

'How can a Poor Man Live?' Resistance to Capitalist Development in Southern Illinois, 1870-1890

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For better than a decade American historians have debated whether or not U.S. farmers were 'capitalist' or 'non-capitalist' during the nineteenth century. This debate has tended to use market integration as the key index for determining where they should be conceptually located, although Henretta and Merrill, who fired the opening salvos in the debate, focused more on how farmers understood what they were doing, and Genovese has long insisted that the direct relations of production are the basis for defining specific modes of production.¹ This argument is important not only insofar as it sharpens our knowledge of early American social formations, but also as it aids in interpreting political disputes that occurred on local and national levels.

In this paper I argue that non-capitalist social relations predominated in extreme southern Illinois during much of the nineteenth century and that, unlike on the north Atlantic seaboard, capitalist development was largely imported from outside. Important local disputes that occurred repeatedly between 1870 and 1890, dealing with definitions of property ownership and degree of taxation, become understandable if seen as an arena of struggle over capitalist forms of development. To interpret these persistent issues, submitted at virtually every county (and often town and precinct) election, I will establish the general context within which they occurred and then examine closely the political debates and votes on the referenda. But first it is important to define the concept 'pre-' or 'non-capitalist', in order to clarify the nature of the transformation being analyzed here.

Precapitalist social formations

Much of the debate concerning whether or not early American rural society was capitalist or not revolves around the degree to which farmers engaged in market (that is commodity) exchange. It is clear that commodity production, in and of itself, is not the defining characteristic of capitalism: commodity production and some form of market exchange have been part of virtually every Old World empire, yet market exchanges did not become the central focus of these economies; rather, they were subordinated to other institutions. Nonetheless, the production of commodities, the social relations through which this

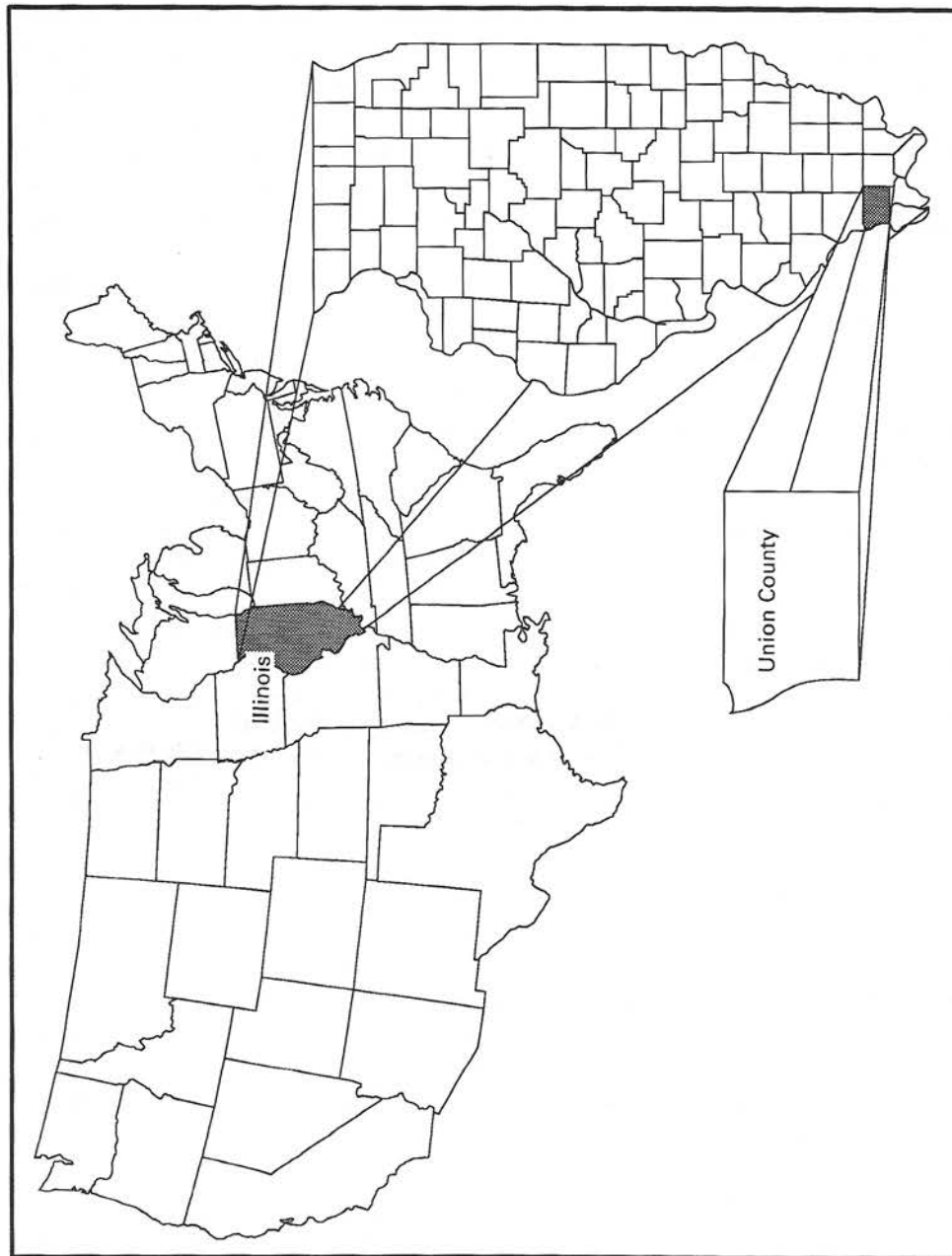


Figure 1. Union County, Illinois

Opposition to corporate capitalism was partially expressed through support for the Democratic Party which was hostile to Eastern manufacturing and banking interests. The issues that emerged nationally in the middle and late nineteenth century centered around tariffs, monetary policy, and state control or regulation of corporations ('monopolies'), especially railroads.⁵ Illinois was the first state to regulate railroads and warehouses

Table 1. *Population of Union County, Illinois*

Year	Total Population	Town Population	% total
1820	2,338		
1830	3,235		
1840	5,520		
1850	7,815	584	7.7
1860	11,181	832	7.4
1870	16,518	2,377	14.4
1880	18,072	3,938	21.8
1890	21,549	5,411	25.0
1900	22,610	6,254	27.7
Total acres in county: 271,360			

Source: Population: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Illinois* 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890.

and quasi-subsistence form of production developed, probably based on the flexible system of agriculture and livestock herding described by cultural geographer Newton.¹¹ Only crop lands were fenced, with cattle and swine allowed to roam on both private and government lands. Cash was extremely scarce and was needed for little except initial purchase of land. Fragmentary evidence suggests that squatting on unclaimed government land was common, and that land patents – titles to government land – were often purchased only when squatters wanted to sell their land with its ‘developments’.¹² Hunting and trapping provided a major source of income during the period of early settlement and long remained a source of supplementary income. As the economy developed and population increased salt pork, lard, live pigs and cattle, corn, beeswax, brandy and whisky, dried fruit, and other agricultural products were major trade goods. In many cases, these commodities were bartered with local merchants for manufactured goods and condiments. Fragmentary accounts suggest that local merchants served as intermediaries for some intra-community exchanges, as well as articulating with distant markets, although the small number of merchants suggests that a considerable amount of intra-community distribution occurred outside formal market channels.¹³

