote in The Nation that "whatever may be left of that famous Old New England, some time Puritan, always Protestant, will be found today more purely and abundantly in Maine than elsewhere.” See Joseph A. Conforti. Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001, p. 266).
always temporary and elites usually ended up bettering their class at the expense of workers of both foreign and native birth. Once the Council-Manager system was in place and a new City Council was elected, Portland’s political future was secured, and the business class no longer found middle and working-class nativists like the Klan (or its predecessors) politically tolerable and those groups were quickly returned to the political fringe before disappearing entirely. Unlike other locales, the short-lived nature of Klan activism and its close relationship with elite social circles ensured that it did not threaten the domination of the ruling class. Instead, the Klan, as had certain laboring nativists during other moments of crisis, temporarily buttressed capital during the contested post-World War I period. From the arrival of large amounts of Irish immigrants in the 1830s through the end of mass immigration in the 1920s, Yankee elites successfully turned to cross-class alliances based on cultural heritage to ensure the maintenance of their hegemony. This is a study of such alliances and their results.

**Historiography**

This thesis seeks to locate the origins of nativism in class conflict between radical workers, immigrant communities and elite business leaders. It seeks to demonstrate that appeals to ethnic unity have been orchestrated by Yankee elites during eras of intense conflict as a means of maintaining hegemony. By dividing subaltern groups, it argues that nativism is an ideology weaponized for the purposes of elites. Using the case study of Portland, Maine, “A Real Social & Political Revolution” demonstrates that manipulating the urban political and economic landscape was a means of limiting the influence of immigrants and class-conscious workers. The First World War and the accompanying culture of conformity provided the impetus for the Chamber of Commerce to finally achieve the centralization of political power entirely in the hands of its members. Through the repression of alternative political and economic structures and intense
appeals to ethnic and racial solidarity, the ruling class was able to build a sufficient cross-class alliance to support the maintenance of the existing system during a period of flux.

The first academic analysis of Portland’s Council-Manager charter, “City Manager Government in Portland, Maine,” was published in 1940 by City Manager proponents and Bowdoin College professors Edward F. Dow and Orren C. Hormell. The professors downplayed the middle and upper class nature of the reform: "It is interesting to note that the committee, in the main, represented the well-to-do class--merchants, bankers, large taxpayers and prominent club women.” However, because the charter change reduced taxes and municipal indebtedness, the dominance of this class is viewed in a positive light. In the years since this study, no systematic analysis has been done on the City Manager system in Portland, Maine, nor its history. This thesis is intended to synthesize and update the historical record on this topic. It questions the popular understanding of the City Manager movement put forth by Dow and Hormell by taking a wide view of the period in which the changes occurred as well as by analyzing changes in policy and citizen involvement in the post-election city politics.

Broadly, some of the existing literature on municipal charter reform does a good job of recognizing the class dimensions of the changes. James Weinstein and Samuel P. Hays offer what Bradley Rice calls the “Hays-Weinstein thesis.” In Hays’ influential article “The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era,” the author writes that elites “found that the decentralized system of political life limited their larger objectives. The movement for reform in municipal government, therefore, constituted an attempt by upper-class, advanced

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8 Dow and Hormell, p. 21.
professional, and large business groups to take formal political power from the previously dominant lower- and middle-class elements so that they might advance their own conceptions of desirable public policy.”

Building off this thesis are Richard Judd’s *Socialist Cities* and Bradley Robert Rice’s *Progressive Cities*. Judd demonstrates that in Dayton, Ohio, the first City Manager-led municipal government in the country was the product of the rising political prospects of the Socialist Party. Elites warned that the city “may follow the example of Milwaukee.” Rice’s contribution is to demonstrate that “modernization, and the affirmation of corporate values, in addition to selfish interests, emerge[d] as important motives for reform.”

Contrary to Hays, Weinstein, and Judd, Rice argues that “To be sure, in some cases, Galveston itself included, the commission alternative appeared at an opportune time for business who were struggling to obtain or maintain dominance over city politics” but “a full understanding of the commission movement must go beyond a purely class interpretation.” Most sources, Rice and Judd included, end discussion on municipal reform with the close of the Progressive Era. This thesis adds to our understanding of municipal reform by continuing the analysis into the more conservative post-World War I period when the elites discussed by Judd and Rice had a greater ability to enact their policies.


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Portland. Particularly important is her analysis of park-building in Baxter’s Portland and the role it played in shaping its identity, public image, and class dynamics. This thesis builds off Kriechels’ study of Baxter and examines in more depth his support for nativism and urban reform.

In the field of labor history, there have been few attempts to combine the study of labor and nativism. Prolific Maine labor historian Charles Scontras has written several books on the state’s labor history. Combined, Scontras’ books provide an in-depth study of how labor has fared in Maine for more than a century. While Maine does not have the history of mass unionism similar to more densely-populated areas like New York, Boston, or Chicago, Scontras work proves that organized labor has a place in the state’s historiography. In general, the historiography of Maine, including the nativist sentiments, ignores the struggle of workers movement. This thesis synthesizes the study of nativism and organized labor as a means of reassessing both.

A recently published contribution to the literature on organized labor and the surprising flexibility of the Ku Klux Klan is Thomas R. Pegram’s “The Ku Klux Klan, Labor, and the White Working Class during the 1920s.” Pegram examines the manner by which organized White, native-born laborers, shut out of mainstream political movements in the wake of the Open Shop movement following World War I, used the Klan in Birmingham, Alabama and Akron,

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Ohio to mobilize for a specifically racialized notion of workers’ rights. Pegram’s article is particularly useful in demonstrating how nativism and racism were used to solidify the cross-class alliance which made the Ku Klux Klan so powerful at its peak.

The Maine Ku Klux Klan has been the subject of numerous inquiries since Lawrence Wayne Moores wrote "The History of the Ku Klux Klan in Maine, 1922-1931" in 1950. Since then, at least four other studies have been completed on the topic. Each one has contributed, in different ways, to this thesis but none address the same question. Moores’ 1950 thesis represents the most sympathetic of all the studies. Perhaps reflecting the reactionary period in which it was written, he argued that “it was natural for Klansmen to view this sect [the Catholic Church] with suspicion and trepidation.” Moores shares the Klan’s view of the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) as well, stating “For the most part the members of the I.W.W. were of foreign descent, they did not contribute to the betterment of the town, and they were inclined to disturb the customary peacefulness of the communities in question.” Assessing the Klan’s brief re-emergence during the 1928 presidential election, Moores again demonstrates his sympathy for the organization. Mournfully, he notes: “After this final display of unparalleled unanimity the Ku Klux Klan disappeared forever from Maine politics, but its political principles remained in the minds of its faithful representatives.” On the topic of Portland’s elections, Moores does demonstrate the importance of the Klan in getting its members and sympathizers to the polls.

17 Moores’ thesis was completed in 1950, during the early years of the Cold War and the height of McCarthy-era red-baiting when anti-radical sentiments were common.
18 Moores, p. 74.
19 Moores, p. 93.
20 Moores, p. 70.
In contrast, Rita Mae Breton’s "Red Scare: A Study in Maine Nativism, 1919-1925" is highly critical of the Klan. Breton views the intense nativism that animated the crackdown on radicals and hostility to non-Anglo Saxon Protestants who were core parts of the Red Scare and Klan activities in Maine as “a constant in the state’s behavior, a spirit which at time is quiescent, but never completely dead.” Breton argues that the Red Scare “engendered an underlying fear of radicalism and a proclivity for intolerance which remained long after hysteria had abated and these various events were forgotten.” On the City Manager question, Breton echoes Dow and Hormell, arguing that “by identifying with a movement relatively assured of success, the Klan hoped to boast of it afterwards as an exhibition of its power.” In the December 1923 election to choose a new City Council and School Board election, she does acknowledge that the Klan’s endorsement played a major role. Breton’s work on the Red Scare and Ku Klux Klan is impressive and adds a valuable framework to the historical record that other historians would benefit from considering. Rather than viewing the period of 1919-20, traditionally associated with the Red Scare, as separate from the period of 1922-25 when the Klan was at its peak, the entire period (1919-25) was in the “wake [of] an intolerance of immigrants...a hatred of communism, a suspicion of organized labor, and a desire for conformity and maintenance of the status quo...” While presenting a useful framework, the thesis overemphasizes an intrinsic ‘spirit’ of Maine and those who inhabited it. This approach mystifies the material basis for nativism in general and the Red Scare and the Ku Klux Klan in particular.

22 Breton, p. 155.
23 Breton, p. 189.
24 Breton, p. 191.
25 Breton, p. 154.
Dow and Hormell’s "The City Manager in Portland, Maine" de-emphasizes the role of the Klan in the 1923 campaign. The pair mention it only once without additional context, writing of the campaign’s final days that “the "antis" called the "pros" "slanderers of the city" and accused them of using the Ku Klux Klan organization as a means of securing manager charter support; at the same time, the pro-manager charter speakers recalled that Boss Tweed called the anti-Tammany reformers "slanderers," and that the "'Klan-Bugaboo' was the last despairing appeal of defeated politicians.”

Mark P. Richard’s *Not a Catholic Nation: The Ku Klux Klan Confronts New England in the 1920s*, as one would expect from the title, “contributes to the history of Catholicism in the United States...and to American religious history.” It seeks to demonstrate that the Catholics were a central component of both New England and U.S. history. Through this lens, it offers the most far-reaching study of the Ku Klux Klan in New England. Richard’s emphasis on religious discrimination offers insight into one aspect of the Klan. Richard largely accepts the narrative that the Klan had only a limited role in the campaign but fails to incorporate the class-based position of earlier research. He argues “that the KKK had simply sided with the majority” and that “the *Portland Press Herald* and local businessmen supported the new city charter because they believed it would lead to more efficient and less costly local government.” This thesis challenges both the accepted notion of the City Manager movement put forth by Richard through Dow and Hormell as well as seeks to make clear the class origins of the anti-Catholic movement.

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26 Dow, pp. 24-25.


28 Richard, p. 27.
John F. Bauman’s *Gateway to Vacationland: The Making of Portland, Maine* offers the most updated and complete history of Portland yet published. Appropriately, Bauman puts significant emphasis on the growth of tourism and the shifting needs which accompanied the shift in public and private priorities. On the topic of the 1923 charter election and the Klan, Bauman does not give enough credit to the Klan’s role in boosting turn-out and shaping the Committee of 100’s grassroots support through appeals to religious and ethnic bigotry. This thesis challenges the notion that the City Manager-Council plan was primarily about good governance by emphasizing the class struggle inherent in the proposal.

Patrick Mannion’s 2018 book, *A Land of Dreams: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Irish in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Maine, 1880–1923* is a comparative examination of Irish communities in Atlantic Canada and Portland during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. The transnational diasporic perspective offered by *A Land of Dreams* challenges notions of what constitutes the Irish diaspora and whether one can speak concretely about diasporic experiences in general, as the experiences of each Irish community varied from each location and across borders. On Portland, Mannion argues that while Portland’s Irish were at various points staunch nationalists, they faced less open opposition to their views than did the Irishmen of those in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. The following study, which focuses on instances of Irish nationalism vis a vis the reactionary native-born anglophones, seeks to add more to the understanding of the struggle for an Irish diasporic experience.

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The following study begins with an examination of the city’s post-colonial origins, emphasizing increasing threats to Yankee capitalist hegemony during the 1840s and the subsequent rise of the nativist Know-Nothing movement as a counter-revolutionary force. Chapter II also explores the start of the Labor Wars of the 1870s and 1880s and the turn to anti-Irish nativism as a means of diffusing that movement. Chapter III focuses on the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (1886-1916), changes in economic and demographic composition before analyzing the role of urban planning in creating an idyllic escape for tourists and wealthy residents. The chapter ends by addressing how radical and ethnic working-class solidarity, in the form of the Socialist Party and militant working-class organizers, inspired anger and trepidation in business elites that workers would gain a foothold in city government. Chapter IV discusses the conservative backlash against radical workers and ethnic communities during the period of 1917-1923. Surging Irish nationalism, combined with the improved fortunes of the city’s Irish longshoremen’s union, was opposed by increasing intolerance toward ‘hyphenated-Americans’ and concerns about the health of the city. This set the stage for the rise of the Ku Klux Klan. Chapter V analyzes the municipal reform movements in Galveston, Texas, Dayton, Ohio, and Auburn, Maine as examples relevant to the case of Portland. It then examines the origins and composition of the Ku Klux Klan, and the Klan’s somewhat unique relationship with Portland’s largest businessmen. Finally, the chapter discusses the 1921 and 1923 charter campaigns, the role of the business community, the Ku Klux Klan, and the resulting victory for the Klan-Business alliance. The concluding chapter discusses the fall out, on both the state and municipal levels, from the charter change and the decline of Ku Klux Klan.
Chapter II:

Industrialization, Reform from Below, and Reaction from Above (1775-1886)

“The cause of the poor in Donegal is the cause of the factory slave in Fall River.”

-Irish World, January 8, 1881

Europeans settled in what is now Portland largely because of its unique natural features, particularly its port and the accessible and protected Casco Bay. Located in the Gulf of Maine, Casco Bay features over 200 islands and easy access to a deep-water harbor, making it an ideal shipping center. From its earliest days, the port drew settlers from England as well as visitors from across the British Empire. What was then known as Falmouth neck focused much of its economic energy on shipbuilding. In October 1775, the Massachusetts settlement town was first bombarded and then burned by the British Navy as the latter sought to quell the anti-monarchical movement. Quickly rebuilt after the war, the town grew to be one of the most important cities in the new republic. By 1820, Portland had the fifteenth largest urban population in the country.

In March of that year, Maine was granted statehood as part of the Missouri Compromise; in part, it gained self-governance because of its opposition to slavery, which was later outlawed in its Constitution. Embodying the levelling impulse of the early Republic, Maine joined other frontier states in refusing to include property requirements for suffrage and thus guaranteed adult male suffrage long before much of the rest of the country. Most other states, especially the original Thirteen Colonies, had property requirements which prevented workers and immigrants from

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participating in self-government.\textsuperscript{33} Portland’s municipal government was founded with a similar ethos: all adult male residents could vote in town meetings and hold public office. In the early national period, artisans and mechanics maintained a public presence through parades and festivals, which reflected the egalitarian vision of some in the new republic.\textsuperscript{34} Major decisions were made at an annual town meeting, which also elected a board of selectmen to implement agreed-upon policies outside of the annual meeting. Nineteenth-century historian William Willis wrote of the period that the town “...had been in its municipal capacity a perfect democracy.”\textsuperscript{35} However, by 1832, governing an increasingly more populated and diverse urban area became more complicated. In that year, the municipality became incorporated as the City of Portland. With the change, voters approved a representative structure and ended the annual town meeting. This system remained in use until 1923. The reasons for the change in 1923 will be discussed in the coming chapters. The old system consisted of an upper house, called the Board of Aldermen, and a larger lower house, called the Common Council. Initially, seven wards covered the entirety of the peninsular municipality. Following the annexation of Deering in 1900, two wards were added. Each ward elected one alderman and three common councilors. A mayor was directly elected on a yearly basis and political parties were instrumental to nominating candidate slates and municipal governance in general. Despite electing a mayor, much of the political power


resided with the legislative bodies.\textsuperscript{36} For nearly 90 years, this system of government continued despite challenges from elites who sought to limit participatory democracy.

**GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION**

Because of its deep water, ice-free port, Portland became one of the nation’s leading mercantile centers. Chief among its exports were ships, timber, and rum, which were commonly exported to the Caribbean and Europe.\textsuperscript{37} The southern Maine economy, however, was limited by its hinterland and the lack of diversity of products for export. It received a major economic boost in April 1853 when the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad opened. The railroad, which connected the Great Lakes and the growing industrial hub of Montreal to Portland, cemented an economic relationship that allowed the city to thrive as the primary destination for Canadian grain exports for the next seventy years. In 1854, the Canadian–American Reciprocity Treaty moved the United States and British Canada toward trade liberalization. The deal boosted the prospect of success for the railroad. Because of the railroad’s success, Portland’s economy experienced significant economic growth and the port became one of the busiest in the United States.\textsuperscript{38} Its growth brought many important changes, most notably significant increases in both the Irish working class and wealth consolidation among the merchant and banking classes.

\textsuperscript{36} Dow, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{37} Made from imported Caribbean sugarcane, Portland was a significant manufacturer of rum throughout the nineteenth century. John Brown Bundy became one of the state’s wealthiest residents through rum production on the wharves. In 1880, the *Portland Board of Trade Journal* published “Portland had the largest trade with the West Indies, of any port on the Atlantic coast.” See “Comunidad Escondida: Latin American influences in nineteenth-and-twentieth century Portland” in Joseph A. Conforti, *Creating Portland: History and Place in Northern New England* (Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire Press, 2005), pp. 192-198.

\textsuperscript{38} Babcock, “The Rise and Fall of Portland’s Waterfront 1850-1920,” p. 65.
Like most New England settlements, Portland’s earliest settlers were primarily of English descent. However, during the nineteenth century, the city’s demographics underwent a major transition. When the United States gained independence from Britain following the American Revolution, the country’s ports were opened to trade from around the world. A busy port and anti-slavery ideals attracted a community of free African-Americans to the slopes of Portland’s Munjoy Hill neighborhood. The Abyssinian Meeting House was established on Sumner (now Newbury) Street in 1828 and it served as the center of that community until closing in 1917.\(^\text{39}\) At the time of its establishment, it was only the third African-American church in the country.\(^\text{40}\)

Connected to the Maritime economy, Portland’s African-Americans mostly worked as longshoremen and seamen. This community peaked at around 400 residents in the 1840 census and declined in both total numbers and as a proportion of the larger population thereafter.\(^\text{41}\) As a port city, Portland was a cosmopolitan center during the early part of the century; one historian described it as a “multiracial, multiethnic” city which included recently defeated Wabanaki, West Indian mariners, an increasing number of Irish laborers, as well as the aforementioned African-Americans.\(^\text{42}\)


\(^{40}\) The establishing of an autonomous African-American church was a bold move for Portland’s small community. It also featured a ‘colored’ school, though Portland never formally segregated public institutions. See “Abyssinian Meeting House,” Greater Portland Landmarks, <http://www.portlandlandmarks.org/abyssinian-meeting-house/>.


emigrants made the Forest City their home. This was especially true during the Great Famine (1845-49), in which half of Ireland’s Catholic population either died or migrated. In the 1860 census, the Irish accounted for “two-thirds of [Portland’s] foreign-born and 11 percent of the city’s total population of about 30,000.”

The mass migration of the Irish, combined with a major cholera epidemic, ignited a national panic among native-born residents who believed good health was “indigenous to our soil” and “disease as an odious alien.” Throughout the country, Irish communities, with their opposition to alcohol temperance, adherence to the Roman Catholic faith, and unsanitary living conditions, were identified by Yankees as the cause of this epidemic. As Alan Kraut notes, “many Americans perceived a link between these two unwelcome guests, cholera and the Irish.”

Besides the threat of disease, their arrival and employment as a reserve army of labor by business elites brought scorn upon them from the native-born working class. The Irish were among the country’s first fully proletarianized workers; on arrival, and for many long thereafter, they owned little more than their own labor, forcing both men and women to work for often low wages. Women primarily cleaned the homes or worked in the needle trades and men worked in the growing industries, including as longshoremen on the waterfront.

Usually working fourteen-hour days and living in abject poverty, residents of the Irish neighborhood of Gorham’s Corner were also known by Yankees for intercommunal street

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46 Eagan, p. 197.
violence and subservience to the bishop. In 1854, railroad developer John Alfred Poor commented on one incidence of street fighting among Irish youth, writing that, “they were all Irish and we suppose Catholics, and when their priest appeared they slunk away like whipped hounds.”

Despite the importance of their labor to the growing economy, the Irish were largely reviled and shunned by the Yankees. James R. Barrett wrote of early Irish-American society, “Excluded from public life, Irish immigrants fell back upon their own communities and institutions.”

Often, these early institutions were tied to the Roman Catholic Church, to which most Irish immigrants belonged. One example of this was St. Dominic’s Church, which now houses the Maine Irish Heritage Center in the West End neighborhood. In April 1833, the church was dedicated as the area’s first Catholic church and it henceforth served as a cultural and religious center of the Irish community. Growth continued and in 1855, the Diocese of Maine was established. New York-born David William Bacon was inaugurated as the state’s first bishop on May 31, 1855. Bacon took over a large territory (Maine and New Hampshire) which included over 2,000 parishioners, most of whom were French Canadian or Irish. Soon after his arrival, the ambitious bishop added new priests and laid the groundwork for an impressive new cathedral. This structure, known as the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, was consecrated on December 14, 1856 and completed following delays due to the Civil War in 1869. As of 2018, it remained one of the tallest and most attractive buildings in the city. Because of its impressive architecture and large size, the Cathedral was a status symbol and show of strength for the

47 Mundy, p. 71.


49 Mundy, p. 82.

50 Barker, pp. 60-61.
Catholic hierarchy. Because of both longstanding anti-Catholicism among Protestants and the bishop’s emphasis on organization, the bishop maintained significant influence over the Catholic community, an issue which would be raised time and again by anti-Catholic activists, including the Ku Klux Klan.

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the ethnic and religious composition of Portland changed significantly. With independence, the city was no longer legally bound to mercantilist Britain and became home to a variety of ethnic communities and trading partners. African-Americans, who were able to carve out a niche on the waterfront, were pushed out by mass immigration from Ireland. These immigrants were by far the largest non-Yankee community in the city; their Catholicism and exclusion from Yankee society produced a tight knit community that would be subject to regular attacks during periods of turmoil over the following decades.

DISLOCATION AND CONFLICT

Beginning in the 1830s, substantial economic changes pushed skilled workers in both the United States and Europe from the relative safety of guild production and into full proletarian status. During the early portion of this period, skilled mechanics and artisans in larger cities to Portland’s south were forced to become wage laborers when highly capitalized corporations proved to be more effective than small craftsman at meeting demand for industrial and social production. In Portland, this change happened at a slower pace and later than in other cities. However, during the 1830s and especially after the Panic of 1837, conflict between workers and capitalists increased dramatically. In 1848, European workers and allies revolted against

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51 One historian described the Cathedral as “...more of a symbol of success and authority to the hierarchy than to the average Irishman” (Mundy, p. 198).
autocratic regimes with demands for radical democracy. Americans responded with sympathy and sought more democracy at home.

Founded in 1815, the Maine Charitable Mechanics Association formed to further education and provide a rudimentary social safety net for out of work craftsmen. During this period, Portland’s skilled workers increasingly lost social status and control of the workplace to larger, more capitalized employers like the Portland Company. By 1860, the Portland Company was reported to be valued at over $333,000 and was the city’s largest employer. The beginnings of mass migration and the introduction of steam-powered machinery “robbed many journeymen of their skills and rendered [the] apprentice system irrelevant. Independent artisans had become dependent wage laborers.” The Yankee workingmen’s notion of community, which had been forged during the revolutionary period, was shattered as they fell into proletarian status. Faced with increasing uncertainty due to the accelerating pace of economic dislocation, Portland artisans organized. In 1831, they founded a Working Men's Institution to promote "equal rights and privileges" and an improvement of living conditions for the "labouring class.” They demanded universal education, equal taxation, simplification of the laws, and the abolition of chartered monopolies. In the aftermath of the Panic of 1837, newspapers editors became increasingly nervous as class conflict intensified. Emblematic of this was an article directed to the city's skilled workers that urged that they, "be contented then, and toil on without longing for

53 The Portland Company produced equipment for different industries over the more than 100 years it was in operation; most important in its early days were the locomotives produced for the burgeoning railroad industry. During the Civil War, it produced gun boats and later boilers for the state’s pulp and paper industry. See Bauman, p. 40.
54 Babcock, p. 32.
55 Babcock, p. 17.
wealth. You are happier without it, if you could only think so." In June of 1845, violence erupted when street performers, who "disguised themselves in grotesque costumes," set several fires. Another group attacked the house of a temperance-minded shipmaster. A radical press developed as well. Local Quaker preacher Jeremiah Hacker published The Pleasure Boat from 1845 to 1866. Staunchly in favor of working class power and opposed to slavery and war, the newspaper enjoyed widespread circulation in Maine and elsewhere in the region. In October 1847, Hacker opposed the ten-hour movement, not because it would drain profits from the rich, but because it did not go far enough in addressing the inequity of wage labor. Rather than reform, he argued that workers must “...demand their rights and their whole rights, and not throw off part of the burden and thus lull them into security till that which remains is bound to their shoulders with iron chains that cannot be severed.” In the years prior to the democratic revolutions of 1848, Portland’s working class proved to be increasingly discontent and potentially open to direct confrontation with the ruling class.

1848 was a revolutionary year across Europe. Democratic revolutions occurred in all corners of the continent. Large numbers of Europeans rose up “against the possession of government, or any public power, by any established, privileged, closed, or self-recruiting group of men.” As news reached the United States, mass meetings and other demonstrations of public support for the revolutionaries occurred across the country. Encouraged by the radical fervor, support for labor and abolitionism soared, which prompted worries among the nation’s elites. Intellectual leaders believed that conservatives lived in fear of having their property redistributed by the revolutions. Despite these fears, the United States became a sanctuary to hundreds of

56 Babcock, p. 19.
58 “Laborers’ Cabin,” Portland Pleasure Boat, October 7, 1847, p. 3.
radical Europeans who fled their countries when counter-revolution prevailed. A substantial number of Europeans brought with them the ideas of socialism and class struggle. New York Congressman Thomas R. Whitney characterized the revolutionaries as “Red Republicans, agrarians, and infidels” who were “the malcontents of the Old World, who hate monarchy, not because it is monarchy, but because it is restraint. They are such men as stood by the side of Robespierre.” Nativists clung to capitalism as an “American Institution” and thus opposed the immigration of the Radical 48ers in part because of their revolutionary ideals, which included support for communism and anarchism.

Agitation at home led Portland’s city government to grow as a means of protecting the capitalist class. In 1848, it founded a professional police force. It also successfully petitioned the State of Maine to allow it to erect houses of detention for juvenile delinquents. When a bill to create a ten-hour workday was proposed, Portland's representatives unanimously opposed its passage, but the state legislature approved it anyway. Artisans, who were force

59 This refrain was often heard by nativists throughout the period of open immigration to the country. See Bruce C. Levine, The Spirit of 1848: German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), p. 5.


