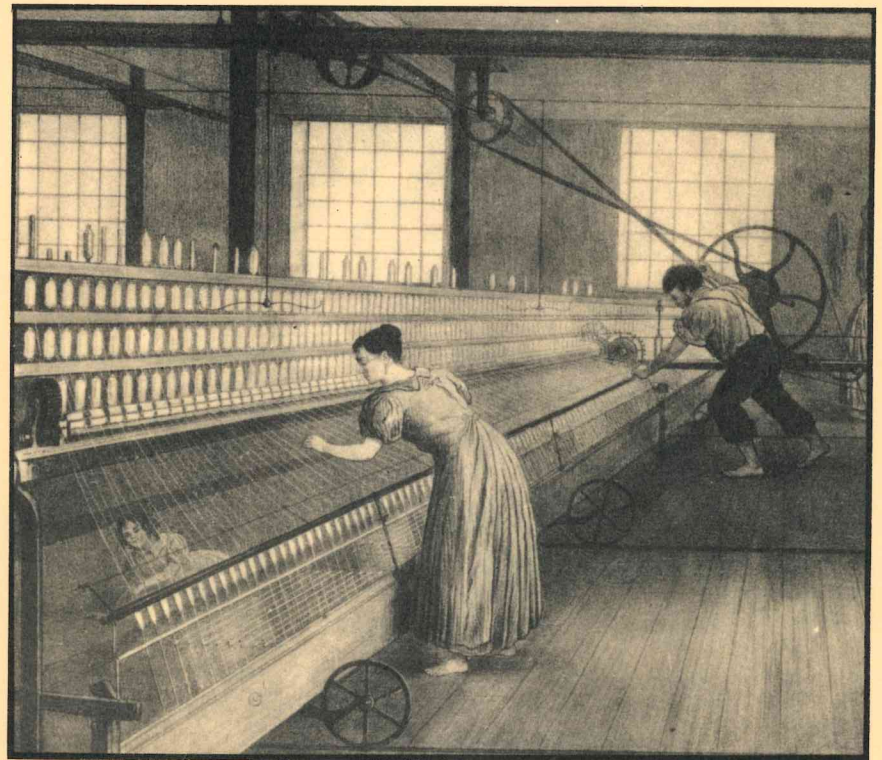


# RADICAL HISTORY REVIEW



***Labor and  
Community Militance  
in Rhode Island***

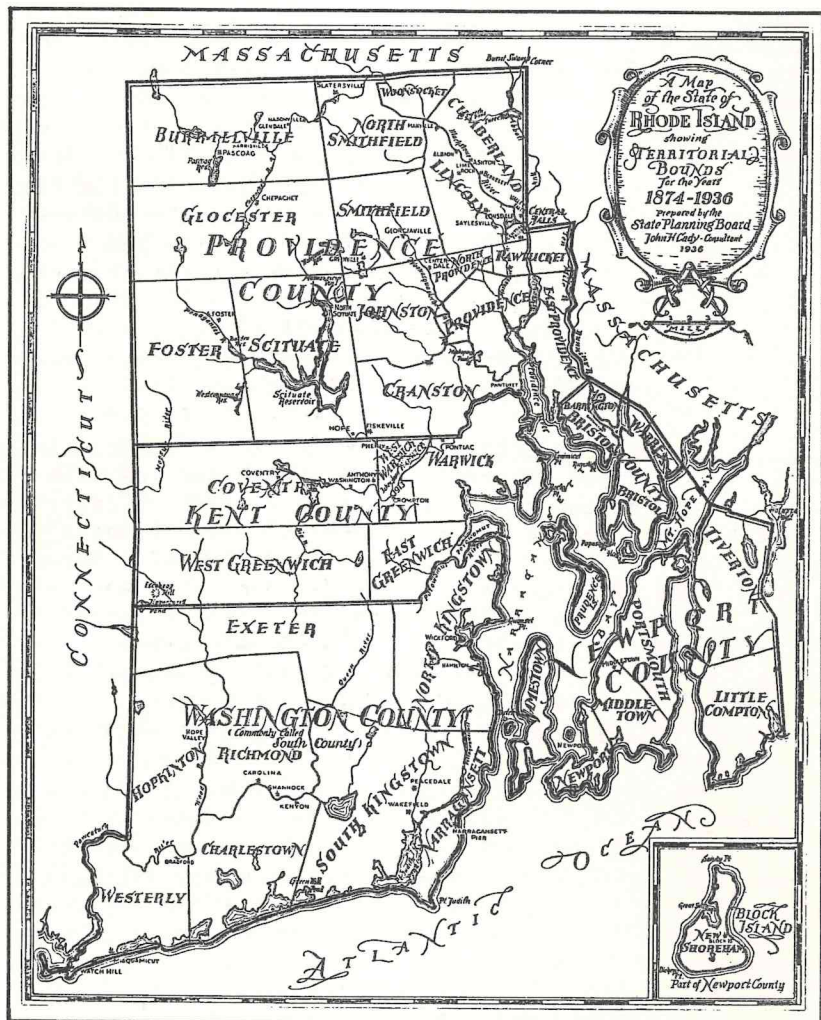
# Pawtucket Village and the Strike of 1824: The Origins of Class Conflict in Rhode Island