The settlers, virtually all farmers, although relatively self-provisioning, were not isolated, self-reliant households. Many had come in extended family groups from North Carolina and settled in kin-based neighborhoods. They replicated the churches they had left behind, such as St. John’s, the first Lutheran church in the Illinois territory. The county itself is said to be named after a union meeting of a Dunkard (German Baptist) minister who migrated to Union County with his congregation and a Baptist minister. Baptists, organized in the Clear Creek Baptist Association in 1831 (the original church

production is effected, and what is considered to be a commodity, are important factors in the development of a capitalist social economy. The notion of production of use-values rather than exchange values was central to Marx's conceptualization of 'pre-capitalist economic formations'. In non-capitalist formations, Marx theorized, production for use predominates over production for exchange, with value being attributed largely on the basis of qualitative, rather than quantitative, measures. While cash exchange frequently exists, it functions to turn one item (e.g. brandy) into another item (e.g. lumber). This exchange can be notated as the circuit C-M-C where C = commodity and M = money. In contrast, in a capitalist economy money becomes not only a universal medium of exchange but a commodity in its own right. The increase of money becomes the aim of exchange, and is notated as the cycle M-C-M', where M' = M + an increment. That is, the owner of money (capital) buys brandy for, say, \$5 and sells it to another person for \$5.50. In American history, the contrast can be indicated by the difference between obtaining a 'competency' and 'expansion' as goals of family life.²

Rural society in Union County is more accurately characterized as 'pre-capitalist' rather than 'non-capitalist' (in the sense that those peoples conquered by Europeans were non-capitalist) prior to the Civil War. Private property in land and an active land market were institutionalized from early settlement; southern Illinois was surveyed by 1816.³ Some early settlers had entrepreneurial propensities, as seen in the establishment of mills and other small manufactories and in the adoption of new technologies by some farmers. A small minority of settlers engaged in land speculation. Nonetheless, these pre-capitalist forms remained just that, lacking the internal dynamism to transform social relations into fully capitalist forms. For much of the period cash was in very short supply, markets were weakly developed, and manufacturing was extremely small scale. Manufactories generally operated in conjunction with working farms and largely served local needs; e.g., flour, grist, wool carding, and saw mills, tanneries, blacksmithing, and distilleries. Wage labor was marginal to the predominant relations of production. Despite the economy's failure to create substantial surpluses a functioning, well-supplied and governed rural society, capable of incorporating a rapidly growing population, was created in the half century between 1803 – the date of earliest permanent American settlement – and the construction of the Illinois Central Railroad in the 1850s. The region was sufficiently distinct that by the 1840s it was called 'Egypt' – a term Yankees used pejoratively, as in 'darkest Egypt', but which southern Illinois boosters used to promote its putative fertility and richness.⁴

Historical Context

The people of extreme southern Illinois were not alone in resisting the rising, Eastern-based corporate forms of industrial capitalism. It was persistently opposed by a large majority of citizens – particularly farmers – in the decades following the Civil War. Lines in this struggle are not clearly drawn: capitalistically-oriented Western farmers and mechanics mobilized as proponents of an older or alternate form of capitalist development and as residents of a geographically distinct and disadvantaged region. At the same time smaller farmers, lacking an alternative economic program, resisted adopting production practices and social relations that would permit rapid development of capitalist relations.

Table 3. *Acres in Farms.*

Year	Total acres in farm	% Total acreage	Improved	% Farm land	Un- improved	% Farm land
1850	95,993	35.4	30,488	31.2	65,505	68.2
1860	140,160	51.7	53,880	38.4	86,280	61.6
1870	164,738	60.7	75,832	46.0	88,906	54.0
1880	167,727	61.8	95,468	56.9	72,259	43.1
1890	178,571	65.8	112,446	63.0	66,125	37.0
Total acres in county: 271,360 ^a						

Notes:

^a Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Soil Survey of Union County*; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Illinois* 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890.

blacksmiths, distilleries, and manufactories were scattered around the countryside and were generally operated by farmers.¹⁷

County farms were generally small-scale, in keeping with the Upland South settlement pattern. The 1860 Census was the first to summarize the enumeration of farms according to farm size. By 1860 approximately 52 per cent of the county's land area was in farms, that is, privately owned, although only about 20 per cent was improved.¹⁸ The census enumerated 1,258 farms.¹⁹ Of these about 21 per cent were under 20 acres and another 47 per cent were between 20 and 49 acres (see table 2). Two thirds of farms, therefore, were small enough to be operated by a family without hired labor even if the entire farm were improved. Fewer than 7 per cent of farms were over 100 acres and there were no farms over 500 acres. Manufacturing, although developing, showed low levels of capitalization and a preponderance of very small scale enterprises. Only two manufacturers employed 10 or more workmen: a pottery employed 10 workers; a shingle manufacturer hired 12. Lumber production was emerging as an important industry with 11 mills employing 44 hands (in 1840 only 3 saw mills were enumerated). The 9 flour and grist mills returned the greatest profits and represented the most capital investment but, like the 3 leather workers (probably tanneries) and 36 other small manufacturers of farm equipment, boots, bricks, clothing, cigars, liquor, and so forth, the mills each employed fewer than 5 hands.²⁰ Wage labor and commodity production, while present, do not appear as the major organizing foci of people's economic activities.

The construction of the Illinois Central Railroad in the mid-1850s began a revolution in transport and in the aim and nature of production. Between 1860 and 1870, if the census is accurate (see note 18) the number of farms grew dramatically but most of the farms were small, under 50 acres, and a large number – 12 per cent of the total – were under 10 acres. Between 1870 and 1880 the number of small farms fell dramatically to

in its 1871 Constitution, well before the first specifically agrarian organization, the Patrons of Husbandry, or Grange, after whom these regulatory laws were named, became a powerful force.⁶ The leading elements of the agrarian movements that swept the nation in the 1870s, both the Grange and other, more ephemeral, organizations advocated combination as business men as much as they envisioned a society based on the cooperation of independent farmers and mechanics. Union County leaders, writing in the pages of the county newspaper, the *Jonesboro Gazette*, generally shared this capitalistic view of economic development and 'progress'.⁷

Most farmers stood in a more ambivalent relationship to commodity production. One indication of this ambivalence was the persistent rejection of 'modern' forms of production by most farmers, despite vigorous promotion by agricultural educators and leading agriculturalists.⁸ Small and middling ('substantial') farmers, who progressively lost status and prosperity in the latter part of the nineteenth century, were only marginally represented in the agrarian programs of the Grange in the 1870s and the Farmer's Mutual Benefit Association (FMBA) in the 1880s and 1890s. Rather, key local issues revealed resistance to greater engagement with the developing national economy and emerging local capitalistic elites. Three such issues repeatedly agitated the people of Union County: fencing livestock, controlling dogs, and township organization, which is closely linked to willingness to pay taxes to support better roads. Of these, whether or not to require the fencing of livestock was the most protracted and, as written in items in the *Jonesboro Gazette*, most revealing of the conflicts raised by the emergence of a new, increasingly hegemonic order. Significant elements of the local agrarian leadership appear to have supported the unpopular side of the issues; those, that is, that represented the market-oriented, town-oriented, 'progressive' farmers against the largely self-provisioning smaller farmer.⁹