61 While Portland’s employers dealt with their share of class conflict, the city’s employers had it relatively easy in comparison to the mill cities of the Merrimack River just a short train ride to its south. In cities like Lawrence, Lowell, and Lynn, labor disputes were common. In 1860, 3,000 shoemakers walked off the job in Lynn, Massachusetts. This dispute led to 20,000 shoemakers to strike in solidarity and another 20,000 community members to march in solidarity. Alan Dawley noted that in Lynn "articulate, activist Irish shoe and leather workers joined Yankees in flatly rejecting the myth of success. Irish and Yankee workers jointly wrote a long history of trade unionism...supported the reform ideas of the Knights of Labor, looked for labour candidates when they went to the polls, and resisted strikebreaking by local police." Just as had occurred in Portland in 1848, Lynn’s business elites called for the professionalization of the police. "Shaken by disorder in the strike of 1860, manufacturers lost faith in the traditional methods of policing the community inherited from the preindustrial era when class antagonisms had scarcely existed and laboring men often had the same attachment to private property as businessmen.” See Alan Dawley, Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 110.


63 Babcock, p. 30.
factory workers as a result of consolidation of capital, participated in campaigns for the ten-hour workday. Stimulated by the 1848 revolutions labor organizing and abolitionism grew in the months and years that followed. In Maine, workers and liberal elites demonstrated an increased willingness to challenge for power. In March 1849, the Pleasure Boat wrote, “let the toiling millions of men and women who have been so long crouching to the rich...henceforth remember that if they perform their part faithfully...they are more honorable than those who labor less faithfully to do good, however rich they may be, or however high, in the false scale of society may be their station.” Later that year, Hacker went even further in expressing the growing consciousness of the working class stating, “…yes, the laboring classes compose the majority of the nation, and have the power, if they would use it, to enjoy the fruits of their own industry; and when they are robbed of half they earn...the fault is their own, and in various places they are beginning to see and understand this, and it is causing quite a ‘shaking among the dry bones’...let those who do the work to be owners of what they produce instead of beggars, and masters rather than slaves.” In electoral politics, abolitionist Samuel Fessenden of Portland won more votes in the September 1848 gubernatorial election than ever before. After running candidates in each election since 1842, the single-issue abolitionist campaign earned a record number of votes for the movement. In April 1849, the ten-hour workday bill went into effect. When bosses at the Portland Company refused to cut the workday, sixty laborers walked off the job. Despite the

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64 “Laborers’ Cabin”, Portland Pleasure Boat, March 12, 1849, p. 3.
65 “Workingmens’ Hall”, Portland Pleasure Boat, March 12, 1849, p. 3. October 18, 1849, p. 3.
66 Both the rising Free Soil Party and the declining Liberty Party supported Fessenden’s candidacy.
support of one of the city’s daily newspapers, the workers lost what was the largest strike in the city’s history to that point and were forced to return to work 11-hour days once more. A month later, Irish shovelers, who were in an even more precarious employment situation than their comrades at the Portland Company, also walked off the job. Bosses, secure in their authority; thanks to an entrenched capitalist political and legal system, defeated the workers. 69 The movement for a ten-hour day continued into the next decades. In 1854, during the peak of the Know-Nothings period, workers on Portland’s waterfront struck for the ten-hour day and the Portland Advertiser noted “a pretty general movement of workers” in favor of the reduction of the hours of work. 70 Though neither organized laborers nor abolitionists achieved immediate success, both causes strengthened in the years following the 1848 revolutions. These manifestations of egalitarianism, in turn, stimulated a counter-revolution of nativism and anti-immigrant activism.

ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION

Class consciousness increased in part because of the conflicts generated by the consolidation of Portland’s business sector. The clearest example of industrial capitalism was the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railway. Built between 1845-1853, the road connected the burgeoning economy of Montreal and the Great Lakes with the ideal port on Casco Bay. A significant investment of capital, the railway came into existence because of a combination of Quebec’s brutally cold winter weather, loosened tariffs between British Canada and the United States, and the initiative of Portland’s motivated business class, especially John Alfred Poor. 71


Poor (1808-1871) was one of Portland’s most prominent businessmen. Much of its 19th century industrial growth, from securing the terminus of the St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railway, to the growth of the Portland Company, to the laying out of Commercial Street on the waterfront is attributed to Poor.\textsuperscript{72} Founded concurrently was the Portland Company. The company was a locomotive foundry that built railroad equipment for the adjacent Portland terminus of the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad connection. With the completion of the railroad, Portland’s business class organized itself into the Portland Board of Trade (PBOT) “to promote Portland’s commercial and industrial potential based upon ‘the natural advantages of the port.’”\textsuperscript{73} Unlike workers, the city’s largest employers had a mouthpiece to promote their collective interests. Peace among the capitalist class, if not unity, was necessary both to defend their collective business interests and to consolidate sufficient capital necessary to leverage for major improvement projects.

**EARLY TOURISM**

With the coming of the railroad from Montreal and the concurrent founding of the Portland Company, the city found itself home to an increasing amount heavy industry. The railroad brought not only the means of transporting grain from Montreal and paper products from central and western Maine but made Portland a major transit point for the budding tourist sector. The St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railway brought visitors to the White Mountains, including Mount Washington. Other lines took tourists northward to summer colonies, including Camden and Bar Harbor. Whatever their destination, thousands of tourists passed through the city each

\textsuperscript{72} Bauman, pp. 39-40

\textsuperscript{73} Babcock, p. 65.
These typically well-off visitors came by steamship as well. Comparatively more comfortable than mid-nineteenth century railroads, the Portland Steamship Company brought an estimated 1.5 million passengers to and from Boston in 1863 alone. Aggressive marketing by the Maine Central Railroad Company attracted tourists to nearby sites, including lighthouses and the islands of Casco Bay. These early tourists were largely professional and elite Yankees seeking what they imagined to be an authentic northern New England experience, which was supposed to be free from the stress and conflict of southern New England and the mid-Atlantic. During the mid-nineteenth century and despite the locomotive producing Portland Company, the city was idealized in print as a “shimmering sun-, breeze-, and surf-splashed city by the sea.” During this period, the nascent tourist industry was not yet the major source of that it would become in the decades that followed, but elites did realize that tourists would provide the city with a steady stream of income that did not require a large industrial workforce. Portland would eventually capitalize on its natural beauty, relatively intact Yankee population, and minimal heavy industry by investing in the tourist sector to the detriment of heavy industry and even the Port in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

KNOW-NOTHINGS

Into the conflict between assertive workers and consolidating capitalists stepped the Know-Nothing movement, which promised to end mass immigration and thus restore the skilled, native-born worker to his previous status. John S. Sayward, who helped organize Portland’s

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74 For a comprehensive overview of the tourism industry in New England during this period, see Dona Brown, Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century. (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995). Brown focuses on summer colonies and rural tourism rather than urban locations like Portland. For an overview of urban tourism, see Catherine Cocks, Doing the Town: The Rise of Urban Tourism in the United States, 1850-1915 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). Though Cocks focuses her research on tourism in major cities, much of it is applicable to other municipalities. There is a gap in the research on urban tourism in smaller cities like Portland.

75 Bauman, pp. 40-42.
chapter of the Know Nothings, wrote that “the Know-Nothing movement is composed mostly of
the middling classes of mechanics and operatives…”\textsuperscript{76} Emblematic of this, the Know-Nothings
chose mechanic J. B. Thorndike as their president.\textsuperscript{77} Thorndike eventually became a deputy
marshal of mayor Neal Dow during the Rum Riot.\textsuperscript{78} A study of the Ellsworth organization
reveals a majority of that town’s identifiable members came from the working class, though with
a wide variation in skill levels. However, the organization was not based in the Yankee working
class alone. Despite being a numerical minority, business and professional elites also played a
critical role in the movement. Ellsworth’s merchants, lawyers, sea captains, clerks, and farmers
were all prominent among the city’s Know-Nothing movement. Moreover, 17 of the 72 largest
taxpayers (23.6\%) in Ellsworth openly affiliated with the movement.\textsuperscript{79} While the Know-Nothing
movement brought together both wealthy and working-class Yankees, its actions did not bring
about mutual benefit to each class. Instead, it primarily served as a political tool for the
advancement of the prospects for upper-class Yankees. In this respect, the Know-Nothing
movement, like the Ku Klux Klan two generations later, was a nativist cross-class alliance that
fed white supremacy to workers and political and economic power to elites.

The growth of mid-nineteenth century nativism was related to increased grassroots
agitation among the working class. The American Party, known as the political outlet of the
nativist movement, rose out of the fractured party system and was able to win major elections
across the country, including in Maine and Massachusetts, by grouping together reactionary

\textsuperscript{76} Scontras, \textit{Collective Efforts}, p. 121.

\textsuperscript{77} Thorndike was one of the city’s most prominent workers. On top of his position in the Know-Nothing movement and as Dow’s deputy, he served as president of the Maine Charitable Mechanics Association.

\textsuperscript{78} James H. Mundy, \textit{Hard Times, Hard Men}, p. 142.

\textsuperscript{79} Whitmore’s study showed that nativists from wealthier professions such as merchants and sea captains were Know-Nothings as well as skilled workers such as blacksmiths, carpenters, and shoemakers. Whitmore, pp. 175-176.
segments of skilled workers and opportunistic elites. The Know-Nothing’s chief objectives--support for temperance and opposition to immigration--both sought to undermine the culture and politics of the working class. This alliance of Yankee workers and capitalists emphasized politics and vigilantism; these tactics successfully stemmed the rising tide of solidarity and democracy among workers, both immigrant and Yankee. In Massachusetts, the American Party swept the 1856 state elections. In office, one law enacted by the party that delayed voting rights for naturalized citizens. While in Kentucky, members killed 22 German and Irish citizen-immigrants for attempting to vote in August 1855.  

In Portland, a similar coalition of reactionaries supported Whig tannery owner and temperance movement founder Neal Dow in the April 1851 mayoral election. Spurred on by the same surge in conservative sentiments, Governor John Hubbard signed the “Maine Law,” which was the nation’s first law to prohibit the sale and consumption of alcohol; although its effectiveness was severely limited by shabby enforcement. Despite this victory for the temperance movement, Dow was defeated for re-election the following April. His opponent was Democrat Albion Parris. Parris, who had been active in Maine politics since 1811, was one of the most well-known politicians in the state. To overcome Parris’ popularity, Dow and his supporters used a tactic which survived into the twenty first century: they blamed their defeat entirely on immigrants. Writing immediately in the wake of the election, an ally argued that Dow had been defeated by “Irish laborers” and alleged that “large sums of money were obtained from the [liquor] trade in Boston” to hire agents “to go through the lines of railroads...and arrange for the Irish laborers to go to the city and vote. Many of these who were brought to the poll had no right to vote...Several hundreds of these non-


81 James H. Mundy, Hard Times, Hard Men, p. 100.

82 Parris was elected to five consecutive single year terms as governor from 1821-1826.
residents voted, and then vanished from the city." The nativist movement, as exemplified by Dow, used the issue of temperance to sow division among workers.

Like the Ku Klux Klan movement of the 1920s, the Maine temperance and anti-immigrant movements expanded out of their Portland strongholds to become statewide political forces. On August 29, 1854, just two years after Dow was narrowly defeated for re-election, hundreds of activists met at a convention and nominated a Know-Nothing candidate for governor. A month later, Portland’s 1,3000 members organized an official chapter and began holding regular meetings at a hall near the waterfront. However, as the group entered statewide politics, the influence of elites expanded at the expense of working class power. For example, those affiliated with Governor Anson Morrill were able to alter the organization’s constitution to allow for endorsed officeholders to appoint those who were not members of the American order. Under Morrill’s influence, the group also began to take positions on “side issues” such as slavery and tariffs. In general, the difference between the Republican Party and the Know-Nothings became blurry. When the Maine Republican Party was formed at a convention held in Augusta on February 22, 1855, a majority of those in attendance were Know-Nothings. Quickly, they became another vehicle for middle and upper-class advancement rather than “a unique reform movement.” Emblematic of this change was the relationship between Portland’s Know-Nothing chapter and Republican tannery owner Neal Dow’s next political campaign. The Know-Nothings

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84 The Know-Nothings nominated Anson Morrill, who was also the nominee of the nascent Republican Party. Considered more of an opportunist than a “true believer” nativist, Morrill personally appealed for and received the support of the Know-Nothings but deeply disappointed the movement while in office. See Allan R. Whitmore, “‘A Guard of Faithful Sentinels,’ The Know-Nothing Appeal in Maine, 1854-1855,” Maine Historical Society Quarterly 20 (Winter 1981): 181.

85 Whitmore, p. 171.

86 Whitmore, p. 182.
served as the base of support for Dow; the temperance leader embraced the group and used their lodge as his campaign headquarters. Dow was narrowly elected again as mayor in April 1855 “...in opposition to the foreigners and Catholics who were mostly on the side of rum.” Dow’s re-election turned into a flashpoint for political violence against the anti-temperance Irish Catholic community by utilizing the working-class base of the Know-Nothing movement for his own political gain.

PORTLAND RUM RIOT

The era’s political culture featured extreme levels of vigilante violence as well as dehumanizing rhetoric heaped upon working-class immigrants. Given that reality, it should be no surprise that Dow’s politically-appointed police force obeyed his command and used deadly force to subdue the largely immigrant anti-temperance protesters later in 1855. In the weeks following his re-election, rumors began circulating that Dow, while vocally supporting a ban on alcohol consumption, hypocritically kept a cache of rum in the basement of City Hall for his personal use. Given that Portland’s Irish were already the victims of significant petty street violence from Anglo-Saxon residents and police, this produced tense relations between municipal authorities and its Irish-Catholic residents. On June 2, 1855, protesters gathered at City Hall to call on the police to investigate the rumor. However, the police refused and a crowd estimated to number up to 3,000 people (in a city of 21,000 residents) stood outside the building. Inside Dow ordered the state militia to disperse the crowd. When it failed to do so, he ordered his appointed police force to open fire on the protesters, who complied. Their shots killed one

87 Mundy, p. 142.
88 Clubb, p. 29.
89 Mundy, p. 130.
person, John Robbins, an immigrant seaman from downeast Maine, and injured seven others. This development, which became known as the “Portland Rum Riot” shocked the country. When voters elected a Democratic majority to the Maine Legislature in the September 1855 elections, Portland’s mayor was the primary target. The Democrats subsequently repealed the groundbreaking temperance law the following spring.90

Incidents such as the Portland Rum Riot were far from the final time that a conservative, business-oriented elite in charge of government attacked immigrants and blamed them for society’s ills in the name of anglicizing society and enhancing their own profits. To maintain control in the rapidly shifting early industrial economy, businessmen and community leaders like Neal Dow relied on cultivating a culture of fear and disunity among workers that allowed capitalist relations to strengthen. The Know-Nothing movement served as one of the early flash points both in Portland and across the country which would reappear during other periods of social upheaval. Soon after the decline of the Know-Nothings, an organization developed in Ireland which spread across the English-speaking world and sought to undermine the legitimacy of English rule in Ireland and North America.

IRISH NATIONALISM

On St. Patrick’s Day 1858, the Irish Republican Brotherhood was born in Dublin. Committed to winning an independent Irish republic by any means necessary, the organization soon spread to Irish communities around the world, including Portland. On April 27, 1865, the twenty-one year old trade unionist and future mayor of Boston, Patrick Collins, addressed a packed Mechanics’ Hall. Among the attendees were trade unionists as well as Irish-American

soldiers returning from the recently-ended Civil War.\textsuperscript{91} Organized under a military structure, sixty-three men subsequently formed the initial cadre of the city’s revolutionary nationalist organization.\textsuperscript{92} Portland’s Fenians joined those from other locales to participate in the ultimately unsuccessful Fenian raids of Campobello Island, just across the border from Eastport, Maine in New Brunswick as well as in southwestern Quebec.\textsuperscript{93} Despite this initial attempt at an armed uprising, other sectors of Portland’s Irish community engaged in community-building and support efforts. The Fenians, which were an explicitly nationalist group, were not the only group of Irish to organize in the city. Community groups that frequently supported nationalism but were not formed toward that explicit goal, such as the Irish American Relief Association (IARA), had a lasting impact. IARA had been founded in 1863 and incorporated by the Maine Legislature in 1865. It sponsored community outings, including St. Patrick’s Day parades, while also functioning as a mutual aid society and fundraising organization for relief in Ireland.\textsuperscript{94} Another such organization, the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), established a presence in the city in 1876. The Hibernians were the largest lay Catholic organization in the country and were committed to upholding loyalty to the U.S. government, aiding sick and infirm members and carrying “on the traditions and history of the Gaelic race.” This organization, which included both philanthropic and covertly political goals, “was at the forefront of many important Irish causes” between the 1880s and 1920s. Possibly in reaction to the establishment of the AOH, “a lodge of Orangemen” was founded in 1878. The Orangemen were Protestants known for their

\textsuperscript{91} Indicative of the proletarian status of the organization, Maine’s first ‘circle’ of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (Fenians) was formed by stoneworkers on the island of Vinalhaven in Penobscot Bay.

\textsuperscript{92} Barker, \textit{The Irish of Portland, Maine}, pp. 107-110.


\textsuperscript{94} Barker, \textit{The Irish of Portland, Maine}, pp. 110-112.
anti-Catholic positions and willingness to engage in violence. Earlier in the decade, riots broke out in New York between Catholic and Protestant from Ireland.\textsuperscript{95} Despite their relative longevity,\textsuperscript{96} little is known about their specific activities.\textsuperscript{97}

In January 1880, land reform proponent and British Member of Parliament Charles Stewart Parnell arrived in New York City to raise funds for famine relief. When Parnell was visited in Boston by Portland’s top Irish community leaders, he indicated that he would likely speak in the Forest City once he returned from engagements elsewhere. Despite every effort made to bring the famed leader, Parnell was unable to visit the city. Nevertheless, the excitement generated by Parnell was indicative of the support for the Irish cause in that historical moment. Support for the Irish cause surged during this period and even conservative Yankees jumped on board. While Parnell at times made radical statements to attract the support of Fenians, his agenda was in general far less controversial. Because of this, Parnell was able to attract the support of a small but influential group of Portland’s Irish community, the so-called “lace-curtain Irish”.\textsuperscript{98} In February 1880, an integrated (and Republican) Irish-American, James W. Cunningham, called a meeting at City Hall to raise funds for famine relief. Chaired by Yankee mayor George Walker, the meeting raised $1,700. In his speech, Walker surprisingly cited

\textsuperscript{95} The Orange Order was known for its role in the 1870 and 1871 riots in New York City. See Michael A. Gordon, \textit{The Orange Riots: Irish Political Violence in New York City, 1870 and 1871} (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

\textsuperscript{96} The organization was still active as of 1900 and met in a building adjacent to the main lodge of the Ancient Order of Hibernians on Congress Street.

\textsuperscript{97} Barker, \textit{The Irish of Portland, Maine}, pp. 114-115.

\textsuperscript{98} These so-called “lace-curtain Irish” were found in Portland. A minority of Irish residents moved out of the working class and into a higher social standing. Two prominent examples were James W. Cunningham who was an Irish-born contractor and William H. Looney, who was a Maine-born attorney and politician. Both Republicans and closely affiliated with the Board of Trade, they represent the Portland manifestation of the initial stages of Irish assimilation into the Yankee ruling class. Both played prominent roles in the charter reform efforts in 1923.
“oppression of the landlords” as the cause of the famine.\textsuperscript{99} It is unknown why Walker made such a radical statement, though it was possibly an attempt to gain Irish votes weeks prior to a contentious upcoming city election.\textsuperscript{100} In November of that year, another meeting of the city’s Irish was convened by relatively well-off community members which formed a chapter of the American Land League.\textsuperscript{101} The Land League was established in March of that year to promote agrarian reform and Irish Home Rule. Across the country, it was a heterogeneous group which surpassed in numbers and influence the earlier Fenian movement.\textsuperscript{102} Involvement by the upper tier of Portland’s Irish community “highlighted the respectability and legality of the Land League.” As such, it was a cross-class alliance which attracted Irish workers and petit-bourgeois Irishmen. Some brought to the movement radical ideas, while others sought simply to reform the existing system of British rule over the island. According to Patrick Mannion, “the Land League brought together middle-class and working-class ethnic and benevolent associations: this can clearly be seen in Portland as heavily Irish labour unions like the Boilermakers and the PLSBS, proletarian groups like the AOH, and middle-class associations like the IARA worked together to improve conditions in Ireland.”\textsuperscript{103} Because the Land League was an organization which was led by members of the small but influential conservative Irish community, it was acceptable to elites like Mayor Walker in a manner that later organizing around Irish independence after World War

\textsuperscript{99} Patrick Mannion, \textit{A Land of Dream}, p. 82.

\textsuperscript{100} Walker lost that election to William Senter, who was a former apprentice watchmaker. For background on Senter, see “William Senter, Portland, ca. 1870,” Maine Historical Society, <https://www.mainememory.net/artifact/18102>.

\textsuperscript{101} The meeting was convened by Frank W. Cunningham, who owned a large masonry company and Looney, who was eventually elected multiple times to the Maine Legislature, was its secretary. The meeting ended following a speech by Charles McCarthy Jr., a wealthy clothing merchant.

\textsuperscript{102} Barrett, p. 114.

\textsuperscript{103} Mannion, p. 91.
I would not be; the class character of this particular organization was a major factor in its acceptability to Yankee elites.104

LABOR WARS

Capitalists increasingly sought to escape dense urban living as a militant labor movement developed. To win higher wages, better working conditions, and recognition of their labor unions, laborers often resorted to strikes. The period from 1875-1925 saw bloody conflicts between labor and capital unparalleled in United States history before or since. Labor historian Sidney Lens called the six decades that followed the 1877 national railroad strike “a blood-soaked era which left an indelible blot on American history.”105 For generations, much of the Yankee public associated the Irish with militant labor unions on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In the United States, this was especially true in the coalfields of eastern Pennsylvania. Well-known across the country in the 1870s was the “Molly Maguires,” a radical Irish secret society. This organization struck fear in the hearts of business interests. The Daily Miners’ Journal, an employer-owned publication in northeastern Pennsylvania reflecting the concerns of Anglo-American business interests, informed its readers that the organization originated in Boston and controlled “all the nominations of the Democratic Party in our cities and in some parts of the country…”106 Eventually, six suspected Mollies were hung in June 1877 on shaky evidence following a defeated coal miners’ strike. Organized laborers, particularly of Irish descent, were widely stigmatized during this period as prone to violence and untrustworthy by the broader public. The Pittsburgh Gazette wrote that “the Molly Maguires represented the spirit of French

104 Once this wave of nationalist organizing died out, around 1890, the movement was largely quiet in the city for the next two decades.
106 Lens, p. 11.
Communism and enforced their views by secret murders."Ironically, wealthy capitalists often employed armies of professional soldiers and strikebreakers to violently disrupt organized labor. Not long after the execution of the Mollies, Irish railroad laborer, Knights of Labor organizer, and Greenback-Labor Party nominee Terence V. Powderly was elected mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania. He defeated a fusion candidate nominated by both the Democrats and Republicans. Though his political program was relatively moderate and surely did not call for communist revolution, Powderly and his allies were vilified as the “Molly Maguire Ticket” and his opponents argued that his administration would attempt to introduce communism.\textsuperscript{108} The image of workers, particularly Irish ones, was rarely positive in the eyes of the Anglo-American elites; by labeling them as murderous communists and associating them with the Molly Maguires, business interests hoped to lessen the possibility of solidarity among the broader working-class. In Portland, a city with a significant Irish population and a large contingent of militant Yankee mechanics, the vilification of Irish workers presented challenges for both union organizing and political action. Despite these scare tactics, both the Knights of Labor and the Greenback Party had a considerable presence in Portland during the lifetimes of those organizations.

\textbf{GREENBACK-LABOR}

The Knights of Labor was an industrial union founded in 1869 in Philadelphia by garment workers. Originally a secret society, it quickly grew during the early days of the Labor Wars. Rather than organizing by craft alone, Knights of Labor organizations welcomed all workers regardless of skill. The organization celebrated “the material contributions [that]

\textsuperscript{107} Lens, p. 29.

‘mechanics’ and ‘working men’ made to the community,” but rejected the notion of class conflict and the socialization of the means of production associated with socialism and anarchism. This republican producerist ethic grew in the wake of the American Revolution but continued throughout the nineteenth century, especially in Maine.109 Its proponents sought to restore the declining system by which men would maintain their ability to own their shops and produce on a smaller scale. However, instead of independence, workers were increasingly forced to sell their labor to large companies in exchange for wages. The Irish had been forced to do this upon arrival in North America, and so too were English skilled workers. To promote labor politics and to ease the access to currency for debtors, a substantial number turned not just to the Knights of Labor but to political action in the form of the Greenback-Labor Party.