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In the late spring of 1824, approximately five hundred textile workers closed the spinning and weaving mills of Pawtucket in a strike which lasted a week. The strike, the earliest in the North American textile industry and the first of any kind to involve women, laid bare deep social cleavages in this Blackstone River village. During this week, mill owners faced determined and well-organized workers, the hostility of angry village crowds, and the threat of arson. Community outrage was sufficient to compel a compromise settlement. Such a settlement, in a period when workers generally lost strikes, is noteworthy and indicates both a measure of worker power and the community's ability to effectively impose sanctions on the behavior of mill owners. (1)

Though the strike dramatically underlined the attitude of villagers to the textile mills, it was neither the first act of community resistance, nor the last. Resistance to the village's textile industry had been visible since 1790, when the famed English immigrant Samuel Slater established the first Arkwright spinning mill in America in a former clothier's shop at Pawtucket Falls. Through the 1830s, resistance was intermittently punctuated by conflict over water rights, taxes, work routine, and the recording of factory time. This was conflict engendered by the rapid expansion of the textile industry in the years prior to 1830 and the substantial social changes it brought in its wake. The most important of these changes were the increased use of unskilled labor and the new definitions of time, work, and leisure which accompanied the rise of industrial capitalism; the far more extensive use of water power and the challenge this posed for customary notions of water rights; and the increasing efforts of mill owners to achieve cultural and political authority commensurate with their economic power.

The central argument of this essay is that the events of 1824 in Pawtucket--and by implication similar events elsewhere--can only be understood in



the context of a long tradition of local resistance to textile mills and mill owners. The existence of such traditions has usually been ignored or denied by American historians, who prefer the notion that capitalism sank its roots into American society quickly and without opposition. But the more closely one examines the values and beliefs textile workers brought into the mills, and the more carefully one traces the origins of those beliefs in rural culture and democratic thought, the more apparent it becomes that the "triumph" of capitalism was at best difficult and incomplete.

This essay develops themes similar to those suggested by Herbert Gutman, and more recently, by Alan Dawley. Gutman, in a series of influential articles, has argued two positions of direct bearing on early nineteenth-century Pawtucket. First, in a study of industrial communities in the Ohio River Valley in the 1870s, Gutman argued that values "alien to industrialism" were stronger and more vibrant in relatively small hinterland towns recently subject to the new pressures of industrial capitalism, and that those values were manifested in widespread community support for workers during strikes. Second, drawing on the work of E.P. Thompson, Gutman has argued that first generation migrants to industrial capitalism brought with them "pre-industrial" values, which persisted and formed the core of private and, at times, collective resistance to the values of industrial capitalism. Alan Dawley, in his book Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn, has pressed these points further and has succeeded in attaching a name to those values which nurtured resistance to the growing power of industrial capital. For Dawley, the belief in "equal rights," rooted in the producer ethic common to both rural and artisan culture, was the ideological source of labor's nineteenth-century oppositional tradition. Whether or not one chooses to call the tradition "equal rights," it is clear that some such oppositional tradition fed the artisan and working-class movement of the 1830s and that its origin antedated that movement. In Pawtucket, an oppositional tradition grew out of the patterns and expectations of rural and artisan culture, the democratic thought of the Revolutionary period, and the experience of adjusting to the vast changes wrought by the introduction of the textile mills.(2)