Union County

Union County, Illinois, is a relatively small region (424 square miles) in extreme southern Illinois. The Mississippi River, with its broad flood plain, forms its western boundary, separated from the interior uplands by a band of rugged hills and bluffs. The divide between the Ohio and Mississippi river watersheds runs roughly through the middle of the county, and on clear days both rivers are visible from some high hills. When settlers arrived from North Carolina and the intervening mid south states in the first three decades of the nineteenth century they found virgin forests, bountiful game, numerous springs, and relatively easy access to river transportation. The climate, like that of their native Virginia and North Carolina, is temperate, with generally mild winters, wet and hot, humid summers. Unlike other portions of the Old Northwest, Indian peoples used the area only for hunting and did not contest American settlement. Prior to statehood in 1818, the southern region of the Illinois Territory was surveyed into townships made up of 36 square miles or 'squares', a system established under the Ordinance of 1785 to facilitate transfer of federal lands to individuals and states. Jonesboro, the county seat, was founded in 1817.¹⁰

The social economy that was created by these Upland South immigrants can only be sketched at the present time. During the early years of settlement a mixed pioneering

largely commercial and administrative centers, but manufacturing of packing materials, farm equipment, and flouring mills became increasingly concentrated in the towns spaced along the railroads – Dongola, Anna and Cobden along the Illinois Central Railroad; Alto Pass and Mill Creek along the rail line to St. Louis, Missouri that was built in the 1870s. Railroads, indicators of linkages with regional and national markets, were increasingly important as outlying hamlets failed to grow despite efforts by progressively-oriented boosters.²⁹ Cottage industries such as blacksmithing and weaving were supplanted by industrially-produced items imported from outside the county.

The encroachment of outside manufactures was initially opposed by town and agrarian elites who framed their arguments in terms of opposition to monopoly interests and also as boosters of local mechanics. Agrarian leaders exhorted farmers to buy from local manufacturers, as when the Dongola correspondent to the county newspaper promoted a local blacksmith by writing, 'Co-operation does not mean send your money out of the county, and let home mechanics starve'.³⁰ The newspaper boosted local wool carders and hailed the prospect that:

The old tan yard building is soon to be converted into a first class woolen factory . . . A woolen mill is almost a necessity in every county. Woolen goods are always in demand . . . Would it not be better, infinitely better, to manufacture these goods at home, rather than impoverish the county by sending our money abroad and building up other localities to the great detriment of our own? . . . We hope our capitalists will not permit this project to fail for want of means.³¹

These capitalistically-oriented leaders were waging a rear-guard action against the new corporate industrial form that more advanced capitalists had created; the mill did not materialize.

These leaders soon abandoned their commitment to a locally self-provisioning economy. The *Gazette's* editorialists and correspondents gradually ceased to exhort farmers to buy plows and other goods from local craftsmen but instead hailed the technical advantages of factory-produced equipment. They boosted commercial agriculture, particularly fruit and vegetable production and the industries necessary to sustain these enterprises – manufactures of packing materials and fruit drying houses. During the middle decades of the nineteenth century industrial production was replacing craft production. Manufacturing became separated from the domain of the farmstead with the consequence that farmers required substantial amounts of cash to function in an increasingly specialized market.

At the same time as farm size was increasing and commercial agriculture was becoming predominant, farmers adopted expensive technologies in larger numbers. As early as 1878 the Dongola correspondent wrote:

One very noticeable improvement in the characteristics of Dongola may be seen in the kind of teams that the farmers bring to town with them when they come to trade. Ten years ago, the ox team was the rule, and a carriage or buggy was a rarity. Now the days of the gee, whoa, haw of the ox driver is heard only as Graham goes out after, or comes in with, a load of logs for the saw

organized in 1820), were an important focus of social life. Until 1848 the Association opposed payment of ministers and was generally hostile to missionary work, believing that such work should be freely given and not contaminated by cash transactions. In 1848 they continued to oppose missionary work but urged the payment of ministers.¹⁴ This resistance to incorporating sacred relationships within a commercial universe suggests that important domains of social and ideological life were ordered through non-capitalist forms.

Extensive networks developed that undergirded political and economic power. These networks were based on kinship; participation in the militia, military expeditions to Texas in the 1840s, and in the Civil War; and on participation in Masonic lodges, church organizations, and political parties. Residents of the county had been largely hostile to 'internal improvements' and to other state policies that promoted commercial development.¹⁵ After the Civil War the voting majority of Union County persistently resisted the encroachment of the new industrial order even as they became ever more drawn into commercial exchange and capitalistic labor relations.

Population grew throughout the nineteenth century. Until the construction of the Illinois Central Railroad in the 1850s, however, only one small town, the county seat of Jonesboro, and a few small cross-road hamlets existed (see table 1), an indication of the strongly agricultural basis of the county's social economy. Southern Illinois lagged behind

Table 2. *Number and size of farms.*

Year	Under 10 acres		10-20 acres		20-50 acres		50-100 acres		100-500 acres		500-1000 acres		1000+ acres		Total No. Farms
	%		%		%		%		%		%		%		
1860	62	5	200	16	587	47	324	26	83	7	-	-	-	-	1256
1870	240	12	494	25	804	41	318	16	130	7	-	-	-	-	1986
1880	19	1	40	2	528	32	487	29	586	35	8	.5	5	.3	1673
1890	41	2	81	5	455	26	532	30	652	37	12	.6	4	.2	1777

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population and Agriculture*, Illinois, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890.

the rest of the state in industrial and commercial development, in general prosperity, and in 1860 it was unusually homogeneous with few Northern- or foreign-born residents, African-Americans, or Catholics.¹⁶ The changes stimulated by the railroad were only beginning to be apparent in the 1860 census. In 1860 Jonesboro had only 435 residents; the neighboring (and rival) town, Anna, created as a station on the new railroad, had a population of 397 and the new railroad stations of South Pass (Cobden) and Dongola were small settlements. The total 'urban' population of the county was 832, or only 7.4 per cent of the total population. Throughout the first half of the century mills,

tiated, with widening divisions between wealthier, technically innovative farmers and their poorer neighbors and kin. These poorer farmers persistently refused to allow property relations to be defined to the benefit of commercially-oriented landowners, or to allow taxes to rise to support good farm to market roads. 'Progressive' elements in the county repeatedly placed the issues of fencing livestock, taxing dogs, and township organization (a proxy for raising road taxes) on the ballot, and county voters repeatedly (but with shrinking margins) defeated them throughout the 1870s and 1880s. The votes on these issues and the debates that surrounded them, as written in the pages of the *Jonesboro Gazette*, expose the growing class divisions and the increasing strength and coherence of the rising class of entrepreneurially-oriented farmers and businessmen.

Livestock running at large

Hahn, writing of Upcountry Georgia, argues that stock fencing laws were a key locus of struggle between independent small producers and large planters who would, by fencing off common lands, drive small farmers into dependence. The fight over fencing, or not fencing, stock was also an expression of a changing definition of private property. As Hahn observes, 'supporters of the stock law elevated absolute property to a moral, if not a natural, right'.³⁵ The fencing issue was hard fought in Union County. In the pages of the *Gazette* only temperance – a cause also associated with the development of capitalist labor relations³⁶ – and appeals for industries to locate in the county recurred as persistently throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century as did the issue of fencing livestock. Because the fencing issue was submitted to voters time and time again it is easy to trace popular sentiments, particularly as they conflict with those given in the pages of the *Gazette*.