During the 1870s and into the 1880s, the Knights of Labor and the Greenback Party often made common cause and had overlapping membership. The Greenbacks sought as its primary goal the return of government printed paper currency, “greenbacks,” by repealing the Resumption Act of 1875. It later renamed itself the Greenback-Labor Party and incorporated the producerist ideology of the labor movement. According to Sarah Babb, producerism “was a powerful message that informed various political struggles of the nineteenth century in the United States.” Greenbacks did not see the primary conflict as between the ownership class and working class per se, but between those who produced and those who were idle. While these categories, producer against idler and capitalist against worker often aligned, it was not always the case.110 Utilizing these ideas, the Greenback Party found some success in politics nationwide and even more in Maine, where supporters sent two Maine Greenbackers to the United States


House of Representatives in 1878 and re-elected them two years later. Among the two was Thompson H. Murch, a stone cutter and secretary of the Granite Cutters International Association. When he defeated incumbent Congressman and future five-term Republican U.S. Senator Eugene Hale, he became one of the first trade unionists to serve in federal office. Perhaps to prevent greater victories in future House of Representatives elections, the national press unleashed a torrent of vitriol against the Maine Greenbacks. A front page story in the New York Times immediately following the state’s September 1878 election, described Murch as “an ignorant stone-cutter, who was never heard of until a few months ago, a Communist, a demagogue of the lowest type, who in his speeches boasts that he has never lost anything because he never had anything to lose...”111 Later, Murch and fellow Greenback Congressman George W. Ladd were derided as having “no fitness for the places to which they have been chosen.”112 In the following year’s state election, the party elected over 30 members to the Maine Legislature, which made them the most successful and influential alternative political party in the state’s history. Despite the Greenbacks achieving their greatest electoral success in eastern and central Maine, the New York Times, while profiling Portland barber and Greenback leader John Todd, reported that the movement was “a queer mental delusion” that “commenced in Portland.” The paper also reported that “Boston free-lover” and spiritualist minister Moses Hull and other party activists had recently arrived in the city.113 Despite not achieving the electoral success in Portland that it did in other parts of the Pine Tree State, the Greenback Party had a significant presence in the city, which opened the door to the Knights of Labor. By 1884, the Greenbacks’

primary issue, currency reform, faded in importance and the movement was co-opted by the Democratic Party.\textsuperscript{114}

Despite the downfall of independent, labor-oriented politics in the country, the Knights of Labor experienced phenomenal growth throughout the 1880s and spread to Maine in 1882. In that year, the first District Assembly was formed in Portland. In 1885, Powderly visited Portland, including a tense meeting with Catholic Bishop James Augustine Healy. Fiercely anti-organized labor, Healy expelled members of his church who joined the Knights. Despite this hurdle, the Knights overcame religious opposition and expanded across Maine. Between July 1882 and July 1886, five different assemblies were organized in the City of Portland and more in nearby towns. More concerned with uplifting and social betterment than open conflict with the capitalist class, the Knights built cooperative institutions which sought to weaken the capitalist control on the working class. For example, the assemblies based in Portland formed the “Mechanics and Knights of Labor Mutual Relief Association” which “paid sick and disability benefits of five dollars a week and the sum of twenty-five dollars for burial expenses.” They also established a cooperative store based on the Rochdale principles.\textsuperscript{115} The organization’s membership skyrocketed mid-decade in large part because of its association with the movement for an eight-hour workday\textsuperscript{116} before peaking in 1886 and quickly declining thereafter.\textsuperscript{117} In the aftermath of


\textsuperscript{115} Scontras, \textit{Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine}, pp. 119-120.


\textsuperscript{117} The Knights of Labor declined for several reasons; the organization’s membership spiked during the period of 1883-1886 and quickly declined thereafter. In 1886, it was incorrectly associated with the May 1886 Haymarket affair which ended with the deaths of seven police officers, four labor activists, and the arrest and imprisonment of hundreds of others. James Green argues that the organization’s inability to win a strike that sought to maintain an eight-hour day in the Chicago stockyards, combined with a change in public opinion in the wake of the Haymarket affair and deep divisions between the Knights and anarchists were the primary causes for the group’s swift decline.
their decline, the labor movement instead focused on organizing skilled male workers. No organization would seek to unite all workers into a single union for decades until the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) were organized in 1905. In the meantime, Portland’s workers remained divided by skill, religion, race, and ethnicity during the coming period of intense class conflict, leaving open the specter of a rise in political nativism.

CONCLUSION

The nineteenth century was a period of incredible economic growth and social change; the question of whether workers or capitalists would be the primary beneficiaries of said growth remained unresolved throughout. Workers, divided against each other because of linguistic, cultural, racial, and national origins, remained weak in comparison to the combination of business interests, which was best exemplified by organizations like the Board of Trade and Chamber of Commerce. Despite the competition between capitalists, which Karl Marx once described as “a fight among hostile brothers,” this group was able to work together to split most of the wealth among themselves. Railroad developer and infamous robber baron Jay Gould commented on the 1886 Knights of Labor railroad strike that, with his vast wealth, he could “hire one half of the working class to kill the other half.” However, while capitalists did not hesitate to use violence to stop organized labor, its use provoked pushback from the public and was thus not the primary method for controlling the working class. Instead, members of Gould’s class tried to avoid violence in most instances by appealing to a shared Yankee heritage, first against Native Americans, African-Americans, the Irish and later a larger and more culturally diverse working class. When threatened by the rise of class consciousness in the aftermath of the 1848 revolutions

See James Green, Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America, (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006) pp. 238-239. Similarly, Kemmerer and Wickersham argue that the growth of the Knights was a “type of ‘paper’ growth” attributable to the eight-hour day movement.” (Kemmerer, p. 218)
or the grinding poverty created by the early industrial revolution in the United States, elites consistently turned to nativism to produce a cross-class alliance of Yankee owners and workers that protected themselves from democratic rule by the working class. By successfully shielding themselves from a united working class, Yankee elites in Portland and elsewhere steadily increased their power and prestige over time. Despite siding with their social betters of a similar ancestry, Yankee workers experienced declining power and prestige. In the years following the decline of the Knights of Labor, Portland’s working class became increasingly diverse and geographically dispersed. However, the age-old conflict between the class of producers and the class of owners continued to adapt to changes in technology, government intervention, and ethnic and cultural traditions. In the period that followed, progressive nativists such as James Phinney Baxter increasingly turned to political reform and elitist urban planning to undermine growing solidarity between militant workers and ethnic communities.
Chapter III:

Nativist Progressives, Labor, and Reform (1886-1916)

“Often I think of the beautiful town
    That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
    And my youth comes back to me”
- “My Lost Youth” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1855

“What advantage can be derived from an ignorant foreign population
which every manufacturing city attracts to it?”
- “Something About Public Parks” by James Phinney Baxter, 1904

Throughout the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, many of the country’s Yankee ruling
class dreaded the swift increase in immigration from outside of northern Europe and an
increasingly aggressive and organized working class. These native-born elites believed that their
country was under siege, and left unchecked, immigrants and organized workers not only
threatened Yankee economic and social dominance but also the nation’s institutions and
integrity.\footnote{T. J. Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920
(New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), p. 31.} In the Yankee stronghold of Portland, Maine, this phenomenon manifested itself
despite the lack of a large cadre of revolutionary workers or an especially militant ethnic
community. Though Yankees maintained their superior numerical, political, and economic
position, Portland elites worried that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s “beautiful town...seated by
the sea,” would continue to undergo revolutionary changes and bring an end to the city and country as they had known it. By World War I, the effects of ethnic and class conscious workers were evident. Throughout the period and especially in the early twentieth century, Portland’s workplaces became highly contested spaces in what was previously known as a city without labor conflict.\textsuperscript{119} Immigrant neighborhoods, filled with unsanitary tenements and destitute families, posed a health risk to what the local Board of Trade regularly described as “the Cleanest and Healthiest City in America.”\textsuperscript{120} Progressive businessmen and politicians responded by pursuing legalistic solutions. Among these were municipal reform, immigration controls, the use of federal troops and courts to defeat labor unions, and the promotion of temperance. Concerned that Yankees had become nothing but “settled” and “preoccupied with [their] own moral and physical decay,” intellectuals argued that this potentially fatal combination would leave them to stop the rising tide of workers’ assertiveness.\textsuperscript{121} In Portland, this task fell to canny owner James Phinney Baxter, who stepped into politics during this key period. Mayor for six terms between 1893 and 1905, Baxter used the Progressive Era’s expanded municipal structures to ensure Yankee dominance while at the same time modernizing municipal infrastructure and governance systems. From 1905 to 1916, nativist leaders like Baxter were displaced when their ideals fell out of favor. During this period, economic and political elites accepted what James Weinstein calls “corporate liberalism,” i.e., politics that accepted the use of

\textsuperscript{119} Several the city’s largest labor union locals were organized during this period. For example, in April 1896, 400 men formed Local No. 82 of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen. By total membership, Portland had the two largest union locals in the state. Two major hotspots for labor conflict were the waterfront and the transportation industry, neither of which was particularly militant in their tactics until the 1910s. Major strikes included the trolley workers strike of July 1916 and three waterfront work stoppages organized by the Irish Portland Longshoremen Benevolent Society (PLSBS).


\textsuperscript{121} Lears, p. 30.
the state as a means of achieving a baseline level of social concern and responsibility.\textsuperscript{122} Militant workers and immigrant communities made gains during this period. In 1916, Portland’s trolley workers decisively won the city’s largest strike due in large part to community support, which frightened Yankee elites. Gains made by workers included the establishment of a municipal non-profit water district, increases in the recognition of labor unions, better wages, and safer workplaces. On the eve of World War I, the power of organized workers and immigrants forced the state to yield to moderate demands. However, increasing militarism and xenophobia around United States entry into World War I crushed the hopes of workers for more radical changes.

Urban reformers, like muckraking journalist Lincoln Steffens, believed that progressives were involved in "a conflict between public impulses for ‘good government’ against a corrupt alliance of ‘machine politicians’ and ‘special interests.’”\textsuperscript{123} Steffens, journalist Jacob Riis and others organized a middle-class movement for urban reform, especially against corruption and entrenched political interests. For example, in Cleveland, Frederick C. Howe argued that “privileged interests...have taken possession of our institutions for their own enrichment.”\textsuperscript{124} Cities like Cleveland, Toledo, and Detroit all voted in reformist mayors who shared this same worldview. While reformers made urban reform popular with visions of increased democracy and government for the public good, it was local elites that implemented most reforms. Using the same rhetoric as liberal reformers, elites instead sought to utilize government as the tool to address the irrationality of the modern marketplace. Inverting the logic of muckrackers like Steffens, local elites blamed the political and social influence of immigrants, labor unions, and

\textsuperscript{122} James Weinstein, \textit{The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900-1918} (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 3.


\textsuperscript{124} Weinstein, p. 94.
radical workers for the “Shame of the Cities.” Conservative reformers sought to bring businessmen directly into government and run municipalities under business principles. These men were turned into reformers by “the increased importance of the public functions of the twentieth-century city.”\textsuperscript{125} If reducing the cost of infrastructure improvements was the primary goal of the managerial city, the means of achieving this was the minimization of political democracy through the centralization and bureaucratization of political decision-making.

ETHNIC PLURALISM

A defining feature of the Progressive Era was an increase in urban ethnic and racial pluralism. Like other cities of the Eastern seaboard, Portland became home to a significant population which originated outside of the British Isles following the Civil War. During the half-century from 1870-1920, new immigrant communities formed including Armenians, Eastern European Jews, Italians, French Canadians, and others.\textsuperscript{126} These groups combined with a significant in-migration from New England’s backwoods farming communities to dramatically increase the city’s population. In 1870, the population stood at 31,434. Following the annexation of Deering’s 3,000 residents, Portland had 50,145 residents in 1900. By 1920, another 19,000 resided within municipal boundaries, putting the population over 69,000. Dense residential neighborhoods, filled with triple decker apartment buildings found in industrial cities elsewhere in the northeast, were built to house this substantial population increase. Yankee elites feared for their own health and safety in relation to these communities. Tenements suffered from overcrowding and a lack of sufficient public and private infrastructure. Immigrant and working-

\textsuperscript{125} Weinstein, p. 95.

class neighborhoods with their dance halls, “second-rate” hotels, and lodging houses scandalized social elites. For example, in 1913, leading citizens, a substantial number of whom would later support the city manager movement and the Chamber of Commerce, organized as “The Citizens’ Committee of Portland.” The organization sought “to promote the public good and remove corrupting and undesirable agencies.”

Threatened by an increasing sense of sexual liberation and ethnic pluralism, Yankee leaders took aim at spaces which encouraged racial, religious, and sexual mixing. Cognizant of Portland’s economic niche as an escape from larger and even more diverse and conflict-ridden cities to its south, elites were determined to make Portland a city known for its beauty and comfort (for tourists and elites), rather than an industrial hub open to subaltern peoples.

**CONSERVATION AND CITY BEAUTIFUL**

Large, industrializing cities like New York and Boston were among the first in the United States to consciously build urban parks. These parks were a means of both social uplift and social control. Dorceta E. Taylor argues that advocates of urban public parks believed that they served several functions important to the maintenance of elite control during the latter half of the 19th century. Among these functions were the production of more efficient industrial workers because of access to natural space, the “socialization [of the working class] into middle class norms and values,” and general moral uplift. Therefore, we must understand parks not as simply a benign social good but serving a larger societal function. Landscape architects Andrew Jackson Downing and Frederick Law Olmsted, perhaps more than any other individuals, were responsible for the proliferation of urban parks across North America. Both men were highly influenced by the Romanticism of the Hudson River School of artists and sought to create “pastoral and

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127 First Report of the Citizens’ Committee of Portland, February 1, 1914, Southworth Press, p. 1
manicured settings” in urban spaces.\textsuperscript{128} The Romantic tradition, which predated its most famous advocates, originated in the 1820s and took early root in the Forest City.\textsuperscript{129} However, it would not be until the 1880s that Portland sought to build its first picturesque public park.

The philosophy of the country’s leading architectural firm, Olmsted, Downing and Vaux, had a clear class bias. Across the country, new parks were built which “resisted placing facilities (except for cricket grounds) for active games and sports” favored by workers.\textsuperscript{130} Public spaces were consciously designed to suit the needs and preferences of well-off city dwellers. Despite these and other obstacles, workers did actively use these parks. Park promoters, including James Phinney Baxter, later cited this usage as a selling point: “It has been said that parks are luxuries for the rich to enjoy. This is a grave error. The rich...are the least benefited by them, for they are practically independent of them. In the summer, they go to the countryside, while nine/tenths of the people are confined to the city.”\textsuperscript{131} However, park use by working-class people was usually discouraged by elites, as parks were “built to accommodate the interest and desires of the middle class. The working class and the poor were forced to abide by middle-class mores to use these


\textsuperscript{129} Beginning in 1832, Portland began preserving land on each end of its peninsula. These areas, now known as the Western Promenade and Eastern Promenade, provided wide avenues for the wealthy to enjoy the spectacular views of the White Mountains and Casco Bay, respectively. Nevertheless, physical distance from the urban core and, in the case of the Western Promenade, a large private estate, prevented significant residential or park development in the area. The city did not build its first public park until after the Great Fire of 1866, in which most of the city’s downtown was burned. The park, while perhaps influenced by ongoing developments in other cities, was not designed by Olmsted or Downing. Instead, Lincoln Park was inaugurated primarily for safety reasons; the area on which it was built had previously contained many highly-flammable wooden structures. As a side benefit, the park was also adjacent to several of Portland’s dirtiest and overpopulated neighborhoods. See Earle Shettleworth, “Creating and Preserving Portland’s Urban Landscape, 1885-1925” in Joseph A. Conforti, \textit{Creating Portland: History and Place in Northern New England} (Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire Press, 2005), p. 252.

\textsuperscript{130} Taylor, p. 448

parks.” In Portland, one park heavily influenced by Olmsted, et al. was the Western Promenade.

Spurred on by the need for new luxury residential housing and increases in streetcar technology, interest in the Promenades grew during the 1870s. In 1878, the British-American landscape architect Calvert Vaux visited and consulted with City Engineer William A. Goodwin. Goodwin wrote that the Promenades’ foreground was “contemptible” and “devoted...to the attrition of cows and the tethering of goats.” He recommended several improvements to the road and surrounding vegetation. However, the major change on the Western Promenade began following the death of the area’s major landowner in 1881. For much of the nineteenth century, the area adjacent to the city-owned Western Promenade was part of the estate of industrialist John Bundy Brown. Brown, who was the wealthiest man in Maine prior to the Great Fire of 1866, built a massive mansion and surrounded his home with acres of undeveloped land. When he died, Brown’s family divided the land into smaller units and sold them to wealthy individuals, creating what became known as the Western Promenade neighborhood. Among those who built homes in the new development was Maine’s most accomplished architect John Calvin Stevens. Prior to purchasing land in the neighborhood, Stevens was already an important figure in local politics.

In June 1888, the Maine Central Railroad completed Union Station on nearby St. John Street. Sitting on what was then the city’s western edge near the foot of Bramhall Hill, the impressive structure was surrounded by a rapidly growing and “crowded tenement neighborhood.

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132 Taylor, p. 441
133 Conforti, p. 253.
134 Bauman, p. 99.
of railroad workers.” Yankee business elites worried that the working-class and industrial neighborhood would continue growing and put it in conflict with plans for the exclusive neighborhood being built on the hill above it. In a full page letter published in the *Portland Sunday Telegram* in December 1889, Stevens’ architectural partner Albert Winslow Cobb expressed concern that allowing further working-class residential development of this “hitherto innocuous wilderness” would force visitors to the city to see “a tract packed full of houses, stables and out-door privies; a thing with all the worst features of a tenement-district, sending up its stench to corrupt the air which blow to Portland from the west.” Cobb continued that visitors should not be “affronted by [the] paltry, puerile, and almost unbelievable exhibition” of workers and their impoverished lifestyle while seeking to enjoy the “regal landscape.”

Clearly, the multi-ethnic neighborhood around Union Station, which included Irish, Yankee, Canadian, and British workers as well as a community of African-American Pullman porters and their families, threatened the Victorian sensibilities in a number of ways. To solve this problem, Stevens and Cobb proposed a new park which would connect Union Station to the residential mansions at the top of the hill via “a system of verdant, tree-lined walkways and carriageways” and act as a barrier to further working-class development in the area. This park would shield Portland’s Brahmins and well-to-do visitors from having to view the city’s multi-ethnic working class. In 1890, the Portland Board of Trade declared its support, calling it “a good and practical scheme;” however, despite its embrace by the business community and the burgeoning suburban neighborhood, the plan was rejected by the Common Council as too expensive. It would not be

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135 Conforti, p. 254.

136 The eviction of working class residents in favor of elite-controlled public parks was not limited to Portland. This happened elsewhere, including most famously in New York City, where Central Park was cleared of both residents and buildings of all kinds to make room for Central Park. See Taylor, pp. 439-440.

137 Bauman, p. 99.
until the election of businessman James Phinney Baxter to the mayoralty in 1893 that a scaled-down version of the project was completed and only then as part of a much larger park system. As the number and diversity of urban workers increased, so did public park-building. Expanding public parks was a goal of the newly affluent urban elites. Besides providing outdoor space for recreation, the parks movement was a method of control in the hands of the urban ruling class. In their hands, urban park-building was a means of maintaining exclusive neighborhoods and, in the case of Portland, discouraging the growth of a large, urban, and diverse working class.

THE RISE OF JAMES PHINNEY BAXTER

The 1890s was a turbulent period across the United States. Increased industrial conflict in the north and east of the country, unrestricted immigration from Europe, and intense pressure from the Populist movement in the west and south combined to produce anxiety for the ruling class. In Portland, expanded railroad activity spurred the growth of industry and nativist activism to shield Yankee business elites from the larger and increasingly hostile working class. The dominant political figure in this period of anxiety was James Phinney Baxter. Already 61 years old when he began his political career in the spring of 1893, Baxter became wealthy as a pioneer in the canning industry around the Civil War. The son of a Yankee doctor, Baxter was a wealthy capitalist, an aspiring intellectual, and a noted philanthropist. In 1888, Baxter built a large building on Congress Street with his own funds and donated it to the City, thereby providing “a home for three of his favorite activities: the [Portland Public] Library, the Maine Historical Society, and in time, the Portland Society of Art.”

139 He was a frequently requested speaker on historical topics and a member of several national and local historical organizations. Baxter’s

138 Conforti, p. 257.
career as a capitalist and philanthropist paved the way for his eventual entry into politics.\textsuperscript{140} Seeking to capitalize on his popularity, the city’s Republicans nominated Baxter to oppose incumbent Democrat Darius Ingraham in the 1893 city election. Ingraham, who was a champion “of the interests of the city’s growing ethnic working class,”\textsuperscript{141} was targeted for defeat by the business community. Publicly reluctant, the canning magnate eventually accepted the nomination but campaigned as “being above the fray” and “non-partisan” in an era of intense partisanship.\textsuperscript{142} His nomination quickly earned the praise of the city’s Republican newspapers; the \textit{Evening Express} described him as “one of Portland’s solid progressive men” who was “identified with [the city’s] best financial and industrial interests.” The \textit{Daily Press} described Baxter as having “scholarly attainments, cultivated tastes and high character.”\textsuperscript{143}

A rising concern beginning during the summer of 1892 and early 1893 was the increasing number of Russian Jewish immigrants entering the country from locales with cholera outbreaks. William Eaton Chandler, a U.S. Senator from neighboring New Hampshire, was chair of the Senate Immigration Committee. A longtime opponent of Eastern and Southern European immigration to the United States, Chandler jumped on concerns about an 1892 cholera outbreak in Russia in an attempt to force the suspension of immigration. Portland’s Republican press, for its part, joined in on the xenophobia. For example, the \textit{Portland Daily Press} warned in January that “...increasing numbers [of disease-carrying immigrants]...may be expected in the coming

\textsuperscript{140} In a collection of laudatory biographical sketches published shortly after Baxter entered office, the entry for Baxter read: “It is seldom we find great business ability and literary genius so beautifully blended in any one character...” Henry Chase, \textit{ Representative Men of Maine} (Portland, ME, The Lakeside Press, 1893), <http://www.onlinebiographies.info/me/rmm/baxter-james.htm>

\textsuperscript{141} Bauman described him as a “progressive” and a “liberal.” Bauman, p. 119.

\textsuperscript{142} Rolde, pp. 45-46.

season unless congressional action is taken to restrict or prohibit it.”

In February 1893, Congress passed legislation granting the President increased authority to quarantine immigrants prior to their arrival. It was into this political climate of increasing nativism that the Republicans nominated Baxter for mayor. The Yankee businessman was a man of the moment, as he was openly hostile to Portland’s Irish community. During his campaign, he refused to solicit votes from enfranchised Irish. When challenged by former Republican mayor George P. Wescott to spend money in predominantly Irish neighborhoods, Baxter replied “I had rather be defeated by such voters than win with them…” When Wescott urged him to appoint one as city marshal, Baxter recoiled further, stating “And the man is a Roman Catholic...I suppose an Irish Catholic marshal would have meant no interference with the rum shops, and disgrace me as mayor.”

With the backing of the Board of Trade and the Republican Party, Baxter narrowly overcame his hostility to immigrants and defeated incumbent Darius Ingraham. In office, Baxter promoted the annexation of neighboring Deering, the expansion of public parks, and vocally opposed the growth of industry and working-class immigration. Although he was elected in part to quell ruling class anxiety, the popularity of socialism grew during his time in office and continued until World War I. Baxter became the defining local political figure of his generation.


145 “An Act Granting Additional Quarantine Powers and Imposing Additional Duties Upon the Marine-Hospital Service” was passed on February 15, 1893. It gave the President vast power to ban immigrants for health reasons and required inspection of ships entering United States waters at their port of departure. However, the powers were not invoked by the outgoing President Harrison nor his successors. See: Howard Markel, *Quarantine: East European Jewish Immigrants and the New York City Epidemics of 1892* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 166; Higham, p. 100.

146 Bauman, p. 120.

147 The *Board of Trade Journal*, which just a year earlier had pledged to stay apolitical, issued a strong message of congratulations to Baxter in its 1893 publication. “Hon. James P. Baxter, who gave Portland her elegant, new public library building, has been elected mayor of the city, for the present year, and from his well-known public spirit and good taste, we feel assured of the mayor's hearty co-operation in promoting the best interests of our people and the prosperity and attractions of the city…” “Our New Mayor,” *Portland Board of Trade Journal*, (July 1893): 9
He sought the refinement of the city and the incorporation of native-born workers into the political system as a means of overcoming the increasing tendency among workers to view corporate power broadly and, in some cases, capitalism itself, as the major social problem.

Shortly after Baxter was elected and Democrat Grover Cleveland was inaugurated President of the United States, the country entered one of its worst financial downturns. Though the Portland Board of Trade declared that “Maine has not felt the effects of recent hard times as many states have,” the depression deepened unrest among railroad workers nationwide. The effect was to further radicalize workers unhappy with the increasingly monopolistic economy. Anxiety was also apparently high among the business class as well, as the *Portland Board of Trade Journal* published an article counseling its readership that “Worry is killing.”

**RAILROAD UNREST**

Railroad workers were among those most effected by the Panic of 1893 and its aftermath. In response to wage cuts and rent increases at the Pullman Company, railroad workers rapidly organized across the country. Many affiliated with the American Railway Union and struck beginning in May 1894. In response, President Cleveland’s Attorney General, Richard Olney, busted the strike using creative legal methods and arresting its leader, Eugene V. Debs. Workers remained outraged by the government’s unjust handling of the matter. This dissatisfaction galvanized Portland’s workers to push for trade union organizing. At the 1894 Maine State Federation of Labor (MSFL) convention, the AFL-affiliate entered politics for the first time when it urged the state legislature to pass a set of policies in the next session. Moderate as the

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149 “Why Worry,” *Portland Board of Trade Journal*, (December 1894), 234.
demands were, the entrance of the largest and most conservative labor organization in the state was an indication of the discontent felt by organized labor.\textsuperscript{150}

Organized labor and radicals continued to use political pressure to push for their goals. In 1894, the People's Party of Maine nominated a slate of candidates for statewide office and for Congress; among these candidates were several workers. Within the two dominant parties, labor activists also sought election to the Maine Legislature and one, a woodworker from Lewiston, was elected.\textsuperscript{151} In 1895 and 1896, socialists entered politics across the country. Maine, which had no organized movement at the time, received increased attention from the nation’s two largest socialist tendencies. In January 1895, the Socialist Labor Party (SLP), the country’s first Marxian political party, established a section in Rockland. A trade unionist and cooper presided over a meeting which launched the SLP’s organizing efforts. A month later, the party’s candidate for mayor received approximately 7\% of the vote. In 1896, the Rockland chapter received a significant decrease in electoral support but brought Maine native and SLP speaker Martha Moore-Avery to the city that fall. Elsewhere, the SLP organized sections in the small industrial cities of Mechanic Falls and Hallowell.\textsuperscript{152} In the latter, an Italian granite cutter, Protasio Neri, served as its president.\textsuperscript{153} In August of that year, SLP national organizer J. Walden Badger spoke

\textsuperscript{150} Among those policies introduced by the AFL were “an employers’ liability act, a bill for the creation of a State Board of Arbitration and Conciliation, and a measure prohibiting yellow dog (anti-union) contracts.” See Scontras, \textit{Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine}, pp. 152-153

\textsuperscript{151} Scontras, \textit{Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine 1880-1900}, p. 151.