Pawtucket came to nourish that oppositional tradition because of the particular pattern of its industrial development. A settled artisan community

prior to the introduction of textile mills, Pawtucket was relatively free of those institutions of mill owner control, company-owned houses, stores, and churches, which prominently marked other New England textile villages. Moreover, the presence of artisans provided mill workers with additional sources of support during times of crisis. It is a further purpose of this study to suggest the quality of the relationship between mill workers and artisans, and to assess the strengths and limits of that relationship.

From 1790 to approximately 1820, the village of Pawtucket, located on the banks of the Blackstone River and straddling the Rhode Island-Massachusetts border, was the most important industrial village in the United States. The water-powered cotton textile industry began here in 1790 with Samuel Slater's introduction of the Arkwright system of carding and spinning. By the early 1820s, this village of close to 3000 inhabitants supported eight textile mills, six of them likely involved in both spinning and weaving. The largest and most important of the mills were the two-story, wood-frame Slater Mill, built in 1793 and owned by the English immigrant Slater and the Providence merchants William Almy and Smith Brown, the latter two kinsmen of the wealthy Quaker merchant Moses Brown; the "White Mill," built in wood about 1800, expanded in stone in 1813, and owned by the skilled and upwardly mobile artisan Oziel Wilkinson and three of his sons-in-law; the four-story "Yellow Mill," built in 1805, expanded in 1813, and owned by a group of prominent local merchants including Major Ebenezer Tyler, Nathaniel Croade, Oliver Starkweather, and Eliphalet Slack; and the four-story, stone Wilkinson Mill, built in 1810-11 by Oziel Wilkinson and operated by his son, David. By the early 1830s, the village's textile industry ran approximately 14,000 spindles, over 350 looms, and employed slight less than 500 workers.(3)

Textile mills did not wholly dominate the local economy. Pawtucket had been an iron working center from the mid-seventeenth century. By the early nineteenth century, the village produced anchors, nails, screws for linseed and fish oil presses (some cast, the others turned on David Wilkinson's screw cutting machine, the American forerunner of the slide-rest, industrial lathe), cannons, hollow ware, and assorted castings. The work was done in numerous small forges located along the river, and in a rolling and slitting mill operated by the Wilkinsons. In addition to the iron working shops, Pawtucket's artisans ran a grist

mill, a tannery and bark mill, three snuff mills, one linseed oil mill, three fulling mills, and a clothier's works. The village also had a sizeable ship-building industry. Between 1794 and 1805, one builder, George Robinson, employed nineteen to twenty ship-carpenters and built seventeen vessels ranging in size from eighty to two hundred and eighty tons. This local industry provided a market for the village's ironworkers, but when ship-building collapsed during the embargo years, most of the ship-related iron business collapsed with it. The growth of the textile industry, however, provided a new market for the village's iron works. A few artisans, such as the Wilkinsons, had previous experience in building textile machinery, but significant expansion did not occur until 1812-13. By 1819, on the Rhode Island side alone, there were "six shops engaged in the manufacture of machinery." One year later, the census taker remarked that the machine shops employed "a great number of hands" and built "all kinds of mill machinery." This was a sophisticated and nationally important industry, nurturing such prominent inventors and machine builders as David Wilkinson, Asa Arnold, John Thorp, Larned Pitcher, and James Brown. (4)