In January, 1872, the state legislature passed the first stock law in the state. According to the *Gazette* Springfield correspondent, the central and northern interests had bowed to pressure from southern Illinois and allowed 'local option'. Each county had to approve the law.³⁷ When the law was first proposed the January 1, 1871 *Gazette* editorialized:

The people of this county and of all Egypt, for that matter, do not desire the passage of such a law. Let the matter be left to the county court... Some of the counties in the state, especially in the prairie country where timber for fencing is scarce, would undoubtedly desire such a law. [But] a stock law, compelling every person to keep up his horses, mules, cattle and hogs, would be a dead letter in Southern Illinois. Nobody would enforce its provisions.

The issue was placed before the voters, eliciting the first exchanges on the subject. A correspondent from a landing named Preston wrote:

An absorbing topic of conversation is the passage of the liquor bill and the stock law. One man declared he would have to leave, for, should the stock law be accepted, he could not keep a cow, and how could a poor man live, without either whisky or milk. Another thought five years under the law would make a wilderness out of the country. Our more temperate citizens are of the opinion that the passage of the stock law would cause large tracts of now useless land to be cleared and cultivated, thus adding to the wealth and improving the health of the country. That the heavy expense of keeping up fences [to protect crops] would be devoted to the erection of better and

3.5 per cent of the total number. In the same decade the number of farms too large for one family to operate easily (assuming all the land is cleared), those of 100 acres or more, grew from 6.5 per cent to more than one third. By the 1880 census more than half of the land in farms was improved although more than one-third of the county's acreage remained unclaimed (see table 3).²¹

The changing structure of agriculture indicates that increasing numbers of farmers shifted from subsistence-oriented production on locally provisioned farms to largely commercialized production, strongly articulated with town merchants and distant markets. By the late 1800s many of the town businessmen were themselves landlords who managed their farms from town – a reversal of the earlier pattern of farm-based commerce and manufacture. By 1880 one-quarter of the farms were operated by renters, most of them on a share basis.²² In addition, resident day laborers became an increasingly important part of the county's labor market. Fruit and vegetable production, which became central to the county's agricultural economy after the railroad linked it to the growing Chicago market some 350 miles to the north, required large amounts of labor which was recruited from resident renters and from neighboring small farms. In contrast to share renters, who paid rent in proportion to the amount of livestock and equipment they provided, resident laborers were given a small plot of ground on which to grow domestic provisions and were available as needed for the farm's labor needs. Farming in Union County began to take on the forms of plantation agriculture and wage labor was rapidly becoming a dominant relation of production both in agriculture and in manufacturing.²³ Although the early settlers had established differentials of wealth and power, the differential between rich and poor increased in the later part of the nineteenth century.

The process of commercialization was probably accelerated by the Civil War since Union County was a strategic barracks for the Union Army. Many Illinoisans were sympathetic to the southern cause, combining a commitment to state's rights with Western Sectionalism which saw agricultural and commercial/manufacturing interests as opposed to one another.²⁴ The county newspaper, the *Jonesboro Gazette*, a militantly Democratic paper, was temporarily closed for sedition.²⁵ Nonetheless, a high percentage of Union county men served the Union cause – more than 16 per cent of the total population, according to the figures of genealogist George Parks.²⁶ The feelings between pro- and anti-Unionist ran deep and were to affect county politics – and to some extent agrarian politics – throughout the next several decades.²⁷

The concentration of population in urban centers and the increasing interdependence and linkages between town and countryside are hallmarks of capitalist development.²⁸ This pattern occurred in Union County, where, in the decades following the Civil War, towns became increasingly important. Prior to the establishment of the railroad, Jonesboro had served as the administrative center of the county and as the site for much of the county's limited mercantile business. In 1870 the two major towns, Jonesboro and Anna had 2,377 residents enumerated, or 14.4 per cent of the total population – nearly double the 7.4 per cent of 1860. By 1880 almost 22 per cent of the county's population lived in towns, and by 1890, 25 per cent were town residents. This growth was part of a growing commercial and manufacturing economy. Union County towns remained

put in force which will secure to the cows regular pastures, and do away with their habit of thieving.⁴⁰

Small farmers had a different perspective on the matter. During the same electoral campaign a correspondent signing himself P.M., wrote:

You are called upon to vote on the so-called stock law; a law that has been gotten up wholly in the interest of large land owners, a law that takes the last privileges from the poor – that of pasturing their stock on the commons. But this is not all. How many voters of Union county are prepared for such a law? Water being one of the first necessities of the animal kingdom, how many are prepared in that line. Nor is this all. We complain of heavy taxes. Do we want to add further to our already too great a burden of taxes . . . by creating an office for each township in the county [to enforce the fence laws], to be paid by the tax payers of the same?⁴¹

The stock law passed handily in that election, 1458 to 731, due, it seems, to confusion on the part of the voters. It was resubmitted in 1880, as 'for stock running at large' and 'against stock running at large' and county voters overwhelmingly, by a majority of 71 per cent, voted to allow livestock to roam unfenced on the common lands.

When the issue came up for another vote in 1887 both pros and cons spoke for the 'poor widow'. A correspondent signing himself S.A.P. wrote:

People are complaining of breachy stock running at large in this vicinity. I do honestly hope that there will be a day in the near future when a man's stock will be kept upon his own premises and not allowed to impose upon the poor widow who is not able to fence her farm as the rich man is.⁴²

In reply, a regular correspondent, X.Y.Z., wrote:

There are a great many men who work hard and are scarcely able to make ends meet who would not be able to supply themselves with sufficient water and would be compelled to drive their stock some distance. Then speaking of the poor widow who has no farm and has to depend on rented land for a living, what will she do with her cows and few pigs?⁴³

S.A.P. also complained about the number of scrub stock running at large which he alleged interfered with raising graded or fine stock. 'A man cannot raise fine stock without there is a stock law, and stock raising is becoming an important feature of our county', he wrote.⁴⁴ X.Y.Z. ridiculed the 'registered stock . . . that an ordinary man can take by the horns and bore backward into a tree . . .'. Anyone, he argued, can fence in stock. 'This is a free country, and if he sees fit to keep up his stock he can do that without molestation, and there is a law to protect a man and his property'.⁴⁵

That year the assertion of private property rights was made explicit for the first time in the pages of the *Gazette*. The Anna correspondent wrote, 'There should be no free pasturage. . . . Every farmer when he carefully studies the question, (unless it be a few who fatten their stock from free pasturage on other people's land) will vote against stock running at large'.⁴⁶

The measure failed. It was, however, gaining advocates, especially in those precincts dominated by towns. Three of these precincts (Cobden, Hess, and Anna) voted against swine running at large (swine causing more damage by their rooting), but the more rural regions carried the day. By 1890 some individual towns and precincts had voted to require fencing and impounded animals that strayed into their boundaries.⁴⁷ It therefore became increasingly difficult for the more rural areas to maintain their open range policies. In

mill, and a great many of the farmers have their nice buggies or spring wagons, and a fine team of horses to pull them along.³²

Even more significant was the investment in agricultural equipment. The correspondent continued:

The number of reapers, mowers and threshers that have been sold at this point is astonishing, when we take all the surrounding circumstances into consideration. It must be remembered that much of the ground in this vicinity is too rough to be well adapted to the use of machines, yet nearly fifty reapers and mowers were sold by our dealers this year alone, besides the large number that had been sold in previous years. New styles of plows, of hay rakes, and many other improvements have also been sold in numbers that show that our farmers are alive to their interests, and intend to keep up with the march of the times.