\textsuperscript{152} Mechanic Falls was home to heavy industry. Hallowell was one of the region’s largest granite quarries. Charles Scontras notes that the state of Maine noted “unrest and discontent” during this period among Maine’s factory and quarry workers.

\textsuperscript{153} Neri had been a resident of Hallowell since 1879 and a frequent contributor to the Granite Cutters’ International Association’s \textit{Granite Cutters’ Journal}. In 1892, “Neri spearheaded a 5 ½ month lockout” in the city. See Scontras, \textit{The Socialist Alternative}, p. 83 and “Protasio Neri and Italian stonecutters,” \textit{Maine Memory Network}, <https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/2623/slideshow/1630/display?use_mmn=1&prev_object_id=4227&prev_object=page>
in Portland in an effort to organize a campaign for his party’s presidential ticket.\textsuperscript{154} Though unsuccessful in organizing a slate at such a late period of the campaign, the SLP’s growth throughout the industrial cities of Maine, which was led by local trade unionists, indicates that the group made inroads among Maine’s working class during this period.

Representing another socialist tendency was Eugene V. Debs. In June 1896, the Portland Central Labor Union (PCLU) brought the Pullman Strike hero and future presidential candidate to the city. Appearing at Portland City Hall, Debs spoke for two hours on a range of topics, including the Pullman Strike, women’s suffrage, capitalist domination, and the need for labor’s emancipation.\textsuperscript{155} Workers, after facing economic depression and reading of governmental suppression in Chicago and elsewhere, seemed ready for a change. The \textit{Board of Trade Journal} acknowledged the city’s labor’s troubles in an October 1897 article. It claimed that despite the growth of the socialist movement in the city, workers faced “good circumstances” and that demoralized or discontent workers were spurred on only by “the shiftless, indolent and lazy class that labor with their tongues more than their hands...”\textsuperscript{156} Nevertheless, economic depression and governmental repression led workers to organize in new and more assertive ways. Labor unrest, both in Portland and nationwide, likely contributed to Baxter’s decision to pursue municipal reform in late 1896.

During a whirlwind of populism, labor strife and ethnic antagonism, Mayor Baxter appointed a special charter commission in December 1895. The charter commission included just three members; two Republicans and one Democrat. Despite their partisan differences, all three

\textsuperscript{154} Besides the head of the local Cooper’s Union organizing in Rockland, the meeting included previous members of the Knights of Labor and People’s Party. See \textit{Two Decades of Organized Labor and Labor Politics in Maine 1880-1900}, pp. 81-84.

\textsuperscript{155} Scontras, \textit{The Socialist Alternative}, pp. 84-85.

\textsuperscript{156} “Labor Trouble Here,” \textit{Portland Board of Trade Journal} (October 1897): 166.
were either attorneys, established politicians, or leading businessmen. The appointment of these managers of capital reflected Baxter’s stated beliefs that the “best men” were needed to run society. After meeting for a year, the commission delivered a proposal to city government which closely mirrored the mayor’s political views. The proposed changes were guided by the recommendations of Quincy, Massachusetts Mayor Charles Francis Adams III and the Boston Municipal League. Among the most important recommendations were the elimination of the Common Council, the citywide election (rather than by ward) of the School Committee, shifting the ability to appoint officials from the Council to the mayor’s office, and the doubling of the mayor’s term to two years. The plan, which concentrated more power in the hands of the mayor, was supported by several former top elected officials, though they were mixed on whether to take the radical step of eliminating the Common Council. The Catholic Church, headed by Bishop James Augustine Healy, opposed the election of the citywide school board. The mayor’s political opponents on the Board of Aldermen, including former mayor Wescott, also opposed the proposed changes. In February 1897, Baxter faced a difficult Republican primary election against Alderman Charles Randall. Opposition to his proposed charter, combined with

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158 Adams III was mayor of Quincy, Massachusetts from 1896-1897. The Adams family of Boston had been among the most influential in the country for more than a century. They were a well-known family to which Baxter likely had close relations. Adams’ uncle, Charles Francis Adams, Jr. and Baxter were both members of the American Antiquarian Society, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; they also shared a passion for New England history. Baxter, whose mother was from Greater Boston, traveled regularly to both Boston and Worcester and participated in the social life of Boston Brahmin elites.

159 The issue of Catholic influence in public education grew in importance in the following decades. It united Yankees of all classes and was a central argument of the Ku Klux Klan during the 1920s. See Ernest C. Helmreich, *Religion and the Maine Schools: An Historical Approach.* vol. 22, Bureau for Research in Municipal Government, Brunswick, ME, 1960.
claims that the mayor attempted to bully a Bath, Maine city official on behalf of his son,\textsuperscript{160} led to the end of his first run as mayor.\textsuperscript{161} In late April, voters demonstrated both their rejection of a city run solely by its “best men” and their overall indifference to charter reform when they voted down Baxter’s charter. Roughly two-thirds of the only 2,504 voters who turned up at the polls voted against the changes.\textsuperscript{162}

Although Baxter gained his vast wealth as a pioneer in the canning industry during the Civil War, as mayor he argued against further industrialization in the city. Instead, he favored linking the city’s economic future to its port and its ability to capture the burgeoning Yankee tourist market. In 1894, Baxter and Portland’s Congressman and soon-to-be Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Thomas Brackett “Czar” Reed, successfully lobbied for federal funds to dredge Portland Harbor.\textsuperscript{163} This sizeable federal investment was combined with a $175,000 allocation in the municipal budget to improve harbor facilities. As a result, Canada’s Grand Trunk Railway “built the largest grain elevator on the East Coast…[with] the capacity to

\textsuperscript{160} In 1896, William Jennings Bryan was endorsed by the People’s Party. However, the Democrats did not name a Populist to their ticket as the party believed it would. Instead, it nominated one of the country’s wealthiest shipbuilders, Arthur Sewall of Bath, Maine. During the campaign, a major Democratic rally was organized in Sewall’s hometown and Mayor Baxter’s son, Percival and his friends, then students at nearby Bowdoin College, went to disrupt it. Percival was arrested and then released. Mayor Baxter then used his political power to excoriate the Bath official who had done so. This caused massive controversy and contributed to his defeat.

\textsuperscript{161} Bauman, p. 123.

\textsuperscript{162} Without a campaign being run by the newly-defeated mayor, the election was a non-issue for most of the electorate. Prior to the vote, most of the focus was on the issue of whether women would be allowed to vote for and serve on the School Committee. Little commentary can be found in city newspapers on the issue. One letter to the editor less than a week prior to the vote argued against the proposal, writing that “the main purpose appears to be to magnify the office of mayor and augment his power; at the same time to lessen the influence in affairs of our non-office-seeking citizens.” (“New City Charter,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, May 12, 1897, p. 6). On the day of the election, the \textit{Portland Evening Express} described the election as “lukewarm” with “little to stir the emotions or harass the soul.” It continued “there was a general indifference manifested, and in many places people passed and repassed the polling places in their own wards without even a thought of voting. The campaign has been insipid from the start, and scarcely a hand has been raised pro or con.” (“Lukewarm Election,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, May 17, 1897.)

\textsuperscript{163} Baxter and Reed were neighbors on stately Deering Street as well as prominent members of the Republican Party.
store one million bushels of grain.”\textsuperscript{164} Federal and city government investments guaranteed that the harbor would continue to serve as Eastern and Central Canada’s winter port. This investment made business sense and it improved the city’s long standing economic advantages, but Baxter had political and social reasons for discouraging wider industrialization.

**SUBURBANIZATION AND THE ANNEXATION OF DEERING**

With the development of horse-drawn trolleys in the 1860s and electrified trolleys in the 1890s, urban residents looked to move beyond city boundaries to more suburban locations for housing. The process of municipal annexation occurred across the country at different speeds.\textsuperscript{165} In Boston, for example, the city expanded westward and southward by annexing towns like Jamaica Plain, Dorchester, and Roxbury in the 1860s and 1870s.\textsuperscript{166} In 1898, consolidation created New York City out of five separate municipalities.\textsuperscript{167} In Portland during the 1890s, annexation of the City of Deering became a priority for both the Board of Trade and Mayor Baxter. The Board of Trade argued that annexation would result in “more wharves, more stores, more manufacturing, more employment for wage earners, and more money for all.” Despite the advocacy of the business class, Deering residents were deeply divided on the issue. When votes were held, the majority of Deering’s population rejected annexation on three separate occasions during the 1890s. Regardless of these votes, the business class won over the Maine Legislature, which approved annexation in February 1899. While the change in political boundaries only added a few thousand residents, the total area more than doubled, which delighted the business

\textsuperscript{164} Bauman, p. 121.


\textsuperscript{166} Connolly, *The Triumph of Ethnic Progressivism*, p. 51.

and political class. Sensing that this outcome was inevitable, speculative businessmen had, like Baxter, already invested in real estate in the adjoining municipality. In the decades that followed, the annexation of Deering proved to be an important moment in the city’s history, as more middle- and upper-income residents built neighborhoods off-peninsula. Deering’s neighborhoods became a stronghold for conservative professionals and working-class Yankees who would populate the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s.

Baxter, immigrants, and industrialization

In January 1904, Baxter wrote in the *Portland Board of Trade Journal* that “Portland can never be a large manufacturing city,” a statement that stood in opposition to calls by the Board of Trade for increased investment in manufacturing. He continued, asking “what advantage can be derived from an ignorant foreign population which every manufacturing city attracts to it? The perils which such a population bring to a community are seen every day in the columns of our newspapers, which depict in lurid terms the anarchy, strife, and bloodshed which results from gathering together large numbers of ignorant men in towns where manufacturing enterprise predominates.” He concluded by urging the Journal’s readers to support his efforts to “adorn our city with parks and statues and pleasant drives, so as to draw [native-born] people here to reside.” Baxter explicitly connected opposition to heavy industry, anti-immigrant sentiment, and the beautification of the city, in an attempt to justify his administration’s spending precious funds on the public park system. More than simply self-justification for his political priorities, these statements reflect a patrician worldview and Baxter’s attempts to create a beautiful city in which class conflict was non-existent. However, the mayor paid the price for making his views

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168 Bauman, p. 123.
known. In September 1904, Percival Baxter was elected to the Maine House of Representatives. Likely connected to his father’s vision of a centralized government hostile to large scale manufacturing and immigrants, Representative Baxter’s first bill submission, and first speech as an elected official was on the topic of creating a single Board of Aldermen alongside a strong mayor in the City of Portland. On the floor of the House, Baxter declared that the city “does not make laws, but it administers them, precisely as a board of directors carries on the business of a great corporation and what corporation could do business under a form as cumbersome as prevails in many of our cities?”170 Voters, however, did not share Baxter’s vision and its opposition routed the proposal at the ballot box later that year.171

The 1905 mayoral election became a bitterly contested affair between the incumbent Republican and the challenger, Democratic nominee Nathan Clifford. The latter, the son of a former U.S. Supreme Court Justice of the same name, attacked Baxter for being both anti-industry and anti-immigrant based on the 1904 article in the Board of Trade Journal. The Democratic Eastern Argus went beyond Baxter’s obvious anti-immigrant sentiments and emphasized the anti-industrial nature of his polemic. Just prior to the election, the newspaper published an unsigned advertisement with the headline “WOULD MAYOR BAXTER DRIVE OUT OF PORTLAND…” and then proceeded to list the city’s half dozen largest heavy industries. It ended with “...because they make noise and dirt, and their workmen are obliged to wear overalls?” Appealing further to the prevailing expectation of government efficiency, Clifford claimed that $200,000, which the city had appropriated for street cleaning, had been diverted to the mayor’s boulevard project.172 Election returns indicated that Clifford and the

170 “House votes to refer City Council bill to Portland voters,” Portland Evening Express, March 2, 1905, p. 1
171 See Appendix B for election results.
172 Rolde, pp. 86-87.
Democrats increased their share of the vote in both inner city and suburban neighborhoods. For example, the percentage of votes received by Clifford in suburban Ward 8 went from 18%, in the 1904 election, to 33%, in 1905, and, in Ward 9, from 34%, in 1904, to 49% in 1905. The city's Democratic newspaper wrote only somewhat hyperbolically that "in fact, the ‘Better Element’ either stayed away from the polls altogether or else they turned to and voted en masse for Clifford."\footnote{“The Man Who Won,” \textit{Daily Eastern Argus}, December 5, 1905, p. 2.} In working class Ward 2, Clifford received his greatest vote total in both 1904 and 1905; the percentages for each were 60% in 1904 and 67% in 1905. Clifford’s campaign was able to increase turnout in all parts of the city, but it was particularly high in the more densely populated and primarily ethnic neighborhoods. Overall, 9,355 residents voted in the 1905 municipal election, an increase of 1,824 from the previous year. It is likely that Clifford was elected in part by winning over voters who had previously supported the Socialists.\footnote{Despite increased overall voter turnout and the absence of a Prohibition Party candidate on the ballot, the Socialist mayoral candidate received fewer votes in 1905 (284) than he had in 1904 (405). This difference accounts for a majority of Clifford’s margin of victory.} In the end, nearly every vote was necessary as Clifford, despite receiving over 1,700 more votes in 1905 than he had a year earlier, won by just 212.

Clifford’s campaign appealed to multiple and opposing constituencies. Likely most important, was his appeal to immigrants and workers, which went far beyond what previous Democrats had done. The other constituency which provided an unlikely base of votes consisted of uneasy business-oriented Republicans, who were skeptical of Baxter’s commitment to industrialization. Clifford received sufficient votes from both constituencies to win the mayor’s position and deny Baxter a seventh term. Self-conscious of their increasingly tenuous hegemony, elites rejected the previously favored politician as their spokesperson. Baxter’s final defeat
proved that it was no longer politically palatable for a nativist progressive to hold political office and he was forced to end his political career at age 74.

PORTLAND LONGSHOREMEN’s BENEVOLENT SOCIETY (PLSBS)

Irish workers were perhaps the most despised of Baxter’s opponents. As the largest organization of Irish workers in the city, the Portland Longshoremen’s Benevolent Society (PLSBS) represented much of what Baxter believed was wrong with politics. The PLSBS was formed during the Civil War as an independent labor union and fraternal organization that sought to ensure a fair deal for Irish longshoremen (dockworkers). In the first three decades that followed its incorporation, the PLSBS resisted overtures from larger labor federations and maintained total independence. However, in 1913, after losing a second strike in as many years, it affiliated with the nationally-organized International Longshoremen Association (ILA). Initiated during a surge of industrialization, the organization’s membership was largely dependent on the strength of the world economy. Working on the waterfront, its members had periods of intense work (usually November to April) when Canadian grain exports arrived via the railroad and long interludes when work was scarce. In 1895 during a period of economic depression, 1.3 million tons of commodities were loaded onto international steamships by PLSBS members. Just five years later in 1900, 2.2 million tons were exported from the same port. The uneven and stressful nature of work on the waterfront, combined with a strong sense of ethnic solidarity on the part of the large Irish community and open racism led the PLSBS to bar African-Americans from membership and the guarantee of jobs for its members. Though destructive to building a broad-based working-class movement in the long run, this clan-like

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175 Connolly, Seated by the Sea, p. 64.
176 Connolly, p. 70.
solidarity was useful to the organization when it struggled for safe working conditions and decent wages during the businessman’s offensive following World War I. The Irish longshoremen held jobs that, while vital to the city’s economic orientation to the sea, made elites like James Phinney Baxter quite uncomfortable. When Baxter wrote about his opposition to further industrialization due to the “ignorant foreign population,” it is highly likely that, given their dominance among the city’s immigrant population, Irish longshoremen were high on his list of groups that did not deserve to live in his beautiful city.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF MAINE

Another enemy of Baxter and the business class was the city’s socialist movement. The Socialist Party of Maine was founded in 1900, but the state overall had little history of socialist politics. While immigrants from Europe had transmitted socialist ideas in the decades following the 1848 revolutions, few of these immigrants settled in Maine. Partially isolated from the radical movements growing in the metropolitan centers, Maine’s socialists remained relatively weak, especially in comparison to cities like Milwaukee. That city, with its long heritage of German immigrants, strong labor organizations, and highly industrialized economy, was the most active city for socialists in the United States. Milwaukee socialists evolved a close relationship with the trade union movement. Portland’s socialists also were closely tied to the state’s comparatively weaker trade unions. Maine’s best-known socialist was Portland’s own Charles L. Fox. He became a socialist while training as a painter in France and returned to his home city in the 1880s to work on building a cooperative commonwealth. A veteran political and social activist by the time of the Socialist Party’s founding, Fox played a key role in both the

177 The Socialist Party of Maine was founded a year prior to the founding of the Socialist Party of America.
178 Scontras, The Socialist Alternative, pp. 94-95.
socialist and labor movements, including as secretary of the Portland Central Labor Union (PCLU) from 1901-1907 and as two-time Socialist Party candidate for governor.\(^{179}\) That Fox twice ran for governor while secretary of the PCLU demonstrates that the city’s labor unions accepted socialist ideas, even though the national leader of the American Federation of Labor, Samuel Gompers, actively opposed radical influence in the organization. Socialists nationwide were unable to win over the national AFL and link it to the socialist movement.\(^{180}\) Major disagreements also emerged between the Socialists and the Industrial Workers of the World, which Socialists, including Debs, helped to form. In 1913, the SP’s National Executive Board expelled leading Wobbly “Big” Bill Haywood on charges that he advocated sabotage.\(^{181}\) Thus, the SP did not have a strong enough relationship with either of the nation’s largest labor organizations, which likely limited its long-term viability.\(^{182}\)

Beyond influencing labor unions toward socialism, the party’s other primary activity was political action. Socialists had held a variety of positions on electoral campaigns, which ranged from the belief that socialism could be enacted via the ballot box, to the position held by the Maine Socialists, which was that campaigns should be used to spread a socialist message, and, if elected, enact reforms to improve the standard of living for workers prior to revolution.\(^{183}\)

\(^{179}\) Fox served as secretary of the Local Number 237 of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paper Hangers’ of America. For the Socialist Party, he also served on its national committee, edited the party’s newspaper, frequently ran for Common Council and other offices, though he did not win elected office. Prior to the formation of the Socialist Party, he was a candidate on the People’s Party ticket in 1894.


\(^{182}\) This is a contentious issue among historians of the U.S. socialist movement. See Elizabeth McKillen, “The Socialist Party of America, 1900–1929” pp. 16-17 for a discussion of the existing literature.

\(^{183}\) The Socialist Party of Maine, in its 1904 platform, affirmed its commitment “to the principles of International Socialism in its world wide struggle for *industrial liberty, equal economic opportunity for all, and the abolition of the class struggle.*” Concerning its tactics, it declared that “the Socialist Party is the only party of labor (brain and
such, the Maine Socialists regularly fielded candidates for local, state, and federal office during the period from its founding to 1914. The party was strongest in Maine’s largest city and it ran full slates in the city’s municipal elections from 1901 to 1913. Socialists regularly criticized the city’s elected officials, including Mayor James Phinney Baxter, of putting capitalists before workers and engaging in “ring politics.” Though Fox and others regularly ran for office, no party members were elected in the city. The mere existence of the oppositional Socialist Party, as an expression of worker discontent, nevertheless represented a threat to capitalism. During the two decades from Debs’ visit to the First World War, the Socialist Party brought radicals to speak in Portland and across the state, including renown labor militant and prominent IWW official Big Bill Haywood.

The radically democratic ideas which both the Socialists and the PCLU brought to the city made a mark on both the city’s working class and its elites. On a policy level, the Socialist Party’s platform consistently called for municipal ownership of public utilities. In 1906, Portlanders voted about three-to-one to support the creation of a municipal water company and, in 1908, the privately-owned Portland Water Company was purchased for about $1 million, and renamed the Portland Water District. Reorganized as a “public municipal corporation”, as of 2018, it still provided water to Portland and nearby municipalities. In 1912, voters enacted a

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184 Scontras, The Socialist Alternative, cover. “Ring politics” was a common insult in the Progressive Era. It was repeated by the city’s business class a decade later as they sought to install a City Manager-weak council form of government. For socialists, “ring politics” were the politics of the business class, which they asserted manipulated voters and thwarted democracy.

185 Scontras, The Socialist Alternative, p. 90.

resolution in support of a longtime municipal socialist goal: the establishment and operation of a
municipal fuel yard to supply fuel at cost to the citizens. Democratic mayor and self-styled
progressive Curtis, in his subsequent address, questioned the legality of the vote and called it “at
most, advisory” while calling the notion an attack on “the very foundation of commercial
industry” which would be “ruinous” if implemented.\textsuperscript{187}

Likewise, the Socialists were steadfast supporters of the initiative and referendum. In
both 1905 and 1921, when new charters were put before Portland voters without those
provisions, they were defeated. Though the party fielded its final municipal ticket in 1913 and
final candidate for governor in 1916, just prior to the U.S. entry into World War I, its impact did
not disappear. Indeed, of the eight immediate demands presented in the SP’s 1904 party
platform, a significant number were eventually at least partially adopted.\textsuperscript{188}

Despite having a limited number of Socialists elected in the state, the group played a role
in shifting political culture. From the 1850s to 1950s, Maine was a staunchly Republican state.
Portland, as its largest city, also tended to favor Republicans, but the partisan division was much
stronger there than statewide. For a brief period from Baxter’s defeat in 1905 until the United
States entered World War I in 1917, there developed a statewide resurgence of Democrats,

\textsuperscript{187} Curtis spent more of his address criticizing the municipal fuel yard plan than almost any other topic. Concluding
his remarks on Portland’s potential entry to the fuel business, he abruptly ended his address without discussing
several key municipal departments. He cited “a lack of time” for his break with tradition. Clearly, however, the re-
elected mayor was flummoxed by the city’s voters’ demonstration of non-capitalist values by a majority of residents.
(Curtis, \textit{Inaugural Address, 1912}, p. 23). The proposal, however, was not merely advisory. Eventually, the United
States Supreme Court upheld Portland’s fuel yard proposal (Jones vs. City of Portland), which deeply alarmed coal
industry insiders. Evidence of this deep concern is evident in the multi-page “How to Combat Municipal Yard
Proposals” published in May 1922 by the industry’s leading magazine. The article, which warned that “Socialists”
sought to use municipal governments to undermine private businesses through public, non-profit corporations
funded through taxes. (Wellington M. Bertolet, “How to Combat Municipal Yard Proposals,” \textit{Coal Trade Journal}
53, no. 21, Chicago, IL, May 1922, p. 456.)

\textsuperscript{188} Among those eventually at least partially adopted were “the abolition of child labor”, “extension of municipal
and town powers to permit the public ownership of public utilities.”, “the initiative and referendum, proportional
representation and the right of recall of representatives”, “equal civil and political rights for men and women”. See
Charles Scontras’ \textit{The Socialist Alternative}, page 183 for the full list.
Progressives, and Socialists. This shift in partisan affiliation began in 1910 when Harris Plaisted, a Democrat, was elected governor alongside a Democratic majority in the Legislature. Portland’s former Democratic mayor Nathan Clifford was elected Senate President, a first for his party since 1854. The Progressive Party, founded on the coattails of Theodore Roosevelt’s presidential campaign, successfully backed a reform-minded Republican for Governor in 1912.

The 1912 election was an historic one both in Maine and across the country. Woodrow Wilson won Maine’s electoral votes for the Democratic Party for the first time in sixty years and the presidency for his party for the first time since Grover Cleveland twenty years earlier. More than 75% of Maine voters rejected the state’s traditional Republican Party and voted Democrat (39.4%), Progressive (37.4%), or Socialist (2%). In the election of 1914, Democrats and Progressives combined to put former Portland mayor Oakley C. Curtis, a banker by profession and a self-avowed progressive, in the Blaine House. Like Baxter, Mayor Curtis sought to entice tourism by enhancing the city’s beauty. However, unlike his predecessors, Curtis campaigned on a platform of strengthening labor protections and opposed the ‘fad’ of Commission-government. In office, he signed a law which capped the maximum hours worked per week by women and boys under 16. The Democratic Party surge continued into 1915 when future Wilson cabinet member William Moulton Ingraham was elected mayor. In a testament to the

189 In his December 1912 inaugural address, Curtis acknowledged interest in the Commission form of government but opposed changing Portland to the system. He cited “the secrecy of a commission which opens up avenues which could be destructive to a city’s interests, all of which would be dependent upon the personnel of the commission” and instead argued for increased transparency within the existing form. In the same address while discussing partisan politics and corruption, Curtis demonstrated his progressive credentials by urging Portlanders “not [to] lose sight of the fact that unprincipled merchants are largely at the root of the trouble by their importunities for favoritism and their propensity to take advantage of it.” “City of Portland: Inaugural Address of Hon. Oakley C. Curtis, December 1912” (Portland, ME: Marks Printing House, 1913) pp. 5, 8.


191 William Moulton Ingraham was the son of Darius Ingraham, James Phinney Baxter’s 1893 opponent.
growing power of labor unions, at least eight workers were elected to the Common Council.\textsuperscript{192} As demonstrated by his opposition to a municipal fuel yard, Curtis was not a radical. However, his acquiescence to one of labor’s demands demonstrates that the political terrain was shifting. The return of the nearly moribund Maine Democratic Party, combined with the Progressives, Socialists and organized labor, presented a potential challenge to the Yankee Republican establishment. With workers and sympathetic politicians occupying major offices, bosses were rightfully concerned that their somewhat tenuous control of politics was loosening on the eve of the largest strike in the city’s history.

\textbf{1916 TROLLEY WORKERS STRIKE}

In October 1915, the Portland Chamber of Commerce boasted that “neither cyclone nor devastating floods bring their destructive forces to bear on any part of the Pine Tree State, while strikes and other labor troubles are an almost unknown quantity.”\textsuperscript{193} Robert Babcock noted this statement was based more on fantasy than reality because “between, 1910-1915, about 13 strikes, mostly small struggles in the building trades, had been waged with considerable success.” More importantly, the city was just months away from its largest and most disruptive strike. The strike, which was overwhelmingly supported by residents, disrupted mass transit during the peak of the all-important tourist season.