Pawtucket, like many English towns, was an industrial village prior to the introduction of textile mills. Unlike the large urban complexes on the Merrimack River or the smaller villages on the Blackstone and Pawtuxet Rivers, Pawtucket experienced capitalist industrialization in a context of both rural experience and artisan tradition. This was not a village like Slatersville, Rhode Island, for example, where the entire physical plant, mills, canals, and class-structured housing, was implanted in an isolated rural community, crystallizing at one moment in time a set of hierarchical relationships which would seem to later generations to be both permanent and inevitable. Pawtucket in 1800 was a community of artisans and farmers, with distinct industrial and pre-industrial traditions, a community in which wealth, status, and power had not coalesced in a consistent pattern. (5)

Class, and class consciousness, emerged in Pawtucket as the textile industry developed. A new and distinct class, consisting of textile mill owners or of wealthy merchants with textile investments, formed itself prior to 1820. The common needs of textile capitalists to recruit and discipline labor, to secure uncontested rights to water power, and to exercise political and social control in the village, drew Pawtucket's mill owners together in fundamental ways.

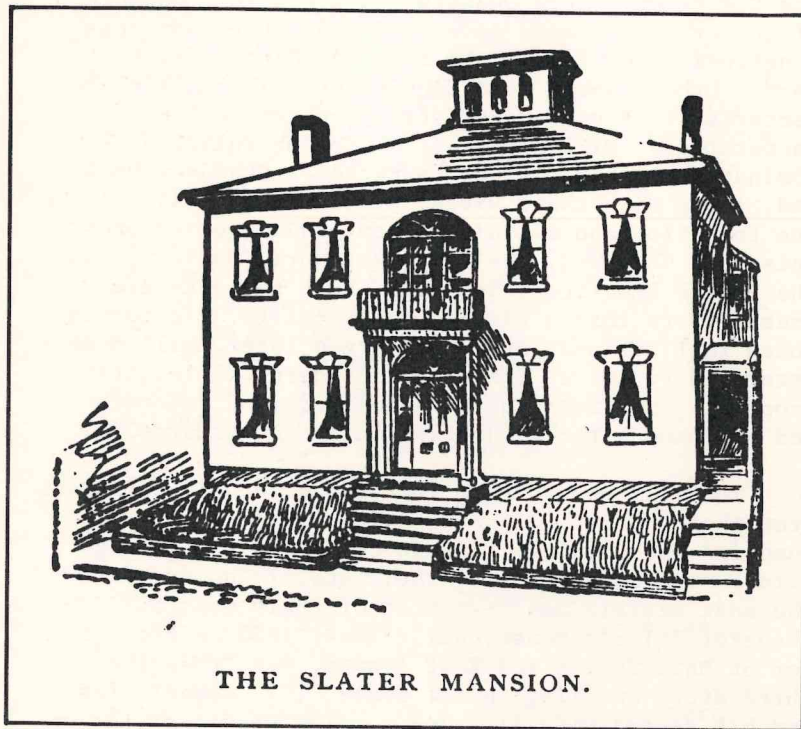
Despite early conflict between Moses Brown and Samuel Slater over the building of the "White Mill," Brown wrote in 1802 that "in order to save the business from immediate ruin we thought best to so far unite so as not to interfere with each other in workmen nor wages." (6) This early agreement set the tone for future cooperation. By the 1820s, Pawtucket's mill owners were accustomed to meeting together to regulate hours and wages and to discuss matters of common interest. (7)

Economic interest was reinforced by kinship and religion. Oziel Wilkinson had three of his sons, Abraham, Isaac, and David, and four sons-in-law, Samuel Slater, Timothy Greene, Hezekiah Howe, and William Wilkinson, involved with him in textile mill ownership. A few of the owners, like the Wilkinsons and the Browns, were Quakers and a distinct network of Quaker businessmen developed along the East coast, a network important in the sale and distribution of yarn. Other owners were Baptist or Episcopalian, but sectarian ties were never strong enough to limit cooperation. Mill owners of different religions dominated the founding of Pawtucket's Sunday School and, along with their wives, played a critical role in the formation and administration of the Baptist and Episcopal Churches, the Pawtucket Moral Society, and the Female Beneficent Society. Such activity expressed more than a simple, shared piety. In forming these institutions, as I will argue later, mill owners attempted to convey their own standards of industry, propriety, and religion to a community of laborers and artisans with frequently distinct standards. (8)