Table 4. *Indicators of Commercial Production: Wheat Production, Cattle and Horses owned.*

	Wheat bu.	Cattle head	Horses & mules head
1850	31,902	5,935	2,348
1860	168,530	6,290	2,605
1870	180,231	6,955	4,820
1880	371,620	6,350	5,407
1890	462,340	10,750	7,163
1900	435,210		

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Illinois*, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900.

Around the county correspondents reported new threshing machines.³³ These machines involved a large capital investment on the part of their owners and at the same time gave their owners a new means to accumulate wealth as they hauled their engines from farm to farm, collecting threshing fees. There are some indications that control of this equipment was a source of conflict: In 1873 the Little Creek Farmers' Club organized in part to 'control those machine men'.³⁴ The increased use of and dependence on equipment represented a deepening of the commercial engagement between the increasingly distinct agricultural and industrial sectors, accompanied by the progressive replacement of manual with machine labor. In this process, a new source of profits was created which disproportionately enriched machine owners in relation to their poorer neighbors. In addition, increasing amounts of capital-intensive equipment signify the growing engagement of many farmers with agricultural markets. This process is indicated by the increasing amount of wheat grown and number of cattle and horses raised (see table 4).

Even as more farmers spent more of their time and resources on commercial production the majority of farmers resisted creating the infrastructure necessary to support commercial agriculture. Agricultural production was becoming more differen-

residents, and no issue better brought out elite views of poor farmers. The Agricultural Column of the *Gazette* editorialized in May 23, 1868, 'Dogs against sheep seems now to be a question, and so far dogs seem to have won'. Detailed accounts of rabid dogs appeared every summer.⁵³ The occurrence of rabid dogs frequently served as a lead to promote a dog tax and to decry sheep killing, as in an article in the *Gazette* of June 4, 1870:

The northern portion of this county has been overrun with mad-dogs during the past few weeks . . . At the last session of the Legislature a law was passed authorizing the County Courts to fix a tax of \$2 upon every dog in their respective counties. Our County Court meets on Monday next, and we trust that they will order this dog tax to be assessed immediately in this county. Every dog that is not worth the tax to his owner should be exterminated; worthless dogs will be exterminated, and valuable ones cared for. Again, it is almost impossible to successfully raise sheep on account of the depredations of dogs. Our hills, valleys and bottom lands are well adapted to raising sheep. When half the worthless dogs that make night hideous by their continual howl, come to grief, we can raise sheep; establish factories in the county, and make our own clothing.

The problem did not abate and calls repeatedly appeared for the institution of an enforceable dog law.⁵⁴ The debate exposed a rift between rural residents. When 'A Farmer' wrote, in January, 1879, that 'the farmers will have most of the dog tax to pay, if they are taxed', another farmer responded:

I deny that the majority of the sheep killed or damaged by dogs in this county, that the dogs belong to parties deserving the title or name of farmers. . . . I venture the proposition: that of the sheep-killing dogs in this county, there is a greater per cent. owned by men who do not properly feed, clothe and care for their families, than by any other class.⁵⁵

Such remarks clearly marked these poor farmers from the 'better class' of 'substantial farmers' who made up 'respectable' rural society.

Another letter-writer, rising to 'A Farmer's' letter, argued that people were raising fewer sheep not because of dogs but because 'the manufacturing of wool for home purposes [was] passing out of use'.⁵⁶ Whether or not his observation was correct, (the number of sheep declined through the 1870s - see table 6) sheep-raisers, and the *Gazette* as a representative of progressive farmers, continued to inveigh against loose dogs.

Table 6. *Sheep Production*

Year	No. of Sheep ^a
1850	4869
1860	5391
1870	9342
1880	3574
1890	4104

^a Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population and Agriculture for Illinois*, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890.

more substantial buildings. That the renewal of land by pasturage would add greatly to its fertility, and that it would make our bottoms in a few years the great grain growing country of the west.³⁸

Thus the issue was joined, poor against affluent, self-provisioning against commercial.³⁹ Only twenty per cent of the votes cast were for fencing livestock (see table 5). The proponents were not deterred and placed the issue on the ballot in virtually every county election and on many town and precinct ballots as well. As the '70s progressed most of the regular correspondents – town-based merchants and farmers who generally supported Grange-type activities – supported enclosure of stock. The Cobden correspondent, for example (who was active in a Fruit Shippers' Association), wrote in 1878 that:

There is not a day when you may not see in Cobden one or more farmers driving the cows away from their wagons. These cows are electioneering in favor of the stock law. The cows undoubtedly think if they plague the farmers enough, a law will be passed to shut the cattle up, and then they will get better feed than they can steal from the farmers' wagons. It is rather tough on a cow who has earned her living all summer by watching every careless person who leaves a garden gate open, and then hurrying to secure a few cabbages or a mess of sweet corn – it is hard on such a cow to be mercilessly driven away from the farmers' wagons, where she might get a good bite of hay and an occasional nubbin of corn. If there is a majority of merciful men in the county, a law will be

Table 5. *Votes on animals running at large.*

	For	Against	% Against
1872	1610	413	20
1875	1173	667	36
1878 ^a	731	1454	(33)
1880	1931	789	29
1884 ^b	2003	832	29
1887	1647	809	33
1888 ^c	2199	1065	33
1890 ^d			
1891 ^e	832	927	53

Notes:

^a "For" is "For the stock law"

^b Against vote is extrapolated, based on votes on other issues. There was a separate vote for hogs: for hogs at large, 1741; against 1094.

^c There was a separate vote for hogs: for hogs at large, 2745; against 1233.

^d Only two precincts voted on the issue in 1890, on "Swine running at large":

Alto Pass precinct: 149 for swine,	138 against
Mill Creek precinct: 50 for swine,	40 against

^e Most of the rural precincts voted for stock at large.

Source: Jonesboro *Gazette*, election returns published in the issue following the November election, 1872, 1875, 1878, 1880, 1884, 1887, 1888, 1890, 1891.

service as county officers. It appears that many farmers resented paying county officials for their services, while 'progressive' elements strongly advocated better pay.⁶⁰ 'If we do not adopt township organization this fall', wrote the *Gazette* on October 10, 1874, 'the legislature should be petitioned to increase the pay of commissioners'.

Reorganization was defeated by increasingly large majorities each time it went before the voters. 1887 appears to have been the last attempt to promote it (see table 7).

The decisive rejection of township organization may have been an artifact of cultural preference as the commissioner form of organization was characteristic of the south, in contrast to the New England township system. However, it also represented a commitment to small, inexpensive government and low taxation over provision of government services, particularly roads.⁶¹ It suggests that the overwhelming majority of farmers were less concerned with smooth, efficient avenues to market than they were with frugality, an indication that 'progressive', market-oriented agriculture had failed to take root. In the late 1880s other state-level reforms of road administration and funding established township-based road districts. The *Gazette*, the voice of agricultural and town elites, supported the new road law which made the issue of township organization moot.