The Cumberland County Power & Light Company (CCPL) had been working to bust its workers’ union for years. The final straw was the company’s June 1916 decision to only pay workers for the time when cars were in motion. A month later, streetcar workers walked off the

\textsuperscript{192} Babcock, “We Will Walk? Yes, We’ll Walk!,” p. 386.

job during the peak tourist season.\textsuperscript{194} The strike shut down nearly 107 miles of electrified railways which served over 113,000 people during a heatwave. Rather than protest the strike, residents rallied to support it.\textsuperscript{195} In the years immediately prior and during the strike itself, the CCPL used every means under its control to guarantee a union-free environment, including using non-union workers (scabs), hiring of Pinkerton secret police, and refusing to recognize the democratically elected union. Primarily composed of Yankees and immigrants from the British Isles and Maritime Canada, streetcar workers were well-known in the community and sympathetic figures. In contrast, the Cumberland County Power & Light Company had been purchased by “brokerage houses in New York City and Philadelphia” in 1912. The company then eliminated discounted fares for school children and fired any employee involved in an accident. Concerned about the strike, Republican mayor Wilford G. Chapman rushed back from a summer vacation to meet with both company officials and union leaders. Seeking to repair the city’s image and quickly restore order during the height of the tourist season, the recently-renamed Chamber of Commerce unsuccessfully intervened to bring an end to the strike. The public overwhelmingly supported the strikers by launching an immediate boycott, harassing scabs, and engaging in some minor vandalism of company property. Because of this, city officials, including Mayor Chapman, were reluctant to use the recently hired extra police to bust or even publicly oppose the strike. Nightly rallies in Monument Square were attended by strikers and community members alike. As a result, the company was forced for the first time in its history to negotiate with its employees.

Business leaders, led by J. M. Bradley of the Cumberland County Power & Light Company, believed that first and foremost, “weak-kneed” politicians like Mayor Chapman were

\textsuperscript{194} Babcock, "Will You Walk? Yes, We'll Walk!," p. 385.
\textsuperscript{195} Babcock, "Will You Walk? Yes, We'll Walk!," p. 384.
to blame for not properly supporting the corporation. On top of that, Bradley faulted the city’s “press, the board of health, the public utilities commission, and the city’s socialists,” all of whom lined up against his company.\footnote{Babcock, "Will You Walk? Yes, We'll Walk!, p. 397.} Even some of the churches favored the workers, decrying the company’s unwillingness to recognize the union a form of “Prussianism”, no small insult on the eve of U.S. entry to World War I.\footnote{Babcock, p. 395.} In the end, workers, with the overwhelming support of the community, won recognition of their union and, perhaps more importantly, “opened the floodgates to the ‘new unionism.’”\footnote{David Montgomery describes ‘new unionism’ as the increasing use of the strike and the tendency to include activism by community members in support strikers. See David Montgomery. "The "New Unionism" and the Transformation of Workers' Consciousness in America, 1909-22," Journal of Social History, vol. 7, no. 4, (1974), pp. 509-529.} Because of this strike, “Portland emerge[d] a bastion of trade unionism in northern New England. Between 1915 and 1921 the number of trade-union locals in Portland nearly doubled.”\footnote{Babcock, “Will You Walk, Yes, We'll Walk!, p. 398.} Striking workers, like the existence of a large industrial working class, were anathema to the city’s self-promoted image of a tourist destination for those tired of urban life. The lack of a strong response by municipal government demonstrated to business elites that the Council-Mayor system was not able to meet their needs for a docile labor force.

\textbf{CONCLUSION}

The period from 1886 to 1916 in the United States witnessed increasing industrialization, urbanization, dislocation, and growing inequality. Open warfare erupted in both industrial cities and mining regions. In city after city, business elites turned to the “best men” in their class as a means of minimizing the threats from below. In Portland, that person was canning magnate James Phinney Baxter. Elected to six terms between 1893 and 1905, Baxter was popular for his philanthropy and independence from orthodox conservatism. In office and outside of it, he
supported creating a beautiful city via public parks, city planning, and increased sanitation while also working to undermine “ignorant foreigners”. Progressive policies, when implemented by Baxter, were tools designed to maintain the social hegemony of wealthy Yankees. He appealed to the shared English heritage as a means of subduing class conflict. However, as the strength and organization of workers grew, this strategy was no longer feasible. During the latter half of the period, especially from 1910-1916, elites were forced to incorporate the demands of the subaltern people to maintain power. The 1916 trolley workers’ strike, which unified the middle and working classes of the city against corporate control, signaled the need for further municipal reform. The rising tide of jingoism grew alongside worker power. Pro-war sentiments swept from the public consciousness the potential for native-born workers and immigrants to join for their collective benefit. With that potential alliance killed during the war, the door was opened for the entrance of reactionary populism and the Ku Klux Klan in the years that followed. While elites negotiated with workers when they held some advantages in the pre-World War era, this was no longer necessary following the culture shift induced by the war’s mass-hysteria and red-baiting. Alarmed by the level of solidarity displayed in the 1916 strike, the business community began the process of reforming city government not long after the conclusion of the First World War.
Chapter IV:

Conservative Backlash: World War I, Irish Nationalism, and the Businessmen's Crusade

(1917-1923)

The only answer is by instruction in the principles which actuated the men and women who laid the foundations of those free commonwealths, whose principles have been wrought into our National constitution, which the I. W. W. and their allies would destroy, and substitute in its place a thing of their own in which License would take the place of Liberty, Class Favoritism, of Equality, and the Nullification of Property Rights, of Justice. - James Phinney Baxter, A New England Pantheon, To Commemorate The Principles and Achievements Of The Pioneers Whose Ideals Were The Seed of Free Government 1917

When James Phinney Baxter died in May 1921 at the age of 90, the Ku Klux Klan was still month away from openly organizing in the Forest City. However, the spirit, which motivated both his public career and his final statement, echoed the Klan’s long-term goals. Concerned with his legacy during his final years, Baxter sought to use a significant portion of his substantial wealth to create a monument to honor the English colonists he credited with founding the United States in order to stem the threat of immigrants. Edited by Percival Baxter, the former mayor left $50,000 ($727,000 in 2018 dollars) to the City of Boston for this purpose. With the bequest, the elder Baxter published a copy of his address to the New England Historic Genealogical Society

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200 In July 1912, Baxter corresponded with leaders of the Immigration Restriction League, an elite-driven organization that lobbied the U.S. Congress for restrictions on immigration. Following a letter from the IRL secretary, the former mayor wrote to the U.S. Congress that, "we therefore most respectfully urge that this overshadowing menace be not ignored by you, and that you relieve this situation by limiting the importation of labor..." (Baxter, James Phinney, 1831-1921. Correspondence with IRL, 1912., Immigration Restriction League (U.S.) records, MS Am 2245, (104). Houghton Library, Harvard College Library. http://id.lib.harvard.edu/ead/c/hou00163c00108/catalog)
(NEHGS) in 1917. This speech outlined the reasons for his project, including the “all too generous impulse of hospitality” of the early national period. While noting that immigrants have been “valuable additions to our population,” others proved “unfit to avail themselves of the blessings of free government, [and] have proved to be a menace to the nation's welfare.” Baxter argued that “destructive revolution” was possible if “advocates and supporters of theories attractive to untrained minds” remained unchecked. Specifically, Baxter cited the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and their allies as threats to the New England people. According to him, the country had received “a larger percentage than ever before of undesirable immigrants, and when the war closes, the nations engaged in it will hold back their abler men, and pour a flood of diseased and feeble ones into this country.”

To answer the challenge presented by the IWW and others, Baxter proposed building a structure of “imposing character,” preferably in Boston, though Portland would suffice, which “would not only be a pious tribute to our fore-fathers, but a most effective method of instruction to the masses who would throng its pictorial halls [and] would visualize to them...the striking events of our history.”201 Baxter sought to encourage the building of a monument not only to the region but to Yankee capitalism itself. Realizing that the wealthy were far outnumbered, Baxter’s Pantheon appealed not just to those of his class but all those of “New England stock,” including skilled craftsmen. Conscious that the dominance of the ruling class was threatened, Baxter’s proposed “Pantheon” was an attempt to maintain cultural hegemony by drawing on nativism to suppress increasingly revolutionary elements in the working class.

In appealing to native-born tradesmen, elites like Baxter sought a traditional ally during a period of increasing radicalism. Baxter’s foe, the IWW, sought to organize all workers regardless of nationality, race, gender or skill level and it proved relentless in its efforts. In the years following the 1912 win by IWW-affiliated Lawrence, Massachusetts textile workers, the group continued to make progress organizing textile workers elsewhere in New England, including in central Maine. Historian Paul Frederick Brissenden, writing less than a decade after the strike, noted that all parties involved recognized the conflict was far more than an ordinary dispute between workers and employer; it was “a social revolution in parvo.” IWW organizer Vincent St. John, wrote to fellow Wobbly ‘Big’ Bill Haywood that "a win in the Lawrence mills means the start that will only end with the downfall of the wage system." Because the IWW judged its tactics on their effectiveness against the class system and not on the established morality of Yankee elites, "staid old New England was confronted with an organization which derided all her fond moralities.” As such, the Wobblies were perceived as not only constituting a challenge to capitalist hegemony but to the cultural identity upon which the United States was built. As such, the IWW loomed large in the minds of Yankee society. The IWW in Maine, which was relatively disorganized compared to its counterpart in Massachusetts, did not match the IWW of the conservative mind. However, the concept of radicals working to unite the diverse working class against their bosses was not entirely far-fetched. Portland’s working class demonstrated more moderate inclinations throughout the period; for example, the city’s voters overwhelmingly endorsed a 1912 vote to establish a municipal fuel yard and again during the 1916 Portland trolley workers’ strike. Thus, even relatively conservative anglophone Protestant workers rose against corporate power and, with widespread community support, won modest

reforms. Though the IWW played a minor role in Maine politics, the threat of working-class unification remained quite real in the minds of elites and those who identified with them.

Baxter’s vision of a massive, patriotic museum to honor his Yankee ancestors was never realized. Nevertheless, the larger goal was accomplished. Starting in 1917, radical workers, immigrants at large, and other dissenters faced severe repression. Like Baxter, a substantial portion of leading counter-revolutionaries were of New England descent and played a role in the NEHGS. One such Anglophile was Woodrow Wilson who was an honorary member of the NEHGS. As president, he signed into law the Espionage Act which silenced and jailed opponents, including former Socialist presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs. Wilson brought Open Shop newspaperman George Creel into his administration to convince the public that foreign interests, in particular Germany, were a real threat to the country’s security. By directing the country’s growing class-based anger towards foreigners, Creel and Wilson encouraged xenophobia and anti-leftism. While Creel did not blame all immigrants, his Committee on Public Information was explicit in its denunciations of radicals, especially those in sympathy with the Russian Revolution. In October 1918, the CPI published what later were determined to be forged documents indicating a conspiracy between the revolutionary Soviet government and the German empire. This calculated public conflation of the Soviet Union and the German state added fuel to the nativist and anti-radical Red Scare in order to ensure Americans would hate the Soviets as they had been convinced to do of the Germans. To this end, the months after the end of the war saw Wilson’s Attorney General, A. Mitchell Palmer, conduct a series of raids to capture and arrest over 10,000 immigrants and leftists. These arrests led to the denationalization

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203 Presidents Woodrow Wilson and Warren Harding as well as First Lady Grace Coolidge were all honorary members of the New England Historic Genealogical Society.

204 United States Committee on Public Information. The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy. Issued by the Committee on Public Information, George Creel, Chairman, October 1918.
and deportation of hundreds of immigrants and were a serious setback for both revolutionaries and reformists on the political left. Abroad, the United States supported counter-revolutions in both Ireland and the Soviet Union. In the latter, the U.S. was part of a coalition which attempted to defeat the world’s first successful workers’ revolution. In Ireland, Wilson supported Britain, opposed self-determination, clamped down on Irish nationalism, and opposed Irish unification.  

During the period from 1917-1923, counter-revolutionaries like those in the Wilson administration severely weakened anti-capitalist movements and radical labor unions both at home and abroad. Though the German Empire and the Soviet Union were open enemies, propaganda at home convinced a large portion of the public that both countries were psychological and physical threats to the average person’s well-being.

Wilson’s policies initiated a tidal wave of counter-revolution that only grew in the years after he left office. The 1920 and 1924 elections produced Wilson’s successors, Republicans Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge. The two were elected on conservative credentials, promising opposition to revolution: “If revolution insists upon overturning established order, let other peoples make the tragic experiment. There is no place for it in America...Ours is a constitutional freedom where the popular will is the law supreme and minorities are sacredly protected."  

Despite pledging to uphold the “sacred” rights of minorities, the Republican administrations failed to stop (and often aided) the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan as a force on the national level. The Klan fought for Anglo-Saxon superiority and sought a cross-class alliance similar to the one called for by Baxter in his 1917 address. The state and right-wing vigilantes used repressive laws and public violence to suppress those who challenged their dominance.

205 Also see Elizabeth McKillen, Making the World Safe for Workers: Labor, the Left, and Wilsonian Internationalism (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013), p. 4.

Though a force in national politics, the Klan left its deepest impression on individual communities. Portland, Maine became a Klan stronghold by making common cause with the Chamber of Commerce. The two organizations, whose leaders shared common social circles and affiliations, combined to push through a regressive municipal charter that all but eliminated the ability of the organized workers and immigrant communities to influence municipal affairs.

During the crucial period surrounding World War I and its aftermath, both the political culture and the balance of power in the city and country changed dramatically. Over the previous decade or so, class conflict had amplified, and nativist sentiments were diminished; workers of all nationalities voted overwhelmingly for municipal, not profit-driven public services, and strikes were commonplace even in relatively quiet Portland, Maine. In the case of the trolley workers in 1916, overwhelming public support led to the defeat of corporate interests. Once war became certain, Maine’s ideological, political, and economic organizations backed it with their full force. Economic changes brought on by the war, namely the revival of the port and vast increases in war-related productions and profits, strengthened the city’s capitalist class.

**TRANSNATIONAL IRISH COMMUNITY**

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Irish immigrants poured into the Forest City. By 1900, over 18,000 of Portland’s approximately 50,000 residents were first-or-second-generation foreign-born. Of that group, about 42 percent were born in Ireland. Equaling over 15 percent of the city’s entire population at the turn of the century, the Irish were, by a significant margin, the largest group of immigrants in the city.\(^{207}\) However, whether by choice or by exclusion, most Irish immigrants did not assimilate into Yankee society. One indication of

\(^{207}\) Connolly, *Seated by the Sea*, p. 78.
this was the high percentage of Portland’s Irish who continued to use Gaelic as their primary language into the twentieth century. Historian Kenneth E. Nilsen wrote that Portland was “the United States city with the highest concentration of Irish speakers in its Irish immigrant population [and] all the evidence indicates that Irish speakers have been in the majority among Portland’s Irish at least as far back as the 1880s.” In another interview, an Irish former longshoreman recalled that “at least 80 percent [of longshoremen were] Irishmen that came direct from Ireland-and they all spoke Gaelic. I felt right at home with them. That’s all I cared to speak.” Longshoremen who tried to assimilate into Yankee society by speaking English were accused of “trying to put on airs.”

David Brundage writes that these newly-proletarianized Irish immigrants “seem to have provided the social base for the most extreme forms of nationalism in the United States during this period.” Thus, the city’s large and vibrant Irish community stood apart and as a threat to the reactionary elements of Yankee society. In the period of enforced conformity in and around World War I, the Irish refused to relinquish their longstanding cultural ties to the home country. Despite Irish and Catholic groups publicly supporting the war, Catholics in general and Irish in particular became easy targets for Yankee vigilantes when public opinion shifted into xenophobic overdrive during the early 1920s.

Because of longstanding ties and regular migration both to and from the Emerald Isle and the Forest City, the Irish nationalist movement regularly found supporters among Portland’s Irish community. While the Irish nationalist movement long had both right and left-wing factions, its expression in North America often took on a populist and working-class tenor. Portland’s Irish,

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209 Connolly, *Seated by the Sea*, pp. 80-81.

who had sponsored speakers from the Land League, the radical *Irish World* and other left-wing nationalist organizations dating back to the 1870s and 1880s, were largely staunch labor unionists and often found themselves both a numerical minority in the city’s politics and generally on the left-wing of the city’s political discourse. Though conservative Irish Portlanders played important roles in the movement, the Irish nationalist movement largely had a working-class character.\(^\text{211}\) As such, if the mass mobilization on behalf of Irish nationalism grew, it would have threatened to reverse the gains made by business interests.\(^\text{212}\)

The bloody response by British authorities to the failed Easter Uprising in April 1916 provoked unrest and resistance across the world from Irish and radical communities, Portland included. As such, even the typically mild-mannered Bishop Louis Walsh was moved to publicly express his anger. Prior to the incident, Bishop Walsh and his clergy refused to attend a meeting organized by the Ancient Order of Hibernians that denounced the British war effort. To the contrary, Walsh praised occupied Ireland’s contributions to the war. Despite his pro-British stance, the attempted overthrow of the British regime in Dublin by Irish nationalist revolutionaries was met with condemnation in the *Maine Catholic Historical Magazine*, which was the only periodical published by Portland’s Irish Catholic community. The outlet, which was largely a product of Bishop Walsh’s efforts, noted “the cold blooded executions” as a response to the “ill-starred Sinn Fein Insurrection” as an example of the British Empire’s “heartless

\(^{211}\) This was especially true during the surge of nationalism in the aftermath of World War I. For more on class struggle and nationalist movements, see Berch Berberoglu, “Nationalism, Class Conflict and Social Transformation in the Twentieth Century,” *International Review of Modern Sociology*, vol. 29, no. 1, (1999): 77–88.

\(^{212}\) On a national level, this mobilization of working-class diasporic nationalism directly threatened the profits of shipping interests in August 1920. In that month, Irish longshoremen in New York City began what became known as the “Irish Patriotic Strike.” Seeking to pressure England to release the Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence MacSwiney, who was then on a hunger strike, longshoremen walked off their jobs. Other ethnic groups, including African-Americans connected to Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), joined in the protest as did longshoremen across the country. This rank-and-file labor action spread to ports across the country (though not Portland) and was connected to the socialist movement. See Brundage, pp. 157-160.
oppression” of Ireland. Nevertheless, because no other public statements were issued in the aftermath of the Easter Uprising, Patrick Mannion argues that this response “may be an emotional response to the sudden and dramatic execution of the Rising’s leaders rather than a representation of a true shift in opinion.” Possibly, Bishop Walsh realized that Portland’s Irish community was dependent on the larger and wealthier pro-British community and his conservative instincts were reawakened. Either way, when war was declared, most of the city’s Irish and Catholic organizations followed their English and Protestant neighbors and declared their loyalty and support for the war effort. Bishop Walsh, for his part, declared the purchase of a Liberty Bond the “solemn duty of every Catholic.”

While most Irish nationalists quieted their demands for immediate independence during the war, some vocal Irish republicans, like Jeremiah O’Leary and the newspapers *Irish World* and *Gaelic American*, were suppressed for their refusal to do so and for taking resistance a step further and publishing pro-German sentiments. O’Leary, in particular, was known for expressing pro-German beliefs. When the *Lusitania* was sunk by German U-Boats in 1915, O’Leary commented that “Germany had a right to sink the *Lusitania*. As far as the Americans who were drowned are concerned, they were themselves to blame for being so silly as to sit upon a keg of powder.” Maine newspapers blamed him for “introducing an alien issue into American politics,  

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213 Regarding the harsh response to the Easter Uprising by British authorities, Bishop Walsh was far from alone in expressing outrage among mainstream members of the U.S. Irish community. For example, the Irish-dominated Chicago Federation of Labor took an unapologetic anti-British posture and denounced “the domination of the Celtic people of Ireland by alien people and powers” while protesting “the summary execution of Celtic persons taken as prisoners of war.” See Barrett, p. 151.

214 Mannion, pp. 191-192.

215 The Knights of Columbus were among the groups which pledged their loyalty to the United States when war was declared in April 1917. Later, the Knights would become the primary enemy of Maine’s Ku Klux Klan for their perceived lack of patriotism.

216 A large portion of Portland’s Irish community vigorously participated in the war effort and they were publicly recognized for their participation in print. The city’s Catholic churches aided the war effort and Portland’s Catholics volunteered for the war as well. See Mannion, p. 195.
and attaching to one of the great political parties what has become to be known as ‘hyphenism.’”

Another national group, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, openly supported the German Empire, and stated that it had “...unshaken confidence that the German Empire will crush England and aid in the liberation of Ireland...” This resolution, which was passed in Boston in July 1916, likely had the support of Portland’s Hibernians. However, likely because dissenters were silenced or jailed, Portland’s AOH did not audibly resist the war efforts. In place of open protests, the group was conspicuously absent from patriotic parades and did not issue statements of support. Setting aside the AOH, Portland’s Irish community leaders were at least openly pro-war. Despite their repeated sacrifices and professions of loyalty, reactionary Yankees in the post-war period believed that Maine’s Irish Catholics were not to be trusted, largely because of their Catholic faith as well as their cultural and political interest in Ireland. On a national level, prominent (though isolated) groups of Irish Americans campaigned against preparedness and, to a lesser degree, the war itself. First newspapers and later Klansmen claimed that Catholic immigrants sought “the division of the American nation for the first time...”

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217 For more on Jeremiah O’Leary, see Rowland, p. 64. For more on Maine’s commentary on O’Leary, see Costrell, p. 154.


219 See Mannion, p. 195.

220 Another noteworthy organization was the Irish Progressive League (IPL), which was founded in 1917 when mainstream Irish republican groups retreated from demanding immediate independence. It sought to keep “the Irish republican cause alive in a period marked by government intimidation and nationalist retreat” while also attracting support from socialists and other anti-imperialists, all of whom were enemies of the state. In communities with a larger and more self-sufficient Irish community than Portland, radical Irish nationalists maintained a public presence during the war. While it is likely that O’Leary and the IPL maintained supporters in the city, there is no evidence of radical nationalist activity in Portland during the war. For more on the IPL, see Barrett, p. 154. On many levels, Barrett’s information on Irish-American opposition to the war came from Elizabeth McKillen, Chicago Labor and the Quest for a Democratic Diplomacy, 1914-1924 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
along alien lines.” This reinforced the longstanding notion that “hyphenated-Americans” could not be trusted as “100% Americans.” Ideas like these animated nativists in the U.S. Congress, Portland Chamber of Commerce, and the Ku Klux Klan to eliminate the immigrant threat.

In 1920 and 1921, revolutionary Irish nationalism was reawakened after decades of hibernation in the city. Across the country, the cause “became a movement of immense proportions.” Mass organizations like the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic (AARIR) and the Friends of Irish Freedom (FOIF) organized local committees to fight for Irish independence. Over the course of 18 months, New York-born Irish revolutionary Eamon de Valera’s AARIR became one of the largest organizations of any kind in the country. It had more than 700,000 members and raised over $10 million for a republican Ireland. Both the Portland Longshoreman Benevolent Society (PLSBS) and Bishop Walsh’s Catholic Diocese were supporters of Irish independence and served as conduits for the promotion of Irish nationalism in the city. On April 6, 1920, the labor union voted unanimously to purchase $2,000 in bonds that were issued by the new Irish Republic as a show of solidarity with the fledgling nation. To do so, it sold a Liberty Bond purchased to support the war effort. Five days later, it hosted New York Supreme Court Justice and radical nationalist Daniel F. Cohalan at Portland City Hall. Introduced by Bishop Walsh, Cohalan’s visit was supported by Clan na Gael, which was the successor to the mid-nineteenth century radical Irish nationalists known as the Fenians and the “main American contact with the militant [Irish Republican Brotherhood].” The meeting raised nearly $20,000. Cohalan also announced the opening of a local office, the creation of a

221 Though the concept that the United States had never been divided along the lines of native and foreign born prior to First World War is absurd, it seems to have been a sincerely held belief of certain Maine newspapers. See: Costrell, p. 155.

222 Barrett, p. 149.

223 Barrett, p. 150.
steering committee, and appointment of ward captains.\footnote{224} Cohalan also praised Maine’s Republican U.S. Senator Bert Fernald for his opposition to the “English made League of Nations,”\footnote{225} putting him on the same side of the hot button issue as left-wing labor unions, socialists, and conservatives.\footnote{226} Showing no signs of abating, nationalist fervor continued into 1921 when the new Lord Mayor of Cork and future Sinn Fein elected official, Donal O’Callaghan, visited as part of an international tour.\footnote{227} Managing to enter the country without a passport, O’Callaghan was allowed to stay nonetheless. A day prior to his scheduled appearance in Portland, the Loyal Coalition, an anti-immigrant, pro England organization later connected to the Ku Klux Klan, unsuccessfully appealed to President Harding to deport the Irish politician “because of [Harding’s] well known attitude towards hyphenated agitation.”\footnote{228} On March 30, 1921, O’Callaghan was given a large parade down Congress Street, treated to lunch with bishop Walsh before delivering a lecture to a packed Portland City Hall audience. In May, a motion during a PLSBS meeting to donate $1,000 to the Irish Relief Fund was withdrawn but only because members had already donated so much to the cause.\footnote{229} After the Irish and British governments announced a ceasefire in July 1921, the Irish question retreated from the forefront of public opinion. The Friends of Irish Freedom shifted its focus to opposing immigration

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\footnote{224}{The office, which was located at 100 Free Street in Portland’s downtown, had a staff of five and over 50 volunteers.}


\footnote{226}{McKillen, \textit{Making the World Safe for Workers}, p. 179.}

\footnote{227}{The previous Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence MacSwiney, died following a hunger strike in an English prison in 1920. MacSwiney became an international symbol of Irish resistance to foreign rule. Because of this, the arrival of O’Callaghan in the country and Portland specifically was treated as a major event.}

\footnote{228}{Connolly, “Nationalism Among Early Twentieth-Century Irish Longshoremen in Portland, Maine,” pp. 287-289.}

\footnote{229}{Connolly, “Nationalism Among Early Twentieth-Century Irish Longshoremen in Portland, Maine,” p. 289.}
restrictions. However, the efforts of reactionary anglophiles did not cease. While the rhetoric shifted from an anti-Irish to anti-Catholic focus, Portland’s nativists opposed the Irish presence in the city, the Roman Catholic Church, and a united Irish republic.