Conclusion

The 1870s are widely recognized to have marked the beginning of a revolution in agriculture.⁶² Nationally, industrial production undercut and supplanted cottage and other small manufacturing and created a basis for rapidly growing cities which needed farmers' products. The newly ascendent corporations and large commercial banks aggressively promoted new social arrangements to undergird and support their organizational needs. These included narrowing the ability of the public to control and regulate their property, developing improved routes to market, and promoting commercial agricultural production. The new era of corporate, industrial capitalism was introduced in Union County by the construction of the Illinois Central Railroad in the 1850s, but the processes made possible and stimulated by the new transportation route did not seriously challenge the pre-existing political economy until after the Civil War. In Union County a new elite developed, recruited from Yankee and other entrepreneurially-oriented immigrants and from members of old families who adopted modern business practices. The same development processes that created a class of urban-oriented entrepreneurs caused an increasing number of farmers to lose their independent access to land as small-holders and squatters and to become landless laborers and tenants, while many smaller farmers supplemented their production through wage labor for their more prosperous neighbors. At the same time the division of labor in general became more complex with more diversified branches of industry, commerce, and services and a greater division of labor within enterprises, and the local economy became more strongly linked to the national economy through sales of local products and the purchase of industrial products.

The farming people of southern Illinois, largely descendants of German and British communities in the Carolina mountains, had created a society capable of reproducing itself largely independent of national markets, in which kinship and other non-commoditized social relations mediated most production and exchange, and through which political

1891 a narrow majority voted that animals should be fenced. Most of the rural precincts favored open range, although some were closely divided.

In January, 1892, the law began to be vigorously enforced in some precincts. This brought forth strong objections, such as a letter from C.M.W. in the southern part of the county, dated January 3, 1892:

This law may suit some people, but not me. God prepared the range for our cattle and hogs. See those nice shady valleys with their cooling brooks and grassy mounds. Look at the tall oak with its boughs bending with acorns. Why must they all decay and waste? See how stock must suffer for water when it is free and yet must be given to them. Since this law is in force we see the idlers of our land loafing around driving off to town the poor widow's cows to make 50 cents.⁴⁸

The Dongola correspondent defended the town's poundmaster the next week, averring that 'he has no idlers or loafers hired to drive in stock, and has not up to date paid anyone any amount whatever to drive stock to him, C.M.W. to the contrary notwithstanding'.⁴⁹

There was trouble in the northern part of the county as well, when the poundmaster and an assistant attempted to drive in some stock 'from down on the creek'. The owners produced a shotgun and 'while the men were disputing the women drove the cows back'. That fracas ended in a lawsuit with the six recalcitrant farmers held on bond of \$100 each. X.Y.Z., the only regular correspondent who supported an open range policy, wrote that 'Our farmers are looking forward to the time when the stock law shall be repealed'.⁵⁰

Finally in April a judge heard the stock law case and the November vote was canvassed, confirming the earlier results. Nine precincts were for animals running at large and six were against, but those six had large enough majorities and enough voters to carry the day. The issue was not completely settled, for the following year Dongola again voted to pen up the stock.⁵¹ By 1894 the stock law issue appears to have been largely settled. Its passage and enforcement were part of the growing commercial orientation of rural life, as indicated by an item in the July, 1894 *Gazette* that conjoined fencing with good roads:

Since the stock law has been in effect we notice that blue grass, and even clover, is springing up along the roadsides in all parts of the county, crowding out weeds and dogfennel. On the hill sides this is just what is needed to stop washing. It is a pleasure to note the improvement that has been made on country roads of late years. We have plenty of rock and gravel and by intelligent and well directed effort Union county can in a few years have as fine highways as are maintained anywhere. Road graders are being used and the road beds are receiving intelligent attention. This has been accomplished under the new road law, and demonstrates that the road commissioners have generally been men who understand their business.⁵²

The road issue will be taken up later in this paper. First, a somewhat subsidiary, but related, debate concerned the issue of taxing dogs. This debate, aimed at limiting the number running at large, exposes both structural and attitudinal changes in the county's political economy.

Dogs

The existence of large numbers of dogs running free in the county raised a series of objections from correspondents to the *Gazette*. Dogs were accused of killing sheep and of being responsible for the decline in sheep raising. Periodic outbreaks of rabies alarmed

Notes

1. Michael Merrill, 'Cash is Good to Eat: Self-Sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States', *Mid-Atlantic Radical Historians Newsletter* 4 (1977), 42–71; James A. Henretta, 'Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., XXV (January 1978), 3–32; Eugene Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (New York, 1969). This debate has been so widely reviewed and commented on that I will not replicate what others have done. See, e.g., Allan Kulikoff, 'The Transition to Capitalism in Rural America', *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Ser., XLVI (1, 1989), 120–44; and Gregory Nobles, 'Capitalism in the Countryside: The Transformation of Rural Society in the United States', *Radical History Review* 41 (1988), 163–76. See especially Bettye Hobbs Pruitt, 'Self Sufficiency and the Agricultural Economy of Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts', *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd Ser., XLI (1984), 333–64; Winifred B. Rothenberg, 'The Market and Massachusetts Farmers, 1750–1855', *Journal of Economic History* LXI (1981), 283–5; and Joan Jensen, *Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750–1850* (New Haven, CT, 1986) who argue for the early importance of market relations and the concomitant development of capitalist dynamics. See Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850–1890* (New York, 1983); Steven Hahn and Jonathan Prude, *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1985). Christopher Clark, 'The Household Economy, Market Exchange, and the Rise of Capitalism in the Connecticut Valley, 1800–1860' *Journal of Social History*, XII (2, 1979), 169–89; John Mack Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (New Haven, 1986); (in a somewhat more problematic manner) Michael Cassity, *Defending a Way of Life* (Albany, NY, 1989); and Daniel Vickers, 'Competency and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, XLVII (1, 1990), 3–29 for studies which stress the early importance of non-capitalist forms.
2. Karl Marx, *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations*, Translated by Jack Cohen, Edited by E.J. Hobsbawm (New York, 1964), and Karl Marx, *Capital*, edited by Frederick Engels (New York, 1967 [1887]), chapters 3 and 4. Michael Taussig, *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism* (Chapel Hill, 1979) has explored the ideological consequences of this transformation of a 'natural' economy in the Cauca Valley in Colombia into one based on capitalist principles. According to his analysis, those peasants still embedded in pre-capitalist systems of production and exchange understood increasing value (wealth) as being due to nature's fecundity and personal generosity. In contrast, those who engaged in wage labor and who attempted to increase the amount of money they had had engaged in pacts with the Devil, an indication of the profound inversion of 'natural' ways of conceiving of production and exchange. Similarly, Kenelm Burridge, *New Heaven, New Earth: A Study in Millenarian Activities* (Oxford, 1969) writes of the way that the imposition by European colonists of money as a measure of human worth was a radically disorienting experience for Melanesians. Vickers, 'Competency and Competition'.
3. Robert P. Howard, *Illinois: A History of the Prairie State* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1972), 84; see also *Illinois Libraries* 59 (5, 1977), special issue on Population Centers in Illinois, 1807, containing Illinois Militiamen, August 1, 1790, and squatters in Territorial Illinois, reports of 1807 and 1813.
4. See Paul W. Gates, *The Illinois Central Railroad and Its Colonization Work* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934). There are a number of professional and amateur histories and genealogies that document the settlement of the county, which are of varying degrees of accuracy. These include Arthur Clinton Boggess, *The Settlement of Illinois, 1778–1830* (Chicago, IL, Chicago Historical Society's Collection, v. 5. 1908); Dr. Sidney S. Condon, *Pioneer Sketches of Union County, Illinois*, edited and annotated by Darrel Dexter from the original articles published in the Jonesboro Gazette (P.O. Box 175, Ullin, IL, 1987 [1871]); John Hubert Doty, 'Vancil and Lyerly Families in America' (in Genealogy Society of Southern Illinois collection, Caterville,

Table 7. *Referendum on Township Organization.*

	For	Against	% For
1872	964	1117	46
1873	762	1026	43
1874	451	1233	27
1876	716	1326	35
1880	985	1930	49
1887	808	1573*	34

Notes:

* barely legible. Source: *Jonesboro Gazette*, election returns published in the issue following the November election, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1876, 1880, 1887.

By 1881 a tax had been levied on dogs, but it was ineffective. The *Gazette* editorialized:

It is simply astonishing how many worthless, sore-backed, half-starved, ugly curs are allowed to go at large in this place. The dog tax makes no difference in the number, or half of them are unclaimed. They go round throttling hogs and cattle by day, and make night hideous with their incessant fighting and barking.⁵⁷

Dogs and sheep gradually disappeared as an issue in the pages of the county newspaper. It is not clear, however, whether the agricultural advisors ceased to promote sheep production or whether farmers ceased to raise large packs of unruly dogs.

Township organization

The Illinois constitution, adopted in 1870, provided for both township and commissioner forms of county organization. A vote to change to township organization appeared on the 1872 ballot, with little popular support. 'Many of the small counties are in favor of the County Court, or, under the new law, County Commissioners mode, as it is much less expensive', the *Gazette* wrote on September 7, 1872. The issue failed, only to resurface the following year (see table 7). 1873 was a year of massive farmer unrest. Farmers across the state organized into Farmers Clubs which quickly linked to county and state Farmers' Associations. The Union County farmers who met for their quarterly meeting October 11, 1873, with representatives from eight of the 12 county Farmers' Clubs, voted to approve township organization.⁵⁸ The issue was not vigorously pursued, however, and the measure failed by a large margin, 762 for and 1026 against. 'The mismanagement of county affairs in Jackson county has told against township organization', wrote a correspondent from the northern part of the county, adjoining Jackson county. Petitioners put the issue before the voters again in 1874, 1876, and 1880. 'We will never have good roads throughout the county, until they are made by township authorities', the *Gazette* editorialized.⁵⁹ The issue was also connected to payment for

- Agriculture*, pp.104-49; and Roy V. Scott, *The Agrarian Movement in Illinois, 1880-1896*. Illinois Studies in the Social Sciences, vol. 52 (Urbana, 1962). The citations in the *Jonesboro Gazette* are too numerous to list. Most issues of this weekly newspaper after T.F. Bouton took it over in 1866 (JG 9/29/1866) had columns promoting improved agriculture and technologies and boosting local businesses, as did the weekly, *Farmer and Fruitgrower*, begun in 1877. See also William Henry Perrin, *History of Alexander, Union and Pulaski Counties* (Chicago, 1883) p.377.
8. Richard Bardolph, *Agricultural Literature and the Early Illinois Farmer* (Urbana, 1948); William L. Bowers, *The Country Life Movement in America 1900-1920* (Port Washington, NY, 1974); Roy V. Scott, *The Reluctant Farmer: The Rise of Agricultural Extension to 1914* (Urbana, 1970).
 9. The development of elements of this new grouping, commercial horticulturalists and orchardists, as a self-conscious class, is analyzed in Jane Adams, 'Farmer Organization and Class Formation', *Canadian Journal of Anthropology* 5(1, 1986), 35-42.
 10. For largely parallel discussions, see Hal S. Barron, 'Rediscovering the Majority: The New Rural History of the Nineteenth Century North', *Historical Methods* 19 (4, 1986), 141-52; Hahn, *Roots of Southern Populism*; Hahn and Prude, *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation*; Forrest McDonald and Gracy McWhiney, 'The South from Self-Sufficiency to Peonage: An Interpretation', *American Historical Review* 85 (1980), 1095ff; and Merrill, 'Cash is Good to Eat'. It appears that, in the mid-south, as in the plantation South, capitalist relations of production did not develop directly out of existing, colonial relations, as they appear to have, for example, in New England and Pennsylvania (see Jensen *Loosening the Bonds*; Lucy Simmler, 'She Came to Work/She Went to Work: The Development of a Female Rural Proletariat in Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1760-1820', Paper given at *Woman and the Transition to Capitalism in Rural America, 1760-1940*, (DeKalb, IL 1989).
 11. Newton, 'Cultural Preadaption and the Upland South'.
 12. I have studied closely the histories of two farms, for which I have the abstract. This, together with oral traditions and the original land patent concerning another farm, show claims from the government with almost immediate transfer to a purchaser, suggesting that the land had been cleared and improved, but not patented until the squatter wished to sell. These transactions occurred in the 1840s.
 13. Daniel Brush, *Growing Up with Southern Illinois*, p.56 writes of a store owned by his brother-in-law in Brownsville, the county seat of neighboring Jackson County. The date is 1829.

Peltry consisting of deer, coon and other skin, beef hides, venison, hams dried, and feathers in the proper season were current in trade and almost legal tender in payment of debts. Merchants took such articles at about the prices expected for them in the markets and usually came out of the barter with little loss.

The quantity of such peltry that came in was wonderful to me. Thousands of pounds of deer skins, shaved and long-haired, would be delivered in a season with dried venison hams in proportion, coon and muskrat skins in hundreds, with an occasional panther, bear, or wolf skin, while beef hides were numerous and feathers abundant.

The goods sold in the store (p.54) included coffee, sugar, spices, indigo, madder, molasses, and whiskey; dry goods such as calico, unbleached stout cotton goods ('domestic'), bed ticking, and cotton yarn for warp.

Cotton yarn for warp was a main article of trade, as almost every family, especially the farmers, made Jeans for men's wear, and striped and checked homespun for women's dresses, all cotton, while linsey-woolsey, half cotton and half wool spun and wove at home, was very much made and worn.

and economic power were created. This paper has not aimed to describe these relations in detail, but rather to indicate some of the loci of resistance to the new order. This new order eroded most farmers' relative position within the social economy and may have represented, in some cases, an absolute impoverishment as increasing population and commercial production made land-extensive farming patterns ecologically destructive. Areas of explicit resistance concerned redefinitions of property rights, control of dogs, and development of good roads which were promoted by the new, town-oriented elite.

At the same time, cross-cutting currents prevented these issues and the growing class divisions from creating discrete classes. A variety of national issues drew smaller farmers and mechanics into alliance with the new elite. Tariffs, opposed by the Democratic party, protected industrialists but left agricultural exporters exposed and raised the costs of mechanical equipment; Republican monetary policies were persistently deflationary to the benefit of Eastern capitalists and worked against indebted farmers; reconstruction policies were seen as supporting freedmen against southern Whites, with whom most Union Countians identified; and railroad regulation played on both anti-corporate sentiments and pecuniary interests. All of these issues joined the interests of small and large farmers; none joined the interests of small farmers with those of the increasing numbers of landless tenants and laborers. In Union County, most members of the agricultural and commercial elites supported the populist and agrarian policies of the Democratic Party, positions which were shared by the vast majority of voters. These elites were at the forefront of organizing farmers' associations in which many smaller farmers participated. Therefore, the cleavages which show up in votes on local issues were not institutionalized in larger political processes or in insurgent organizations. Rather, agrarian organizations appear to have created a bridge between the earlier non-capitalist political economy and the modern one which developed during the late nineteenth century. In this process, the 'substantial farmers' – the early elites who easily moved into commercial production when the railroad made that possible – lost their preeminent position to a new class of self-identified capitalists, many of whom were simultaneously farmers, merchants, bankers, and investors.⁶³ At the same time the number of very small farmers declined significantly and the number and proportion of tenants and farm laborers increased dramatically.