**PLSBS STRIKE OF 1921**

The December 1921 longshoremen’s strike occurred during a period of intense conflict between labor and capital across the country, especially on the waterfronts. The war in Europe was good for the PLSBS and its members. During the boom period 1915-1919 the union witnessed a dramatic increase in new members; in 1914, fewer than 50 longshoremen joined the union whereas just three years later, nearly 450 joined the organization. Boosts to membership and increased work occurred in other ports as well. However, with the war over, businessmen launched an offensive to take back the profits that they’d been forced to bargain away during the war. On the waterfront, longshoremen’s wages were drastically reduced and working conditions worsened. The PLSBS and other longshoremen’s unions across the country fought back. Prior to striking, the conservative leadership of the ILA advised the PLSBS and other eastern seaboard locals to accept “significant reductions in wages for handling general cargo.” This included major reductions in regular and overtime wages, which had been at an all-time high during the war. While they were upset about wage cuts during a period of rapid inflation, PLSBS-affiliated workers were unwilling to concede changes that would increase workplace injuries.

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230 By 1935, the organization, which once had 100,000 members, dissolved. See Brundage, p. 175.

231 The combination of increased job security and cresting support for Irish nationalism led to a major strike in August 1920. A work stoppage over the arrest of prominent Irish nationalist Bishop Daniel Mannix spread from New York across the country. Longshoremen, both African-American and Irish, refused to handle cargo in response to the Mannix’s arrest at sea. See Brundage, p. 157.

232 Connolly, *Seated by the Sea*, p. 124.

233 Connolly, p. 125.
Because steamship operators refused to meet the union’s demands for safety, longshoremen refused to work starting on December 21. Immediately, Portland’s municipal leaders formed a citizens committee to help negotiate an end to the strike. Among those on the committee were the millionaire mayor Carroll S. Chaplin, wealthy Irish builder and architect John J. Cunningham, and Catholic Bishop Louis J. Walsh. Although the committee was clearly linked to the Chamber of Commerce, it claimed neutrality. Elites used threats of coercion to end the dispute more so than during previous stoppages. Henry Merrill, who was a member of the citizens committee and chairman of the State Pier Commission, threatened to withhold vital state funds earmarked for building the Maine State Pier, without which Portland’s waterfront economy seemed doomed. Bishop Walsh, who served on the committee because of his position as the head of the Catholic Church in Maine as well as his shared Irish heritage, spoke to the strikers on “sacrifice” and “family.” He also apparently ignored the union’s previous acceptance of a massive wage reduction and the hardship faced by all workers during the businessman’s offensive. Mayor Chaplin warned that Portland, with its population of more than 69,000 residents, might become a “fishing hamlet.” In contrast to the trolley workers strike of five years previous, no parades or rallies were held in solidarity with the strikers. The prevailing sentiments were decidedly anti-labor and especially anti-immigrant. Thus, isolated by a shift in public sentiments, PLSBS was forced to concede most of its demands. Using city hall as the negotiating space, the union and steamship companies hammered out an agreement. In the end, business, community, and political leaders all sided with the steamship companies, with whom they shared class interests. Despite it being a political moment highly unfavorable to labor, the PLSBS was willing to shut down the port during the busiest season, which threatened what was

234 Connolly, *Seated by the Sea*, p. 128.

235 Connolly, p. 129.
still the lifeblood of Portland’s economy. Even though they won, elites may have suspected that changing city government was one way to ensure that local authorities would remain favorable to business interests if the political climate shifted back to immigrants and workers as it had just five years earlier during the trolley workers’ strike. One means of doing so was connecting the spread of diseases, particularly the Spanish Flu, to the immigrant presence in the minds of the native-born middle and working classes.

IMMIGRANTS AND HEALTH

Portland, with its large harbor and access to Casco Bay, was a port of entry to the United States for thousands of immigrants. Yankees had for generations believed that European immigrants were disease-ridden. When an unparalleled influenza outbreak occurred in 1918, panic ensued, which exacerbated the xenophobic ideas of the period. From 1907 to 1937, House Island in Casco Bay was the “Ellis Island of the North.” Reaching its peak following the 1921 Emergency Quota Act, House Island quarantined hundreds of potentially “undesirable” and “unclean” immigrants. Since the war in Europe began in August 1914, increased numbers of refugees from southern and eastern Europe, including Italians, Russian Jews, and Armenians, had settled in the traditionally Anglo-Celtic city. In November 1923, just weeks before the new City Council was elected and during the peak of the Klan’s influence in Portland politics, two ships, the President Polk and the George Washington, arrived in Portland from New York. U.S. immigration officials quarantined over 200 passengers. Neighborhoods such as Gorham’s Corner, Bayside, and Munjoy Hill were shunned by residents of other, more fashionable districts.

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236 Bauman, p. 144.

that did not feature “dark, ill-smelling passageways.” Bayside in particular was a neighborhood in transition. Adjacent to City Hall on the peninsula’s northern edge, it had previously been a neighborhood of established Yankee families. Because of its proximity to industrial yards and then-filthy Back Cove, the lower portion of the neighborhood soon became home to the poorest refugees and immigrants, a large portion of whom originated in Eastern Europe, particularly Russia and Armenia. In a citywide survey of housing in 1924, 77% of Bayside residents were renters and 88% lacked an indoor bath. Despite the presence of slum neighborhoods within sight of City Hall, the Portland Chamber of Commerce declared the city “America’s Healthiest City” and “America’s Summer Playground.” Business leaders sought to lure wealthy tourists who wanted an urban experience free from unsightly immigrants and the associated health issues and labor conflict.

However, Portland was no less susceptible to pandemic than other urban communities. In the fall of 1918, a flu pandemic swept around the world. In September, it reached Maine. City health officials were primarily concerned with the pandemic’s effect on the 1919 tourism season. The city health officer wrote in late 1918 that “we should leave nothing undone which would make [tourists] secure against preventable communicable disease.” Though the Portland Evening Express boasted in a headline in October that the “Death Rate Of Influenza Here Is Remarkably Low,” the city’s ethnic workers experienced the worst of the outbreak. This was true elsewhere as well; “studies consistently noted that immigrants to the United States had markedly higher death rates than the native-born.” Wage-earners were more likely to be infected

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238 Bauman, p. 104.
239 Bauman, pp. 144-45.
240 Bauman, p. 142.
than others. Other studies attributed increased infections “to overcrowding and general poor economic conditions.” In Portland, an Italian section of Munjoy Hill was hard hit. The Maine Department of Health and Human Services noted in early October 1918 that “on account of the number of cases of influenza among people of the Italian quarter of the city, the Italian church at 235 Fore Street [was] opened and beds [were] installed there for the use of persons who [were] living in houses where the disease prevail[ed].” In Lewiston, the city’s primarily working-class Franco-American community was deemed a “vulnerable population” on which the pandemic had a “tremendous impact.” While research done outside of Maine indicates that residents born in Ireland suffered lower morbidity rates, anecdotal evidence suggests that may not have been the case in Portland. Mary Catherine Ragan, an Irish-American and future nurse was a child at the time of the flu. Of the period, she later recalled, “we had friends that lived in a three-flatter. There was a death on the first, second, and third floors. It was all the same family.” She continued that because the parish priest was barred from holding a formal memorial per state and municipal orders prohibiting all public gatherings, he “said Mass on the top of the stairs [of the church] and the people were out on Gray Street listening. My mother and father attended that because we lived nearby.” The pandemic eventually passed but Portland reported 2,499 cases, which equaled more than 3% of the city’s entire population. City officials and businessmen had long been concerned with the city’s image and the health consequences of a large immigrant population. John F. Bauman notes that "for America’s Sunrise Gateway, the healthiest city, the flu epidemic on top of war compounded the dilemma of a precipitous drop in summer tourism. Portland, confessed the city’s health officer at the close of 1918, "is a most important gateway for


tourist traffic...We should leave nothing undone which would make them [tourists] secure against preventable communicable disease.” With the knowledge that disease spread fastest in unsanitary conditions, Portland’s working-class neighborhoods seemed to be not only a threat to the city’s morals but to the long-term health and prosperity of the city.

CONCLUSION

In response to both the national drive for war and the struggle by ethnic workers and radicals from below, government-sponsored propaganda and militarism swept over Maine during the World War I era. Looking to silence the opposition of radicals and immigrants, elites like James Phinney Baxter used their wealth and political power to roll back gains made by workers and immigrants. Organized labor, which often contained both radicals and immigrants, was defeated by the “businessmen’s crusade.” Longstanding concerns about the health and sanitation of immigrant slums, brought to life during the 1918 influenza epidemic, were both a cause and effect of the period’s xenophobic anxiety. All of these concerns contributed to the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and the drive for charter reform in the early years of the 1920s.
Chapter V: Charter Reform, the Ku Klux Klan, and the 1923 Portland Elections

Portland has been in the throes of a political turmoil over the new Charter— and the Ku Klux Klan has affiliated itself with the Committee of 100— in favor of the new Plan. Noise, hatred, and bitterness are in evidence. - Bishop Louis Walsh, personal diary, September 8, 1923

Foreign-speaking naturalized Americans, Roman Catholic priests and nuns, negroes and the poorest class of white-skinned men and women, ALWAYS VOTE.

DO YOU? - The Maine Klansman, November 8, 1923

On the evening of September 10, 1923, Roman Catholic Bishop Louis J. Walsh wrote in his diary that “a real ‘Social & Political Revolution’” had just occurred.245 Earlier that day, voters turned out in record numbers to decide the fate of a plan that would dramatically alter the city’s municipal charter. While there was another election set for December, those who opposed the proposal understood that its passage indicated that their political influence was all but eliminated. Prior to the election, prominent Jewish-American lawyer and Common Council member Israel Bernstein warned voters that, “if this plan goes through, every man of Irish descent may as well pack up his trunk and leave the city as far as representation in the city

244 The Committee of 100 was dominated by Protestant business interests. Of its 100 members, only one was Catholic and none were Jewish or African-American. See “Maine Voices: Why Portland doesn’t have an elected mayor,” Portland Press Herald, September 27, 2010, for an overview.

government is concerned."246 This was confirmed in December when a businessman’s committee, known as the Committee of 100, was elected to both the City Council and School Committee. The counter-revolutionary businessmen succeeded where their fathers had failed; since at least 1897, Yankee elites had sought to centralize decision-making into fewer and more elite hands. Organized workers and laboring immigrants understood that the new charter had stripped them of virtually all political influence and that local governance would reside solely in Yankee businessmen social clubs. With the change, the municipality’s priorities changed as well. With the limited democracy that had previously existed all but eliminated, the business men's power was unchecked, and elites no longer needed to concede to reforms to keep the peace. The new government, elected in December 1923 with the aid of the Ku Klux Klan, consisted of a new City Council composed entirely of wealthy Yankee Protestants.

During the period from 1917 through the early 1920s, the pillars of capitalist society were challenged to various degrees across the industrialized world. Internationally, the largest and most important of these threats was the 1917 Russian Revolution and the subsequent attempted revolution in Germany. In the United States, ethnic workers and segments of organized labor challenged for power during the 1919 strike wave, which involved hundreds of thousands of workers in major industries. While concerns around issues of wages and control of the workplace were often the direct goal of strikers,

Responding to the demands of workers, capitalist elites remained unwilling to relinquish control. In some cases, such as the Soviet Union, counter-revolution generated civil war. In the United States, varying degrees of political action, appeals to ethnic and religious prejudice, and vigilantism were the preferred tactics of counter-revolution. The Klan’s growth can in part be

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attributed to the image of the “immigrant radical” cultivated by mainstream politicians. The Klan’s secretive nature, willingness to use violence against its opponents, and its basis in the lower middle classes, generated distrust even among elites with whom they shared common political goals. Across the country, the Klan opposed big business. However, Portland’s Klan gained credibility by making common cause with the city’s dominant business class instead of challenging it. When the Chamber of Commerce began the process of creating a “businessmen’s government” in 1918, it sought to complete James Phinney Baxter’s vision of a beautiful, residential city; a tourist haven, with a docile workforce. As had happened elsewhere, the Chamber of Commerce sought to eliminate the involvement of ethnic workers and radicals in local governance and thus ensure that business owners would be unchallenged in future conflicts. In order to accomplish this, conservative elites reached out to reactionary Yankee skilled workers and small business owners to form a temporary cross-class alliance based on maintaining Yankee dominance. This occurred with relative ease because both groups shared common ethnic origins and their leaders shared social circles.

**CHARTER REFORM**

One means of eliminating the threat of subaltern power was by eliminating city governance as a contested space. Since at least the 1890s, various civic groups sought reform of Portland’s municipal charter. Around the country, reformers believed “that the conspicuous failures of American municipal government could be remedied by modifying the administrative structure of city charters.” Early liberal reformers such as Jacob Riis and Lincoln Steffens imagined municipal reform as a form of democratization. However, local business leaders soon

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began championing municipal charter reforms as responses to threats posed by organized democratic engagement by radical workers and immigrants. There are two important case studies in municipal reform which demonstrate the class-based nature of the movement. The first city in the country to adopt a Commission form of government was Galveston, Texas in 1901. Dayton, Ohio was the first large municipality to adopt a Council-City Manager system in 1913. In both cases, elites used extraordinary events to seize control and shut down subaltern political movements.

The introduction of the Commission government in Galveston, Texas demonstrates the class-based and racialized nature of charter reform. During the 1880s and 1890s, the Texas Farmers Alliance and the Populist Party organized low income farmers and workers in a cooperative effort to control the emergence of industrial capitalism. A force to reckon with, Dallas Populists won all but one ward in the 1896 election. In Galveston, the 1895 Common Council was composed primarily of workers, including longshoremen, bartenders, and a drayman.²⁴⁸ Black residents, with whom the Populists often made alliance, were a minority in the community and maintained a foothold in the political system under the ward-based system. During the 1890s, Galveston’s political system was drastically altered. Changes included requiring all candidates to campaign citywide to get elected. Despite its best efforts, Galveston’s business class was unable to prevent workers and the Black community from influencing city politics. Bradley Rice notes that “the politically active businessmen of the city had learned that structural reform and good organization could aid their efforts to dominate local government; but full control eluded them.”²⁴⁹ However, when the country’s deadliest hurricane struck the port

²⁴⁸ Rice, p. 4.
²⁴⁹ Rice, p. 6.
city in September 1900, Galveston businessmen quickly realized that it represented an opportunity; within weeks, at least one businessman-councilor urged the body to resign en masse and be replaced by the governor. While this did not occur, Galveston did quickly turn to a new form of government, the Commission system. In Galveston, elites did not let the hurricane go to waste and easily changed the city’s political structure to benefit themselves. Portland businessmen, like their Galveston counterparts, knew that in emergency situations, people are more likely to prioritize stability over democracy. Portland elites understood that the prevailing conservatism of the post-World War I period created political space for the complete capture of municipal political power that had eluded the previous generation. In post-hurricane Galveston, as would occur in Portland following the inauguration of the Commission-City Manager system, political power shifted to a small group of businessmen as a result of a real or perceived emergency.

Dayton, Ohio was the first large city to adopt a Council-Manager form of government in 1913. Under this system, decisions, such as setting a budget and hiring city officials, were primarily concentrated in the hands of a bureaucrat hired by a City Council. In Dayton, labor unions were effectively neutralized by an open shop campaign that began in 1901. However, an effective chapter of the Socialist Party emerged from the trade unions struggle against the open shop and then turned to political action to reverse their defeats on the shop floor. In 1911, the Socialists elected two members to the council and three city assessors. In the 1912 presidential

250 Rice, p. 3.

251 This system is commonly known by a variety of terms; Commission, Commission-Manager, and Council-City Manager are used depending on the specific context. As such, these terms will be used interchangeably. According to Bradley Robert Rice in Progressive Cities (p. xii-xiv), all forms include the centralization of authority and responsibility in a small number of men elected from across the municipality, not by ward. In strict commission governments such as in Galveston, each Council member is also the head of a city department. When the City Manager was introduced in Dayton and afterward, professionals, not elected officials were brought in to oversee city departments.
election, Socialist Eugene Debs received more votes in Dayton than former President Theodore Roosevelt. Mainstream newspapers believed that Dayton was quickly becoming “Ohio’s Milwaukee”: a Socialist Party and trade union stronghold that would effectively defeat the capitalist parties. With the threat of Socialists in city government, the business class acted swiftly to prevent the socialist movement from establishing a stronghold. Granted home rule in 1912, Ohio cities were able to change their charters without approval of the state legislature. Freed from oversight and able to act quickly, Dayton’s elites turned to an experimental form of Commission government—the Council-Manager system—which proved to be even more effective at shutting out workers from political influence. According to Richard Judd, Dayton’s business class turned to it because it “met the needs of a powerful new class of American industrialists.” Socialists and the trade unions opposed the change, calling the proposal a “trap for the workingman, hid under the guise of virtue” and “a step backward for democracy.” Despite these pleas, voters were convinced of the plan by a Citizens Committee of 100. The local businessmen formed a Citizens Committee of 100 and, after a massive advertising campaign and a constant barrage of anti-socialist, pro-middle class reform propaganda, voters endorsed the Manager proposal. Afterward, Socialists continued to fight and occasionally win seats at the table, but the threat of Dayton transforming itself into a workers’ stronghold passed. Through using the logic and rhetoric of progressivism, which de-emphasized partisan politics in favor of ambiguous terms like efficiency and professionalization, Dayton’s ownership class maintained


253 Judd, Socialist Cities, p. 144.

254 Judd, Socialist Cities, p. 147.
near total control over the city’s politics and set a trend which Portland and other municipalities would soon emulate.\textsuperscript{255}

**Council-Manager in Maine**

The Council-Manager movement in Maine began under similar circumstances as charter reform had in Galveston, Dayton, and elsewhere. The first municipality in the state to adopt such a system was the industrial city of Auburn. When it did so in 1917, Auburn was the largest shoemaking city in the eastern United States.\textsuperscript{256} Auburn’s factories were a highly contested space. The thousands of largely Franco-American shoemakers sought to organize themselves throughout the 1890s and 1900s. However, they were successfully opposed in these efforts by the factory owners. These Yankee capitalists were known for being a “bold, ferociously anti-union community of entrepreneurs.”\textsuperscript{257} Efforts to expand labor unions into this anti-union outpost increased during the years preceding the implementation of the city manager system. The Auburn Board of Trade sought urban reform for the first time in 1909. Defeated at the polls, the plan remained dormant until the entrance of the IWW to the community four years later. In the aftermath of the successful 1912 “Bread and Roses” strike in Lawrence, the New England IWW turned its attention to the unorganized workers of the Androscoggin River valley, particularly in Lewiston and Auburn. National Wobbly organizers worked to organize Franco-American workers in the region from at least 1913. In that same year, Auburn’s electorate defeated for the

\textsuperscript{255} Judd, *Socialist Cities*, p. 148.

\textsuperscript{256} Writing in the 1930s, labor organizer Powers Hapgood of the Congress of Industrial Unions wrote of Lewiston and Auburn, "This district is to the shoe industry what [the] Pittsburgh district is to the steel industry. Victory means sweeping organizational results in all non-union centres." See Robert Bussel, *From Harvard to the Ranks of Labor: Powers Hapgood and the American Working Class* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), p. 158.

second time a proposal for a Commission government. Opposition to the Commission government was based in the city’s Ward 5, which was largely Franco-American. The National Municipal Review wrote that “the defeat in each case was due in part to the unwillingness of the ‘foreign’ ward to give up ward representation and submit to a government of five commissioners representing the native New Englanders of the other four wards, and in part to the apathy of the citizens in general.”

Thus, prior to World War I, plans to de-democratize municipal government were defeated not only due to hostility from Franco-American workers, but also because Yankee elites were unable to convince a sufficient number of Yankee workers to join their cause. Nevertheless, Auburn’s capitalist class persisted. The Board of Trade began discussing another vote in November 1915. When the return of Wobbly organizers was reported in 1916, this likely provided the impetus for another attempt at Charter reform.

By 1916, Bowdoin College professor and City Manager evangelist Orren C. Hormel spoke to a meeting of the Auburn Board of Trade, calling “the government of American cities...one [of] the conspicuous failure[s] of the United States. In order to meet the challenges of the period, he called for an end to the “decentralization of power and diffusion of responsibility.” With anti-immigrant sentiments stoked by wartime propaganda, Auburn voters went to the polls in September 1917 to vote on a modified City Manager plan that retained representation by ward. In its third attempt, the Auburn Board of Trade prevailed, and the electorate narrowly endorsed the City Manager proposal over the objections of the Franco-American community, 5,415 in favor to 5,038 against. Facing the threat of radical labor organizing, Auburn’s Yankee elites capitalized on the opposition to ethnic communities to ensure that capitalist interests would not

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260 Hormel was later retained and wrote the new Charter put forth by the Board of Trade. See Skinner, p. 135.
be threatened by the potential emergence of a hostile government and did as their compatriots in Dayton had done just a few years earlier and turned to the City Manager system.

In the following year, Portland’s business class returned to charter reform. As detailed earlier, in the years since Portlanders rallied behind striking trolley workers in July 1916, the city had been engulfed by militaristic patriotism and nativist propaganda. With the political wind in its sails, the Chamber of Commerce announced that it would begin the process of researching alternatives to the prevailing Council-Mayor system. Quickly, it founded and sponsored a Committee for Municipal Research to correspond with other municipalities about their preferred form of governance. In 1920, satisfied that the Council-Manager system would meet their needs, the Chamber began to campaign for its adoption in Portland by forming a committee headed by Brahmin architect John Calvin Stevens and with rising politician Ralph Owen Brewster as its secretary. Just as Baxter had done decades earlier, the Committee consulted with the National Municipal League and then sent its proposal to the Maine Legislature. In early 1921, that body approved the change and authorized Portland to hold a referendum on it that September. Voters were given three choices: the option to maintain the existing system (Plan 1), a plan similar to the one voted upon in 1897 (Plan 2)\(^{261}\) and the Council-Manager proposal (Plan 3). In the months that followed, several groups campaigned against the change. First and foremost was the rank and file of both the Democratic and Republican parties. The parties opposed the changes because Plan 3 removed the primary system and thus the ability of parties to nominate and influence candidates. The Catholic Diocese, just as it had in other elections, opposed reform because the changes would have dramatically reduced the voting power of Catholics, particularly in School

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\(^{261}\) This plan was a hybrid of the existing system and the proposal put forth by the Committee for Municipal Research. It would have created a unicameral, ward-based City Council and shifted important decision-making power to a strong Mayor.
Board elections. Despite an expensive campaign by the Committee of 100, a plurality of voters on September 12, 1921 chose to maintain the Council-Mayor system.\textsuperscript{262} Despite losing, the Committee of 100 did not give up their plan for reform. Soon thereafter, the city’s businessmen began the process of reviewing its proposal and sought another election in 1923.\textsuperscript{263} The 1921 campaign was run on the question of municipal efficiency versus popular democracy. However, the campaign two years later was largely conducted on the basis of religious and ethnic conflict. Just as the Chamber of Commerce began its second campaign, the Ku Klux Klan gained momentum and grew rapidly in the city as it did elsewhere. Because of this, the 1923 elections were more focused on religion and ethnicity than matters of municipal governance.

\textbf{KU KLUX KLAN}

Founded in Tennessee in the aftermath of the Civil War, the first Ku Klux Klan opposed gains made by African-Americans and southern supporters of Reconstruction. However, the organization was eventually eliminated by federal intervention under President Ulysses Grant. An institution confined to the former Confederacy, this version had little impact in the northern United States. However, in the half century between the end of the Civil War and the organization’s second iteration, the country’s politics, economy, and demography changed dramatically as did the group’s scope. No longer fighting a defensive battle to restore white supremacy in a war-ravaged region, the new Klan instead went on the offensive against supporters of modernization, social equality, ethnic pluralism, and economic democracy, including African-Americans, political radicals, immigrants (especially Roman Catholics and

\textsuperscript{262} The vote totals for each plan were: 5,685 (Plan 1), 236 (Plan 2), 5,584 (Plan 3). Plan 1 won by just 101 votes. The \textit{Portland Evening Express} bemoaned the fact that “apparent indifference” on the part of the electorate led less than 50% of registered voters to cast a ballot. (“The Charter Voting,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, September 14, 1921).

\textsuperscript{263} Dow, pp. 20-22.
Jews), and feminists.\textsuperscript{264} These groups, all of which advanced their causes to various degrees during the Progressive Era, had their progress stalled around the First World War. In 1905 a novel entitled \textit{The Clansman, an historical romance of the Ku Klux Klan} was published by Woodrow Wilson’s longtime friend, Thomas Dixon, Jr.\textsuperscript{265} The novel capitalized on Jim Crow era stereotypes to reignite the “lost cause” of the Confederacy, especially the Klan as a defender of society. Eventually, ambitious director D. W. Griffith turned \textit{The Clansman} into \textit{The Birth of a Nation}. The film, once again supported by President Wilson, was a major commercial success. While it is unknown if the film was shown in Portland, it was scheduled to be shown in nearby Boston in May 1921. African-American civil rights groups and the Knights of Columbus convinced city officials to ban the film over concerns that it would provoke a race riot.\textsuperscript{266} Seeking to capitalize on the film’s overall success, Georgia medical student, lecturer, historian and organizer William Joseph Simmons and a group of fifteen other white Protestant male southerners, reinvented the Ku Klux Klan. The organization did not gain widespread membership until 1920, when it hired two professional marketers from the Southern Publicity Association in Atlanta who sent out professional recruiters across the country. The organization rose from a small group based in the Old South to a nationwide political and social power because it tapped into at least a century of state-sponsored nativism and anti-radicalism.

Whatever the politics of the national organization, Klan organizers were given significant leeway in order to best appeal to the interests of the native-born middle strata in any given community. As such, the priorities of local chapters varied widely and were subject to the whims

\textsuperscript{264} Nancy MacLean argues that the Klan was, in part, a response to these forces. See Nancy MacLean, \textit{Behind the Mask of Chivalry: The Making of the Second Ku Klux Klan} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).


of local organizers more than the priorities of a centralized leadership. In Portland, this meant that opposition to Catholicism broadly, and the political authority of the Irish in particular, were top priorities. Representative of this, the Klan entered Portland by way of Boston-based organizers of the Loyal Coalition. The Loyal Coalition, which was formed in the wake of World War I, described itself as a “patriotic organization” committed to “good government” and keeping “the hyphenates from controlling America.” Among the group’s earliest priorities was lobbying against U.S. support for an independent Ireland. By early 1923, the group had been practically absorbed by the Klan and ceased independent action. Emblematic of this transition was an October 1921 press release which announced the hiring of historian Telfair Minton as the organization’s secretary but made no mention of his personal or the group’s relationship to the Klan. However, in September 1922, newspapers reported that the Klan had gained traction in Portland and Bangor and a month later, Minton and Loyal Coalition President F. Eugene Farnsworth introduced Klan Klokard (lecturer) William James Mahoney to a packed meeting hall in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Despite the introduction, Farnsworth claimed that he was not [yet] a Klansman. In January 1923, the two spoke publicly again, this time in Portland before an audience of 500 at Pythian Temple. At this meeting, the pair represented both the Loyal Coalition and the Ku Klux Klan. During it, they attacked Irish nationalism and the Roman Catholic church in the organization’s first major event in the state. A newspaper reported Farnsworth indicated that the Klan opposed the Knights of Columbus and “Sinn Feinism.” He claimed, “to have never taken issue with the Catholic religion,” but with “Rome’s political

267 Richard, p. 21.
268 “From the Loyal Coalition,” New Age Magazine (October 1921): 517-518.
269 Breton, p. 172.
machine." By repeating long-running conspiracy theories, this rhetoric likely sounded familiar to those in attendance. While Minton eventually returned to Boston full-time to organize on behalf of the Klan in Cambridge, Farnsworth stayed in Maine and became the organization’s leading figure. In October 1923, the Loyal Coalition published a statement in the Klan-leaning *The Guardian of Liberty* calling for Americans to “wake up” to the dangers of the Catholic Church, but omitted any mention of the Irish question. Farnsworth, who made a living by jumping from one social trend to another, likely observed the rising stature of the Ku Klux Klan and saw it as a lucrative business venture. Thus, the Loyal Coalition seemingly disappeared and left the Irish question behind, they embraced its close cousin, anti-Catholicism, and the Ku Klux Klan.

Far from an organic social movement, the Maine Klan was a tool used by opportunistic Yankee politicians who sought to maintain their hegemonic position. In Portland, this manifested itself in a cross-class alliance under the guise of efficiency and improved public services. Businessmen and professionals used the Klan to motivate the Yankee middle and working classes to support anti-democratic municipal reform. The Maine Ku Klux Klan shared common characteristics with other Klan organizations across the country, including anti-Catholicism, use of the organization’s secretive and archaic language and symbolism, and a tendency to recruit from established Protestant social orders. However, the Maine Klan took a different position on

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271 Richard, pp. 21-22.


274 The second iteration of the Ku Klux Klan should in part be viewed a pyramid scheme; members had to pay $5 to join, and the leadership could keep a certain portion of the membership fee of each new member. Farnsworth attempted several professions prior to becoming leader of the Maine Klan. See Boone, Robert H. “A Kleagle and His Klan: F. Eugene Farnsworth and the Ku Klux Klan in Maine,” M.A. thesis, 1965.
its relationship with the wealthy than did some other chapters. Nancy MacLean notes that the organization in the South fervently opposed the growth of department stores. One Klan lecturer in Athens, Georgia repeated a commonly held belief that “‘Department stores, all of which are principally owned by Jews or foreigners;’...were pushing out ‘American’ businesses.” 275 In contrast, the Portland branch had a supportive relationship with wealthy industrialists and commercial giants. For example, when it endorsed the Committee of 100’s slate for City Council in late 1923, among those the Klan supported was millionaire investor and businessman George F. West. 276 Even the fervently Republican Portland Evening Express expressed discomfort at the ticket’s lack of representation of “all classes of citizens and all elements of the electorate, not to say all classes or sects.” 277 Among the leaders of the Committee of 100 was Robert Braun, who was the co-owner of the Connecticut-based Porteous, Mitchell, & Braun department store. As evidenced by their support for both the City Manager system and the Committee of 100’s City Council slate, the Maine Klan did not share antipathy toward the wealthy that was found in Colorado, Georgia, and other parts of the country.

On the question of charter reform, the Maine Klan also sided with elites. Elsewhere in the Klan’s realm, this was not the case. MacLean notes that “on the local level, Klansmen often pitted themselves against the elite sponsors of municipal ‘reform.’ Klansmen saw in so-called

275 MacLean, p. 78.

276 George F. West, whose “greatest portion of his wealth came from investments in gas and electric utilities” spent $100,000 in 1911 ($2.78 million in 2018) to build one of Portland’s largest and most expensive mansions. “This Place Matters: The West Mansion,” Greater Portland Landmarks, <http://www.portlandlandmarks.org/blog/2016/5/26/this-place-matters-the-west-mansion> At the time of his election, he was one of the city’s wealthiest men and paid more in 1923 property taxes ($3,473.25) than the rest of the Committee of 100’s City Council candidates combined. At the time of the announcement of his candidacy, the Portland Evening Express described West as “a former president of the Portland Chamber of Commerce, a member of the executive council of the State Chamber of Commerce, president of the Portland Y.M.C.A., and a financier of ability.” “Committee of 100 Places City Council Slate Before Public,” Portland Evening Express, A2, October 13, 1923.

Progressive proposals for appointed city managers and commission governments attempts to constrict popular control over the state so that it could better serve business interests.” An Atlanta-based Klan newspaper attacked “commercial clubs and [the] autocratic chamber of commerce.” The experience in Colorado Springs, Colorado was similar, where “anti-Klansmen organized the bipartisan Citizens’ Committee to counter the Klan’s challenge in the spring, 1925, municipal and school board elections. The committee’s membership list was a roll call of the social, economic, political, and intellectual elite of Colorado Springs.” Whereas other Klan organizations “articulated the animosity petit-bourgeois whites felt toward both capital and labor,” no evidence has been found of this in the Maine Klan. During the summer and fall of 1923, the Klan devoted its collective energy to the campaign initiated by the Chamber of Commerce. In an anti-populist tone that might have shocked reactionary populists in other Klan branches around the country, the Maine Klansman Weekly, writing just weeks before the election of the new City Council, lumped poor whites with Catholics, naturalized immigrants, and African-Americans as enemies that needed to be outvoted at the polls. Farnsworth, for his part, echoed the sentiments put forth in his organization’s newspaper. In one common refrain, he told an audience, “I am a native-born American citizen and I believe my rights in this country are superior to those of foreigners.” Surprisingly, the organization even drifted into elitism. Rather than making economic arguments, the Maine Klansman Weekly and the stump speeches of F. Eugene Farnsworth focused entirely on patriotism and anti-Catholicism.

278 MacLean, p. 87.
280 MacLean, 79.
281 The Maine Klansman, December 10, 1923, p. 2.
Other ties closely bound the Maine Klan and the business community as well. In Bangor and Brewer, the Klan was linked to the Brewer Businessmen’s Association, which was formed in 1922 to promote the Klan among the city’s business community. In December 1923, following Portland’s municipal elections, industrialist F. Herbert Hathorn and lumber mill owner Delmar Merrill, who were likely Klansmen, purchased land and a small house in Bangor. After quickly building a hall, the two hired Rev. Milton C. Bennett from central Maine, to serve as their new church’s pastor and preach “Old Time Religion.”  

The Klan was able to grow because it augmented the state’s conservative business community.

In Portland, two of the Klan’s best-known leaders were DeForest H. Perkins and Dr. Walter E. Witham. Perkins taught at different venues across Maine after completing a M.A. thesis in history from the University of Maine. On the eve of World War I, he became Superintendent of Portland Public Schools and President of the Portland Rotary Club (1916-17). Leaving education, he became the executive secretary of Portland Chamber of Commerce in September 1918. Under Perkins’ leadership, the Chamber initiated the movement for a City Manager system. In 1921, just as Portlanders rejected the plan for the first time, he left the Chamber. While little is known about his activities over the next four years, Perkins reappeared following the forced resignation of Farnsworth to become the Grand Dragon of the Maine Ku Klux Klan. The organization, which by then had linked itself irrevocably to the political fortunes of possible Klansman, Chamber of Commerce favorite, and Governor Ralph Owen Brewster, collapsed in 1928 after Brewster was defeated in his bid for the United States Senate.  

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282 Breton, pp. 180-181.

283 As Rita Mae Breton argues that, “financial instability, internal corruption, on both local and national levels, loss of a charismatic leader, political scandals, and increased attacks by newspapers and politicians can all be listed as factors contributing to the Klan’s decline in Maine.” Breton, p. 207.
Dr. Walter E. Witham was a physician who resided in the Deering neighborhood. Also a founding member of the Woodfords Club, less is known of his career. Witham was the first Klansman in Portland and one of the major donors who established the Loyal Realty Company. The latter shared its name with the Loyal Coalition which had employed now Klan leader F. Eugene Farnsworth. The company secured a $42,000 loan that the organization used to purchase 8 acres of land on Forest Avenue. Witham, an established Yankee doctor, invested both time and money into establishing Portland’s Klan chapter. Witham and Perkins were part of the burgeoning class of professionals who were members of both the Yankee elites and the Ku Klux Klan. They likely served as links between the businessmen and Klan movements.

In the fall of 1913, the Woodfords Club was founded. Named after the well-to-do neighborhood in which most members resided, it was an exclusive suburban social club composed almost entirely of businessmen and high-ranking professionals. Though theoretically apolitical, the organization emerged from the defunct Deering Republican Committee as well as from the Masons, International Organization of Odd Fellows and other fraternal orders in the area. It was based on the same concept as the Portland Club, a conservative Republican social club established in 1886. Among the founding members of the Woodfords Club were elite business and professional men who would shape city politics for decades to come, including future Ku Klux Klan leaders DeForest H. Perkins and Dr. Walter E. Witham, as well as leading businessmen and future leading City Councilors.

While we know the names and occupations of many of the leaders of the Maine Klan, no list of its general membership exists. However, a close examination of newspaper reports, public

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records, and the Klan’s own statements uncovers approximately 30 men with close ties to the organization. While this is a small sample size for a group which reportedly had thousands of members at its peak, it provides a useful shorthand because it includes people and businesses who paid to publicly identify themselves with the organization. Thus, an analysis of these individuals reveals much about the composition of the group’s core supporters. Of the 30 names, 21 were identified in the 1923 Portland City Directory. All of them owned property, though the amount and type of property each one owned varied dramatically. The most common professions were company owners (5) and company presidents (3). Five men who held professional jobs were identified as well. Unsurprisingly, some of the wealthiest among this group paid a significant amount in property taxes. Arthur C. Leadbetter, Moses P. Stiles, Dr. Walter E. Witham, and J. Wilder Haggett were the four men who combined to form the Loyal Realty Company that purchased land for the Klan’s eight-acre clubhouse. They paid a combined $2,500.89 in property taxes in 1923 alone. Of the principal members of the real estate company, two were listed in the city directory and both were professionals. Yet, only Witham lent his name to the organization. Within the sample, the largest overall group consisted of self-employed skilled or semi-skilled workers. These men worked in the building trades, repaired watches or shoes, painted homes, and worked as a barber. More than half of those whose lived in Portland paid less than $100 in property taxes, which the City Directory set as the threshold for listing one’s bill. This indicates that many of the Klan’s rank-and-file members, while owning their own

286 See Appendix Item B.
287 These professionals included an accountant, real estate agent, Protestant minister, physician, and insurance agent.
288 It is unknown, though highly possible, that these men were also connected to the Loyal Coalition that Eugene Farnsworth ran prior to moving back to Maine.
businesses, were themselves not independently wealthy.\textsuperscript{289} A notable portion of business owners who advertised in the \textit{Maine Klansman Weekly} were not Portland residents and instead lived in nearby Brahmin suburbs of Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, and Falmouth Foreside.\textsuperscript{290} Thus, the inner core of the Portland Ku Klux Klan was a cross-class alliance. While it is likely that few members of the industrial working class joined the organization, petit-bourgeois sole proprietors as well as company owners and presidents played a major role. As such, the Klan was able to recruit supporters from across the Yankee population. The Portland Klan, unlike other Klan chapters, was effective at doing more than intimidating its opponents; it had a lasting effect by joining with business elites (rather than challenging them) to centralize political power in the hands of the city’s Protestant business class. It did so by tapping into the period’s prevailing xenophobia and linking the battle against ‘hyphenates’, the Roman Catholic Church, and the movement for a businessman’s government in a unique manner.

\textbf{1923 elections}

In early 1923, Portland’s Committee of 100 launched another well-funded campaign to change the city’s governing structure. The proposed charter, approved by the Legislature and pending approval of the voters in September, was nearly a carbon copy of the failed proposal from two years earlier.\textsuperscript{291} The two key policy changes were the addition of the citizens’ initiative, recall, and people’s veto and the election of the School Board in at-large elections

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{289} Nancy MacLean’s analysis of the Athens, Georgia Klan indicates that most Klansmen were similarly middle income and property-owning men. See MacLean, pp. 52-76.
\item \textsuperscript{290} Brahmin in this sense applies to the old, wealthy New England families of British Protestant origin which were influential in the development of American institutions and culture. Often associated with Boston, these elite Yankees spread across the United States, including to Portland.
\item \textsuperscript{291} Opponents of the City Manager proposal managed to require that Plans to change the Portland charter needed a majority of all votes cast. This requirement meant that the Chamber of Commerce needed to win mass public support to secure victory.
\end{itemize}
instead of by ward. The direct democracy reforms were added to entice progressives who were concerned by the centralization of power in the hands of an unelected, possibly non-resident City Manager. At-large School Board elections, rather than by ward, were added to entice anti-Catholic voters to the polls. Anti-Catholics had long opposed Catholic influence in the public school system, especially their election to the School Board. The options, labeled Plan 1, Plan 2, and Plan 3, nearly mirrored those of 1921 as well. Plan 3, which was the proposal of the Committee of 100, had the backing of a large percentage of the city’s wealthiest and most influential people. Among those supporters were Guy Gannett, the new owner of the Portland Press Herald who would later establish a nationwide media empire. When Gannett purchased the newspaper, he was already the wealthiest publisher in the state. Making plain its position on the issue, the newspaper’s first headline of 1923 proclaimed, “Politicians Would Keep Public In Ignorance of...Misgovernment.” Complaining of a “soaring” tax rate and the city’s “bonded indebtedness...larger than the national debt was for years,” the newspaper claimed that elected officials were doing nothing to “keep down the mounting indebtedness.”

Gannett hired two new writers who wrote exclusively on the issue. Edward F. Dow wrote in 1940, “the campaign of 1923 [thus] became more picturesque, popular, and personal than was that of 1921.”

The Press Herald continued throughout the year as an active partisan in favor of the City Manager system. The Press Herald and other supporters argued that the Citizens Committee represented a taxpayer revolt against inefficient government. Pro-City Manager historian Edward F. Dow noted that the Committee of 100’s campaign was aimed at “home owners, small shopkeepers, business and professional men and women rather than the working men, the small wage earner, and persons without regular employment.” In short, the mainstream pro-City Manager campaign

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293 Dow, p. 23.
“had the flavor of an energetic taxpayers’ association meeting.”\textsuperscript{294} In the final days of the campaign, attorney William H. Looney spoke on Portland’s Long Island and argued that increased taxes and expenditures were leading to “low wages and high cost of living” and thus “impoverishment, stagnation and decay.”\textsuperscript{295} The proponents of Plan 3 were largely the city’s largest taxpayers and members of the progressive-minded business class. This same constituency was unable to convince voters to reform the Charter three previous times.\textsuperscript{296} Despite their arguments, it was not clear prior to the election that they would finally win in 1923. To do so, elites needed to extend their position beyond the Chamber of Commerce and reach the typically unorganized middle strata. Luckily for them, the Ku Klux Klan grew considerably throughout the next year and was able to provide an appeal to nativism that inspired those less concerned by their property tax bills than those within the social circles of the Chamber of Commerce.

Outside of the Chamber of Commerce, a different type of movement emerged which played a decisive role in motivating Yankees to turn out to the polls that September. The Ku Klux Klan under F. Eugene Farnsworth rapidly grew through 1923. In April, it purchased eight acres on Forest Avenue near the Woodfords neighborhood to build a headquarters.\textsuperscript{297} Both the movement for the City Manager and the Klan organization grew concurrently; they did not publicly merge until late in the summer when the Klan endorsed Plan 3. In a show of force, 10,000 people watched as 1,500 Klansman paraded down Forest Avenue just three weeks prior to the September 10 vote. \textsuperscript{298} Supporters of the status quo, likely influenced by the Klan’s

\textsuperscript{294} When it opened the following year, 3,000 Klansman were present. See Dow, p. 24.

\textsuperscript{295} “URGES POLITICS IN CITY BE ABOLISHED,” \emph{Portland Evening Express}, B8, August 31, 1923.

\textsuperscript{296} In 1897 and 1905, Charter reforms that would have created a unicameral City Council with a strong mayor were narrowly rejected by city voters. In 1921, the City Manager was similarly rejected.

\textsuperscript{297} Richard, p. 24.

\textsuperscript{298} Breton, pp. 177-178.
demonstrable growth, finally organized an active campaign in the immediate aftermath of this parade.\textsuperscript{299}

Despite the multi-year campaign put forward by the Chamber of Commerce, those in favor of maintaining the council-mayor system had felt confident in their ability to defeat the proposed changes.\textsuperscript{300} As late as early August, voters were apparently as disinterested in change as they had been in 1897, 1905 and 1921.\textsuperscript{301} On August 1, the \textit{Portland Evening Express}, which was in favor of maintaining the existing charter, told its readers that little interest was shown in the election which was just 5 weeks away.\textsuperscript{302} Even 10 days later, when increases in new voters were reported, their reasons for doing so were construed as unrelated to the upcoming vote and were not viewed as symptoms of increased interest in the Charter campaign.\textsuperscript{303} It is likely that overconfidence due to the previous successes is the primary reason for the lack of a campaign. This laissez-faire approach faded after Klan leader F. Eugene Farnsworth registered to vote in the city for the first time.\textsuperscript{304} Supporters of the existing charter finally organized a skeleton campaign two days later on August 16. The meeting that began the campaign was chaired by a

\textsuperscript{299} Dow, p. 24.

\textsuperscript{300} Voters rejected charter changes in both 1905 and 1921 by narrow margins. The Maine Legislature, when it approved the charter change in March 1923, placed an additional hurdle for enactment: Those plans that sought to alter the charter, i.e., numbers 2 and 3, not only had to receive more votes than the other two plans but the winner had to win a majority of all votes cast in a three-way race.

\textsuperscript{301} In May 1897, only 2,540 voters came out to vote, with 1,540 voting to retain. In April 1905, only 1,504 out of around 9,000 possible voters turned out. In the former, the \textit{Portland Evening Express} placed the results on page 11 and described “little interest” in the vote. In both elections, the bulk of the votes to change the system came from wealthier suburban wards. See “Lower Board Will Remain,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, April 25, 1905, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{302} “If the number of personal and telephone inquiries at the board of registration is any criterion, interest in the forthcoming election...is negligible. George H. Allan, chairman of the board of registration said that never could he remember a time when so little apparent interested had been manifested” (“LITTLE INTEREST BEING SHOWN IN CHARTER ELECTION,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, August 1, 1923.)

\textsuperscript{303} Among these reasons were the October referendum limiting working hours for women and children and twenty-one-year-old residents excited to register to vote for the first time. See “THinks CITIZENS NOT INTERESTED IN CHARTER VOTER,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, August 1, 1923.

\textsuperscript{304} “Klan Organizer Adds Name to List of Portland Voters,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, August 14, 1923, A2.
former Common Council member and had only 30 people in attendance. The Committee of 15 that formed as a result of the meeting did not even have representatives from Wards 1, 4, or 9.\footnote{305} The next day, Mayor Carroll S. Chaplin mocked the chances of the City Manager plan by meeting with a psychic, who predicted he would serve a third term as mayor.\footnote{306} Despite the formal inauguration of the campaign, the anti-City Manager \textit{Portland Evening Express} continued to report expectations of low turnout until after August 23. On that day, the newspaper ran a paid advertisement from the Klan which urged its supporters to register to vote as well as an allegation that Plan 3 was so poorly written that it would bar future municipal elections.\footnote{307} The allegedly poorly-written nature of the proposal was one of the core messages put forth by opponents of Plan 3. On August 23, longtime opponent of the Baxter family, former mayor, and Ward 5 Alderman Charles H. Randall was named head of the anti-Charter reform campaign and the \textit{Evening Express} finally conceded that interest in the campaign was quickly growing, as 114 Portlanders registered to vote the day prior, though no connection was made to the previous day’s advertisement in the same newspaper.\footnote{308} The “anti business manager charter” campaign, established less than three weeks prior to the September 10 vote, was composed primarily of leading members of both major political parties as well as older businessmen; it had committees

\footnote{305} “Plan Aggressive Campaign for Representative City Government,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, August 17, 1923, A9. Interestingly, Ward 4 was one of the two traditionally immigrant, working class districts in the city. This indicates that the opposition campaign was initially disinterested in motivating the city’s Irish working class to head to the polls.


\footnote{307} “DECLARES CITY MANAGER CHARTER WOULD BAR MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN PORTLAND,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, A1, August 23, 1923.

\footnote{308} “RANDALL HEADS ANTI-CHARTER ORGANIZATION” and “REGISTRATION FOR ELECTION IS WAKING UP,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, A1, August 24, 1923. Of those 114 registrants, only 12 were residents of Wards 1-5. This proved indicative of the turnout in September, as the off-peninsula suburban districts voted overwhelmingly in favor of Plan 3.
in each of the nine wards.\textsuperscript{309} Furious campaigning immediately commenced. The campaign made a variety of arguments and did not stick to a clear theme. In front of certain audiences, those opposed to Plan 3 appealed “to our natural New England conservatism” and claimed that city government worked relatively well. Proponents of the city manager, they argued, were simply citizens who “don’t appreciate what we have.”\textsuperscript{310} Speakers argued that the city manager proposal was slanderous to Portland and its proponents did not believe in self-governance. To middle and working-class audiences, local Democratic Party chairman Herbert J. Welch\textsuperscript{311} argued that, because of the decrease in the number of seats and the increased cost of running a citywide campaign rather than in a much smaller ward, only propertied men would have a chance of serving in elected office. He continued that Plan 3 represented a “brazen attempt to deprive the people of representation and to place the control of the City’s affairs in the hands of a few.”\textsuperscript{312}

By election day, earlier predictions of limited turnout proved exceedingly incorrect. By

\textsuperscript{309} An example of the dominance of the political class on this committee is exemplified in Ward 1, which included much of the diverse East End. Despite this diversity, the opposition committee had four members, all of whom were current or former elected officials save one, who was a prominent shipbuilder. Donald C. Kimball was an incumbent Common Councilor, Osmon C. Monroe had done so previously. Percy R. Horton was a former Justice of the Peace and Frank A. Small was the longtime owner of a local shipbuilding company. Immigrant workers were not represented. In some wards, the established politicians happened to also be ethnic community leaders. For example, Jewish lawyer Isreal Bernstein was a member of the Common Council and served on the Ward 3 committee. Despite not having a representative on the original committee, Portland’s Irish eventually played an important role in the campaign in the largely Irish Ward 4. However, in most cases the committees were composed of established civic leaders with little influence from ethnic communities or the working class. This lack of outreach into the working class by proponents of Plans 1 and 2 likely played a role in the passage of Plan 3.

\textsuperscript{310} “PENNELL TELLS OF FAILURES UNDER CITY MANAGER PLAN,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, A1, August 30, 1923.

\textsuperscript{311} Indicative of the strange bedfellows created by the charter issue, the staunchly Republican \textit{Portland Evening Express} described the head of the local Democratic Party simply as “a prominent young attorney”.

\textsuperscript{312} “MANAGER PLAN WOULD STOP CANDIDATES WITH NO WEALTH, WELCH SAYS,” \textit{Portland Evening Express}, A9, August 31, 1923.
September 10, the opposition newspaper was well-aware of the turnout, writing “BIG VOTE BEING CAST CHARTER ELECTION HERE.”

Although the Klan attacked Catholics, Jews, African-Americans, workers, radicals, and other subaltern groups, opposition to its actions tended to be isolated and sporadic. In Chicago, various groups opposed to the Klan founded the American Unity League (AUL). The AUL, which published the newspaper Tolerance, sought to publicize the names of Klansmen and disrupt the organization at the grassroots level. The AUL’s influence made it to Portland as well, though with less success than in Chicago. As early as October 1922, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) organizer Robert Bagnall urged Portland’s recently formed branch to organize “a steady [movement] rather than a spasmodic thing.” Bagnall wrote, “We would advise that you arrange conferences with the leading Jews and Roman Catholics, also Labor leaders, as the Klan is against all of these, as well as against the Negro, and that you get them to enter actively into the fight.” However, no evidence exists that Bagnall’s advice was followed. The Maine State Federation of Labor and the Portland Central Labor Union took no position on the charter change.

314 Barrett, p. 273.
315 Copies of Tolerance were found in Bishop Walsh’s archive at the Catholic Diocese office in Portland.
317 It is unclear why organized labor did not take a position. It is possible that the PCLU and MSFL may have been preoccupied with an ultimately unsuccessful October 1923 referendum which would have limited the number of hours worked by children and women. Thomas Pegram has written about how the Ku Klux Klan was friendly to white, native-born workers in other locales. See Pegram, Thomas R. “The Ku Klux Klan, Labor, and the White Working Class during the 1920s.” The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, vol. 17, no. 2, 2018, pp. 373-396.
Established just three weeks before the vote, it seems as though a coalition of ethnic and religious voters sought to unify the Catholic, Jewish, and African-American communities and combined with the political parties to oppose the Klan and the Committee of 100. Though the opposition campaign was largely led by established politicians, it did include a variety of speakers from different subaltern communities. Among the featured speakers at rallies was Jewish lawyer and politician Israel Bernstein. Bernstein argued that Plan 3 would eliminate the ability of ethnic and religious minorities from getting elected to city government.