By the turn of the twentieth century most vestiges of the previous social organization had been thoroughly subordinated to commercial commodity production, heavily reliant on seasonal and year-round wage labor and organized within a framework of capitalist legal relations.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by a grant from the southern Illinois University at Carbondale Office of Research and Development and a grant from the Illinois Humanities Council for a series of newspaper articles on the agrarian movements of Union County, Illinois. Thanks to Kathryn Carr, Dennis Smith, Christine Gemignani, Union County Clerk Bobby Toler and his staff, and the Social Science Librarians at SIUC's Morris Library. Without their help I could not have collected the data in this paper.

24. See, e.g., Destler, 'Western Radicalism'; Paul Finkleman, 'Slavery, the "More Perfect Union", and the Prairie State', *Illinois Historical Journal* 80 (2, 1987), 248-69; Howard, *Illinois*; Jones, 'Agrarian Radicalism'; Frank L. Klement, *The Copperheads in the Middle West* (Chicago, 1960).
25. Over-zealous members of the U.S. military, on presenting the order to close, destroyed many back issues of the paper. There are, consequently, few issues of the paper prior to 1865 when it resumed publication. There is a virtually complete run since that date.
26. George E. Parks, *History of Union County, Illinois*, 3 vols. (Anna, IL., 1987), pp.320, 321, 324. Parks' study of enlistment records shows (p.235) 1,852 Union County men enlisting in the Union army in the period 1861-62, out of an enumerated population of 11,145. He notes that some of these enlistees were probably 'refugees or workers who enlisted in Union county' although they were not actual residents. His listing (p.324) of Union Countians by regiment (5 principal regiments) lists 1,568.
27. See also Simon, 'Union County in 1858'.
28. Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (London, 1961); Manuel Castells, *The Urban Question* (London, 1977); see also Anthony Giddens, *Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Berkeley, 1983), esp. chap. 6.
29. During the 1860s and '70s the pages of the *Gazette* have frequent items by correspondents from these hamlets who write glowingly of the investment possibilities in their communities. These hamlets had been cross-roads settlements of varying importance in the pre-railroad period; with the railroad they remained small trading centers but never became the manufacturing centers their boosters promoted. See, e.g., JG 10/13/1866, 5/4/1867, 2/23/1867, 9/7/1867, 9/28/1867, 12/28/1867, 12/5/1868, 4/23/1870, 8/20/1870, 9/3/1870, 1/6/1872, 10/25/1873, 12/20/1873.
30. JG 2/21/1874; also JG 3/15/1873, 6/25/1881, 5/7/1887.
31. JG 6/4/1870.
32. JG 7/27/1878.
33. See, e.g., JG 7/18/1874, 7/3/1875, 7/22/1876, 6/23/1877, 6/30/1877, 7/27/1878.
34. JG 7/19/1873.
35. Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism*, pp.239, 251.
36. See, e.g., Norman Clark, *Deliver us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition* (New York, 1976) and Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (Philadelphia, 1981).
37. JG 1/20/1872.
38. JG 2/17/1872.
39. Occasionally other concerns contributed to the debate. The reporter for a Farmer's Club meeting of 'substantial farmers', wrote of 'a lively discussion in regard to the frightful mortality among the forest timber during the past two years. It was shown that at least four per cent. of the most valuable white oaks had died during the past season. Should the same continue for the next ten years, our forests will be completely denuded of their most valuable timber. Now what is the cause? . . . [I]t was shown by a number of members that it is caused by trampling of cattle and the rooting of hogs during the dry weather of the past two seasons. . . If the running of large stock is the cause of the death of timber, what an argument in favor of the stock law!' (JG 11/15/1873). I did not see this argument made subsequently, although Hahn, in *Roots of Southern Populism*, p.243, notes that it was commonly used to promote the fencing of domestic stock in Georgia.
40. JG 11/2/1878.
41. JG 11/2/1878.
42. JG 5/28/1887.
43. JG 6/4/1887.
44. JG 5/28/1887.
45. JG 6/4/1887.
46. JG 8/6/1887.

47. e.g. JG 5/31/1890.
48. JG 1/16/1892.
49. JG 1/23/1892.
50. JG 2/27/1892, JG 3/5/1892, JG 3/19/1892.
51. JG 11/11/1893.
52. JG 7/14/1894.
53. See, e.g., JG 6/4/1870, 7/2/1870, 7/16/1870, 8/10/1878, and many more not noted.
54. See, e.g., JG 1/27/1872, 4/22/1876.
55. JG 1/25/1879, JG 2/8/1879.
56. JG 2/8/1879. Wool production rose sharply during the Civil War as the Union Army required large amounts of wool to replace the cotton no longer available. See Bardolph, *Illinois Agriculture in Transition*; Willard W. Cochrane, *The Development of American Agriculture: A Historical Analysis* (Minneapolis, 1979); Norman L. Crockett, *The Woolen Industry of the Midwest* (Lexington, 1970); and Paul W. Gates, *Agriculture and the Civil War* (New York, 1965). Union County and other southern Illinois farmers also raised considerable cotton during the war years and continued to do so into the 1870s, despite a relatively short growing season. Part of the decline in sheep raising can be attributed to market shifts following the Civil War.
57. JG 6/25/1881.
58. JG 10/18/1873.
59. JG 11/8/1873, 9/19/1874.
60. In the September 27, 1873, issue, the Dongola correspondent to the *Gazette* wrote, 'The November election is arriving close, and the candidates are flocking here to fasten and secure every voter on their behalf. All are good men and want to put down the salary grabbing business, and curtail the expenses of the county. Now, will some good man come forward and run the machine for one year gratis, and for small pay the second year'? A candidate, responding to a candidate who rose to the challenge, responded that 'no sane man would seek the position without some compensation' (JG 10/4/1873).
61. An irony of this historical legacy is that Union County roads are now relatively better maintained than those with township organization, due to the way state road funds are allocated. They now go to the county, which uses them to maintain the county road system. Township roads are drastically under-funded, and if a township is poor (as are many rural townships), its roads will be in extreme disrepair. In contrast, Union County is able to allocate its limited funds on the roads that most need them, since all roads are county roads.
62. Solon J. Buck *The Agrarian Crusade*; Clarence H. Danhof, *Change in Agriculture: The Northern United States, 1820-1870* (Cambridge, Mass, 1969); Gilbert C. Fite, *American Farmers: The New Minority* (Bloomington, 1981); Earl W. Hayter, *The Troubled Farmer, 1850-1900: Rural Adjustment to Industrialization* (DeKalb, 1968); Carolyn Howe, 'Farmers' Movements'; and Carl C. Taylor, *The Farmers' Movement, 1620-1920* (New York, 1953).
63. For a study of one element of this new class, the fruit growers, see Adams, 'Farmer Organization and Class Formation', pp.35-42. See also Jane Adams, '1870s Agrarian Activism in Southern Illinois: Mediator between Two Eras', *Social Science History*, in press.