Despite the efforts to solidify their base, ethnic communities were slow to organize and did not put forth an effective opposition campaign. Whether it was because they had defeated the Committee of 100 two years previously and were thus overconfident or they did not realize the real threat posed by the new Yankee cross-class alliance, the Klan and business community out-organized the city’s Jewish, Irish, and African-American communities as well as its established political organizations. The group misread the historical moment by appealing to voters’ democratic sensibilities in a period of mainstream acceptance of reactionary politics.318

What motivated voters on both sides of the campaign to vote was that it seemed not to be just over the size of the city legislature or whether an elected mayor or appointed City Manager were best, but what role, if any, workers, immigrants, and generally subaltern people should have in governance. The elections, in short, were viewed as disputes over the future of the country, not mundane municipal structure as had been the case in previous attempts at reform. Years of

government-sponsored xenophobia during the First World War and the subsequent crackdown on radicals and labor unions during the 1919-20 Red Scare created a fundamentally conservative political climate in which xenophobic Yankees, including the business class, outnumbered Portland’s ethnic voters, radicals and supporters of political government. In this climate, two different arguments were put forth by supporters of the change. While Guy Gannett and the Portland Press Herald provided daily reminders of the perceived wastefulness of mayor-council governance, the Klan appealed to the religious and ethnic intolerance of elements in the electorate. Indicative of the importance of appeals to religious bigotry (and not issues directly linked to municipal reform), the Committee of 100’s official campaign brochure listed, “the religious affiliation of the school board candidates...as if to emphasize that none were Catholics...”  

Because of this, the result of the September and December 1923 elections should not really have been in doubt. While some voters surely believed that Plan 3 simply proposed long overdue progressive reforms, most voters did not vote purely for or against a Commission-City Manager form of governance but whether immigrants, Catholics, and workers should have political influence. The Klan, for its part, recognized this. Klan leader Farnsworth viciously attacked Catholics, the foreign-born and others he suspected of being against “Americanism.” Ignoring the assassination of Abraham Lincoln by John Wilkes Booth, he erroneously claimed that “I can show you the tombstones of the murderers of our Presidents and they’re not in Protestant cemeteries.”  

After learning of the Klan’s persistent threats and innuendo, Waterville’s Irish declined to march on St. Patrick’s Day. Regarding the elections itself, Farnsworth was direct in his bigoted attitude toward the city’s Irish Catholics and other

319 Boone, p. 51.

320 Breton, p. 174.

321 Breton, p. 176.
immigrants. Speaking to 3,000 at a rally days prior to the vote for a new City Council, Farnsworth raised the issue of Irish representation in government, “Do you think that our forefathers who founded this country would vote for an O’Rourke, an O’Reilly or an O’Sullivan for the school board?...Isn’t it going to be wonderful after Monday to have an American school board, teachers you can trust, good people in other positions? It is going to be wonderful to have a clean administration here. But I don’t want you Irish policeman to worry, because we are going to use you alright…Gather together all the anti-Klan votes you can-Catholic, Negro, Jew, and Italian votes - all the gang, and I wouldn’t give you ten cents for the whole bunch.”

This change in rhetoric engaged thousands who had not previously been involved in municipal politics. This is demonstrated by the massive surge in turnout in the 1923 elections in comparison to previous votes on municipal charter reform. In 1921, Plan 1, which maintained the existing charter, won by a mere 101 votes. Two years later, it lost by 2,997. The different result was the result of massive turnout, particularly in the suburban wards: 6,105 more voters turned out in 1923 than had in the previous election. Of those new voters, over 71% voted for the Commission-City Manager (Plan 3). Suburban voters from wards 7, 8, 9, most of whom resided in the new neighborhoods built since the annexation of Deering 24 years earlier, were enthusiastic in their support for Plan 3. The Boston Herald, which covered the Klan in Maine for months prior to and during the election, concluded correctly that “this election marks the first entrance of the Ku Klux Klan into local politics, and it is conceded that without the Klan’s support the change of government would not have taken place.” The Portland Evening

322 Boone. pp. 48-49.
324 Richard, p. 27.
Express, which had opposed the Council-Manager system, quickly conceded that the voters had spoken and moved on to other matters.

When Plan 3 prevailed on September 10, it marked the end of one election and the beginning of another. Its passage triggered another campaign scheduled for December 3 to fill the newly-established City Council and School Board. The new system was a radical change from the single year, ward and party-based system that had been in place since 1832. Insulated from public oversight, the new Councilors and School Board members would have a huge influence for the foreseeable future. City Councilors, for example, had the power to hire the new City Manager. Operating as a de facto political party, the ascendant Committee of 100 nominated a slate of candidates as did their opponents. The Klan did not nominate its own candidates. Instead, it continued as the junior partner in the conservative coalition and endorsed the Committee’s candidates for Council and School Board except for one Jewish candidate, who was defeated.

In the aftermath of the City Manager movement’s win, the Klan continued to challenge the ability of immigrants and members of ethnic communities to utilize public space. For decades, Portland’s Catholic community marched through the city on Columbus Day and proudly linked its own faith with that of Christopher Columbus. However, in 1923, the Klan challenged this public display of religious pride. Rather than Columbus, the Klan sought to honor the northern European Vikings and the English Pilgrims. The outgoing mayor denied the Klan’s

325 The new system initiated several major changes. Eliminated were partisan nominations and designations on the ballot. Five councilors replaced the bicameral system. Members of the City Council served five-year terms in office whereas under the previous system, the Common Council and Aldermen were elected annually. The School Board elected seven to three-year terms in office. In all cases, candidates were elected in citywide votes.

326 In the School Board elections, the sole Jewish candidate was defeated. Boone writes, “I cannot find any other reason than anti-Semitic, anti-"foreign" prejudice for the defeat of Mrs. Caplan.” While some Committee of 100-endorsed candidates did not welcome the support of the Klan (Boone, p. 51), it was vital to the sweeping of the new City Council and School Board for the Klan-Committee candidates.
permit request for its own march through downtown on the grounds that such a parade would “inevitably result in disorder and riot.” Denied the right to upstage the Catholics in the heart of the city, the Klan held an initiation ceremony in the off- peninsula Woodfords neighborhood for approximately 1,000 men and 500 women; some 6,000 residents observed the event. Afterward, the Klan lit a fifty-foot electric cross.327 As evident by the rapidly increasing membership and ability to capture the attention of thousands, the organization’s political power only increased in the fall of 1923, which was an ominous sign ahead of the December election.

When Plan 1 was rejected in September, Bishop Walsh was not a registered voter. However, in the days that immediately followed, he registered to vote for the first time and instructed his priests that “registration of all our men and women now becomes a serious duty in view of open and invisible opposition.”328 Nativists from Neal Dow to the Klan claimed that Catholics flooded the polls each election day to do the bidding of the Pope. While this was obviously untrue, the outright assault on Catholic political influence brought Bishop Walsh and the Church directly into popular politics. Despite these efforts, the Committee of 100-Klan alliance prevailed at the polls on December 3. About 21,000 voters, which accounted for over 80% of those registered to vote in Portland, turned out to the polls. The Maine Klansman Weekly boasted that “Portland citizens are, for the first time in decades, represented by a Protestant city government.”329

Narrowly defeated in 1921, the growth of the Ku Klux Klan provided the Portland Chamber of Commerce the necessary appeal to emotion that it needed in order to pass the long

327 Richard, pp. 24-25.
328 Breton, pp. 190-191.
sought-after charter reform. Similarly, the drive for a Council-Manager government provided a useful vehicle for the Ku Klux Klan as it expanded into statewide politics. The drive for the centralization of city governance, whether in Galveston, Dayton, Auburn, Portland or elsewhere, was often based on class and racial conflict. Like the centralization of the workplace into interlocking corporate structures, the era’s businessmen sought (and often won) control of municipal affairs. The Klan, which was a product of both established patterns of nativism and new forms of radicalism and suppression, willingly played a subordinate role to that of the Committee of 100 in the September and December 1923 elections. Being itself a cross-class alliance of xenophobic Yankees, the Klan easily merged its politics with the wealthier group of xenophobic Yankees in the Chamber of Commerce. However, in the aftermath of these elections, Portland’s voting rates declined dramatically, and elected officials and the new City Manager increased their own power. Though the Klan promised its base that the new system would enhance democracy, it further stratified class relations to the detriment of the larger working class, regardless of creed, race, or religion.
CHAPTER VI:

Portland, the Klan, and the Council-Manager system

Portland will be one city that will resist attempts of outsiders to come in here and stir up trouble and discontent among its citizens. We will use every power we have to protect the property of our merchants and manufacturers.

-Portland City Manager James Barlow, April 1937

The joint Klan-Committee of 100 victory in the 1923 elections did not end the involvement of either group in Maine politics. Though Farnsworth resigned in April 1924 after an internal revolt against his leadership, the Klan continued as a political force. With the city of Portland made secure for elite Yankees, both the Klan and Chamber of Commerce turned toward the 1924 statewide general election. In the gubernatorial election, Portland State Senator Ralph Owen Brewster campaigned to replace Percival Baxter as governor. Despite being backed with the full energy of the now statewide Klan, Brewster did not admit membership in the organization. His opponent, fellow Yankee elite William Pattangall was a Democrat and a vocal opponent of the Klan. In the end, the ambitious and business-friendly State Senator with a relationship with Klan organizers won the seat convincingly. The Klan, for the moment, appeared as a formidable force capable of supporting factions in the ruling class who most

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330 Scontras, Organized Labor in Maine, p. 233n.

331 Richard, p. 31.

332 The Ralph Owen Brewster archive at Bowdoin College contains several color pamphlets, correspondence, and other propaganda indicating Brewster’s intimate relationship with the Klan. Among the items in this collection was a business card of national Klan organizer Brown Harwood sending Brewster New Year’s greetings in 1925, immediately prior to his inauguration as Governor. While it is indisputable that Brewster had a close relationship with the organization, no evidence has been found categorically proving his membership.
strongly opposed the rights of ethnic communities and workers. However, the national organization, which soon faltered because of corruption, violence, and the general cooling of the threat of radicalism and ethnic workers, no longer captured the attention of the Protestant middle class. Following Brewster’s defeat in the U.S. Senate primary of 1928, the Klan dissolved and was unable to reclaim its place on the far-right of Maine politics.

**VOTER TURNOUT**

While the Ku Klux Klan returned to the fringes before the decade was over, the changes it and the Committee of 100 secured lasted for much longer. In the wake of charter reforms, local elections became almost insignificant affairs in which few people participated. The outcome, regardless of who won, seemed pre-determined. In the final years of the Council-Mayor system (1913-1923), most municipal elections saw more than half of registered voters turn out to vote. In 1915, when the Council’s composition swung leftward, over 82% of those registered cast a ballot. Following the turnout of 66.3% of voters for the December 1923 election, turnout plummeted. In the election a year later, turnout fell to 34.1%. During the period of 1924-1939, the average turnout for municipal elections was only 33%. Defenders of the Council-Manager system argued that the dramatic decline in voter participation was "not as serious as it seems" and "one of the evils in democracy which often appear when efficient government is maintained. Political and personal appeals in partisan government stir up the emotional voter but not the intelligent voters, and perhaps the loss in numbers in Portland elections may be allocated to the categories of partisan, emotional, and less intelligent voters.”333 However, it was not “efficient government” that led to the decline of participatory democracy in the city but the futility of fighting the entrenched business class. By forcing all candidates to win a costly citywide

333 Dow, pp. 30-32.
election, the city’s immigrant minority would have no legitimate opportunity to hold public office. With political parties eliminated from municipal governance, voters had less of an inclination to come out to support their party than during statewide or federal campaigns. The rise of aggressive conservativism led to the end of the Socialist Party, which had provided left wing voters an opportunity to voice their interests as well. With the end of the mayor’s office and the shifting of major municipal functions to the unelected City Manager, the position of elected councilor was changed from that of policy maker to that of policy manager. Overall, decreased participation in local politics allowed those with a direct vested interest in securing government support to win election almost at will.

Free from annual elections and partisan government, the City Council all but eliminated the ability of the public to influence its decisions. Historian Edward F. Dow, considered the “father of the Council-Manager system in Maine,” conceded that "...almost everything of any importance in city administration is discussed fully in executive session.” The new Council, which amply used “long executive sessions, preceded by short and often perfunctory regular public meetings,” did all it could to discourage popular interest in and attendance at the regularly scheduled meetings. Unconstrained by the leftist and liberal proposals of ethnic communities and radical workers, Portland’s Council-Manager discouraged the participation of residents in several ways.

CONSERVATISM

In 1924, the City Council made a number of important and lasting decisions. It hired the first City Manager, a bureaucrat from Cincinnati named Harry A. Brinkerhoff who lasted only

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334 Dow, pp. 50-51.
four years in the position. In 1928 the Council hired James Barlow, who proved more durable in the position. From 1924-1948, city government was overseen by just two men, neither of whom had existing ties to the city. The two managers and a City Council which featured less than two dozen officeholders maintained a system of urban conservatism which did not shift even during the peak years of New Deal liberalism and labor unrest.

As one might expect from a government dominated by fiscally conservative businessmen, the post-1923 government was intent on limiting the city’s indebtedness. From 1923 to 1938, Portland decreased its debt load, despite the existence of mass unemployment during the toughest years of the Great Depression. By contrast, the State of Maine more than doubled its amount of indebtedness during the same period.\textsuperscript{335} When challenged for control of the workplace by class-conscious workers, the City Council responded with threats of force. In April 1937, following the successful sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan, Portland City Manager James Barlow declared “Portland will be one city that will resist attempts of outsiders to come in here and stir up trouble and discontent among its citizens. We will use every power we have to protect the property of our merchants and manufacturers.” To that end, the City Council ordered the police to use tear gas and firearms if sit-down strikes occurred.\textsuperscript{336} Workers, perhaps afraid of being tear gassed or killed by the police, did not stage sit-down strikes in the city.

Long a goal of elites, Portland fully committed to a future based on tourism in the years following the charter change. This occurred for a number of reasons: the Grand Trunk Railway, which had transported Canadian grain to Portland’s waterfront since the 1850s, diverted traffic to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia during a period of rising nationalism in Canada following

\textsuperscript{335} Dow, p. 59.

\textsuperscript{336} Scontras, \textit{Organized Labor in Maine}, p. 233n.
World War I. While the newly-built Maine State Pier, increases in petroleum imports, and Maine’s booming paper industry helped maintain activity on the waterfront, the loss of Portland’s favored relationship with Canada led to a dramatic reduction of tonnage shipped to and from the city. In 1919, over 300 manufacturers employed 6,538 workers. Wages equaled over 6 million dollars in that year. Ten years later, only 213 such employers employed approximately 4,500. By 1937, the number of manufacturers fell to 151 and only 4,000 worked in industrial production. Thus, over the span of 18 years from 1919-1937, Portland’s industrial workforce fell by over 38%. Finally, Portland’s businessman’s government simply invested more in the tourist sector than any other. Public and private buildings, such as the Exposition Building and the Merrill Auditorium attracted the new class of automobile tourists to the city. Among hotels, none matched the 12-story Eastland Hotel in Congress Square when it opened in 1926. The tallest hotel in New England at the time of its completion, it provided a luxury experience for wealthy visitors. The attractive, tourist-oriented, and nativist city envisioned by James Phinney Baxter decades earlier was fulfilled in part by the transition to a more centralized, less democratic form of municipal governance. With wealth concentrated into fewer hands following the shift from organized manual labor to the new tourist economy, profits were not shared with those workers who succumbed to nativist slogans. As such, a New Portland was built on exploiting workers of all nationalities, including those who sided with the Chamber of Commerce.

337 Bauman, p. 151.
339 Dow, p. 16.
340 Bauman, p. 158.
CONCLUSION

Writing in the wake of the Fenian uprising for Irish independence,\textsuperscript{341} Karl Marx regularly corresponded with his First International comrades in the United States. In one such letter, Marx explained that all around him he saw “a working class divided into two hostile camps,” those being Irish and English. He continued that, “this antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short, by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organisation.” This conflict, which “continues across the ocean,” “is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power.” Therefore, Marx argued that “the greatest achievement you could bring about now” would be “a coalition of the German workers with the Irish workers (and of course also with the English and American workers who are prepared to accede to it)” that would unite in favor of Irish independence and more generally for revolution.\textsuperscript{342} In essence, Marx argued in 1870 that if German, Irish, English, and Yankee workers would put aside their national differences, they could overthrow the capitalist mode of production and build a new society based on democratic principles. Of course, workers in North America and elsewhere have not done so, in large part because they long clung to national and ethnic prejudices. What Marx identified as the “secret” of labor’s impotence we now know as religious and ethnic bigotry. The ability of the ruling class to appeal to existing prejudices among native-born and patriotic workers has long been one of the most effective means of preventing revolutionary sentiments and action. Portland, Maine, with its longstanding Irish and Yankee

\textsuperscript{341} One such battle involved the invasion of New Brunswick’s Campobello Island, which is a short distance off the northeast coast of Maine in Passamaquoddy Bay.

working class communities, provides an excellent case study through which we can see this struggle play out.

A series of cross-class alliances between the largely Yankee business class and a largely Yankee working class inhibited a serious working-class threat to capitalist property relations in Portland, Maine. Whenever the seedlings of working-class unity arose, reactionary workers were solicited by the primarily Yankee business class. To these workers, the ruling class made vague promises of equality. Shared heritage, not material interests, also featured prominently in these appeals. However, in the end, even the middle strata reactionary workers lost out to their ruling class partners. Throughout Portland and United States history, the ruling class has maintained hegemony through a variety of all-too-familiar appeals to patriotism, Anglo-Saxon heritage and “100 percent Americanism.”
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Charles A. Scontras.


APPENDIX ITEM A

Below are the results for each Portland city election in which votes acted upon proposals to either enhance the power of the mayor (1897 & 1905) or install a City Manager (1921 & 1923).

In each case, a Yes vote is in favor of the reform and a No vote is opposed.

**May 18, 1897**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Island 1</th>
<th>Island 2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>240</td>
<td><strong>1026 (40%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>174</td>
<td><strong>1540 (60%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>414</td>
<td><strong>2566</strong></td>
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**April 25, 1905**

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<tr>
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<th>Island 1</th>
<th>Island 2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>44</td>
<td><strong>697 (46%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>33</td>
<td><strong>807 (54%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>77</td>
<td><strong>1504</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
September 13, 1921

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
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<th>Plan 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Island Ward 1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island Ward 2</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 1</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>1235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 2</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 3</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 4</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 5</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>1002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 6</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>1397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 7-1</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>1315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 7-2</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 8-1</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1191</td>
<td>1519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 8-2</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 9-1</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>1115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 9-2</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5685</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>5584</td>
<td>11505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: 5685 (49%)  236 (2%)  5584 (49%)
### September 10, 1923

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
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<th>Plan 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Island Ward 1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island Ward 2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 1</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>1901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 2</td>
<td>1260</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>1431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 3</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 4</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 5</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>1412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 6</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>959</td>
<td>2053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 7-1</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>1687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 7-2</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>1101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 8-1</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>1814</td>
<td>2215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 8-2</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 9-1</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1478</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward 9-2</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6931 (39%)</td>
<td>760 (4%)</td>
<td>9928 (57%)</td>
<td>17619</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The percentages are calculated based on the total column.
**APPENDIX ITEM B**

Below is a list of the names, primary occupations, business names, business and personal addresses, the amount of taxable property more than $100 and a note on the individuals’ connection to the Ku Klux Klan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Primary Occupation</th>
<th>Business Name</th>
<th>Business Address</th>
<th>Home Address</th>
<th>1923 Tax Bill</th>
<th>Connection to the Ku Klux Klan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moses Abbott</td>
<td>Barber</td>
<td>Moses Abbott Barbershop</td>
<td>229 Spring St.</td>
<td>7 Taylor St.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman; &quot;Come in and get trimmed by a white man&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles E. Alley</td>
<td>Watchmaker</td>
<td>Charles E. Alley Watchmaker</td>
<td>647 Forest Ave.</td>
<td>81 Walton St.</td>
<td>$116.76</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John M. Arters</td>
<td>Reverend</td>
<td>Methodist Episcopal Church</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>South Portland</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Frequently spoke at public gatherings on behalf of the Ku Klux Klan, including the Maine Legislature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everett A. Bean</td>
<td>Restaurant owner</td>
<td>Bean's Quality Lunch</td>
<td>75 Oak St</td>
<td>345 Cumberland Ave.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. E. Berry</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Direct Selling Co., Inc.</td>
<td>270-278 Middle St. room 409</td>
<td>325 Spring St.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman; &quot;Brokers: Tea, Coffee and Molasses&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert S. Conant</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Conant's Dry Cleaning</td>
<td>20 Forest Avenue</td>
<td>50 Western Promenade</td>
<td>$161.00</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James H. Davis</td>
<td>Sales manager</td>
<td>Brewster, Gordon, and Co.</td>
<td>30 Codman St</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman &quot;Rochester, NY Tea, Coffee &amp; Cocoa&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin F. Dean</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Dean Bros.</td>
<td>8 Brown St.</td>
<td>Westbrook</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman &quot;Klansmen: We are at your service with a reliable stock of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Address 1</td>
<td>Address 2</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Eugene Farnsworth</td>
<td>Klan Leader</td>
<td>28 Preble St.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>579 Congress St.</td>
<td>Shoes for your whole family, and earnestly solicit your patronage&quot; &quot;Est. May 5, 1883&quot;. Lead Organizer of Maine Ku Klux Klan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percy Farnum</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Farnum's for men's: Clothing, Furnishings and Hats</td>
<td>12 Brown St.</td>
<td>430 Forest Ave.</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman; &quot;It pays to shop around the corner&quot;.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Wilder Haggett</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>43 Saunders St.</td>
<td>$255.00</td>
<td>Donor to Klan, helped KKK purchase Forest Avenue property.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmore W. Kilbourne</td>
<td>Printer and Engraver</td>
<td>The Eagle Press</td>
<td>205 Middle St.</td>
<td>Falmouth Foreside</td>
<td>Multi-time advertiser in the Maine Klansman.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur C. Knudsen</td>
<td>Shoe Repairer</td>
<td>Fine Shoe Repairing</td>
<td>33 Pembroke St.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur C. Leadbetter</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>332 Woodford St.</td>
<td>$914.27</td>
<td>Married to Grace H; Donor to Klan, helped KKK purchase Forest Avenue property.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almon B. Leavitt</td>
<td>Public Accountant and Auditor</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>415 Congress St. Room 653</td>
<td>279 Walton St.</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman &quot;Audit - Systems; Cost Systems; Investigations; Income Tax Returns&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred A. Libby</td>
<td>Electrician</td>
<td>Velvet Edge Company</td>
<td>173 Franklin St. #7</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman; listed as working for Grand Trunk Railway in City Directory.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horace E. Lombard</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>The Windsor</td>
<td>288 State St. #6</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George H. Lowell</td>
<td>Electrical Contractors</td>
<td>G. H. Lowell &amp;</td>
<td>215 High St, South</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in Maine Klansman; &quot;Electrical Engineers &amp; Contractors / So. Portland City</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Co.</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>Electrician/Role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. A. Mansell</td>
<td>Junk Dealer</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in <em>Maine Klansman</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judson P. Marvin</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>Church of the Messiah</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>21 Morning St.</td>
<td>Sent to Maine from Rochester, Vermont on Sept 1, 1921 to lead Church of the Messiah in Portland. Also served on campaign committee for Ralph Owen Brewster.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles D. Moses</td>
<td>Restaurant owner</td>
<td>Gift Shop of Charles D. Moses</td>
<td>647 Forest Ave.</td>
<td>22 Waverly St.</td>
<td>Advertised in <em>Maine Klansman</em>; Also owned Checkerboard Tearoom and Novelty Shop (547A Congress St)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeForest Perkins</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>120 Exchange St rm 605</td>
<td>Edgeworth Ave.</td>
<td>$196.05; Superintendent, Portland Public Schools; Secretary, Portland Chamber of Commerce; Maine Klan leader 1925-1928.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Phinney</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Professional Hair Dresser</td>
<td>118 Spring St.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in <em>Maine Klansman</em>; 547A Congress St&quot;. Formerly of Preble House, 12 years&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. V. Pierce</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Wood for sale: Fire Wood of Every Description</td>
<td>208 Park Ave.</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in <em>Maine Klansman</em>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester V. Pierce</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Woodfords Fuel Co.</td>
<td>1147 Congress St.</td>
<td>249 Forest Ave.</td>
<td>Advertised in <em>Maine Klansman</em>; Listed as D. W. DeLinden in add. City directory says Chester V. Pierce is owner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James H. Pinkham</td>
<td>Shoes</td>
<td>Pinkham's Shoe Store</td>
<td>688 Forest Ave.</td>
<td>57 Revere St</td>
<td>$326.14; Advertised in the <em>Maine Klansman</em>. Mentioned in June 14, 1928 PPH as connected to Klan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. E. Robertson</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Gasoline, Oil and Accessories on the square</td>
<td>404 Main St, Cumberland Mills, ME</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Advertised in <em>Maine Klansman</em>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Address Description</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moses P. Stiles</td>
<td>Insurance Agent</td>
<td>Not Available Not Available 87 Glenwood Ave.</td>
<td>$907.59</td>
<td>Donor to Klan, helped KKK purchase Forest Avenue property; Married to Mertie A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter E. Witham</td>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>Not Available Not Available Not Available</td>
<td>$424.03</td>
<td>Local Klan named after Witham. Donor to Klan, helped KKK purchase Forest Avenue property. Property in Gertrude Witham's name.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Thomas (Tom) Richard MacMillan was born and raised by working class parents in Portland, Maine. He graduated from Portland High School in 2005 and Clark University in 2009. At Clark, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Development and Social Change. After returning to Portland, he was involved in community and political, which included leadership roles in campaigns to protect public land from privatization, the legalization of marijuana, and the establishment a $15 minimum wage; he also twice ran for office, including for mayor of Portland in 2015. He was a founding board member of the Friends of Congress Square Park, three-time chair of the Portland Green Independent Committee, and co-founder of the Portland Tenants Union. He is a member of the Labor and Working Class History Association (LAWCHA) and the Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (SHGAPE). He is a candidate for the Master of Arts degree in History from the University of Maine in December 2018.