The mill owners were most conspicuously different from their poorer neighbors in their patterns of consumption and display. Though they were the village's sole owners of carriages, their stately houses were the most visible manifestation of their wealth. Ebenezer Tyler's house, built about 1800 on the corner of Main Street and East Avenue, was "then the only three story dwelling in the place." (9) Samuel Slater and his second wife finished a brick structure, begun by Hezekiah Howe, on three East Avenue lots. Bought from Howe in 1819 for \$6,500, the "Slater Mansion" was richly decorated. Wallpaper depicting Oriental scenes embellished one parlor, while the walls of another featured scenes from Scott's Lady of the Lake. On the east side of the river, Oliver Starkweather built his "mansion house" about 1800. The Starkweather House's elaborate detail, quoined corners, ornate entrance, and gabled dormers, rivaled the finest Federal houses of the period. In 1815,

Colonel Eliphalet Slack, involved with Starkweather and Tyler in mill ownership, built an imposing brick house for himself: "For a long period these two were the finest dwellings in Pawtucket on either side of the river. The Walcotts and the Pitchers, who were interested in the cotton manufacture and other industries, erected mansion houses about this time."

(10) Here was starkly visible evidence of the changes brought by the advance of the textile industry. The stately houses of Pawtucket's newly rich were not isolated in rural retreats or even in separate neighborhoods, as they would be later, but were built in more than one neighborhood and in the midst of ruder housing. For some they were affronts to the traditional order, and for the striking textile workers of 1824, they served to focus community animosity.(11)



THE SLATER MANSION.

As late as 1820, Pawtucket was a community primarily composed of artisans. A few, like the metal-working Jenkses, had deep roots both in the village and in their trade, but the majority were recent migrants from the countryside who entered Pawtucket in the period of industrial expansion which followed the Revolution. The term artisan, or mechanic (as they were then known), encompassed a variety of trades

and masked subtle differences in status, work routine, wealth, and power. Some master artisans, like the highly-skilled Wilkinsons, were critical of the development of the textile industry, and their values and allegiances developed accordingly. For every master, however, there were many more apprentices and journeymen, as well as others for whom the customary forms of apprenticeship were largely meaningless. The village's ship-carpenters, for example, worked as wage laborers in gangs as large as twenty under a single master ship-builder and with little opportunity for advancement. And with the rapid growth of textile machine shops in the years of embargo and war, many machinists and metal-workers became increasingly subject to distinctively capitalist forms of business organization. These artisans thus experienced a loss of autonomy similar to, though not as extreme as, that which confronted the village's textile workers.(13)

Pawtucket's artisans were men poised in the middle, with the lure of independent proprietorship on the one side, the disgrace of downward mobility into the ranks of factory labor on the other. Historians know more about the successful, those such as Oziel Wilkinson who rose to industrial prominence and took a leading part in town politics. But for every

Wilkinson there were many more like the Smithfield shoemaker, Stafford Benchley, forced to give up his trade and to enter a local textile mill with his family in order to meet mounting debts.(14)

The chance for upward mobility was one factor affecting whether artisans identified with those above them or with those below them in the new industrial hierarchy. Craftsmen and laborers like the ship-carpenters, nail-makers, and others whose time was hired by master artisans, were likely to identify with the village's textile workers. The ship-carpenters, in particular, whose work was seasonal and who returned to local farms in the winter, adhered to a loose and traditional pattern of work close to the rhythms of agricultural life. Stigmatized by the local Baptist minister as "wanting in stability," the ship-carpenters were the natural allies of the textile workers whose behavior invoked identical, if harsher, comment. Other artisans, particularly those master machinists who saw their fate directly linked to the textile industry, accepted the values and ideology of mill owners. In their attitudes and behavior, in their standards of work, time discipline, and moral propriety, they were among the village's "respectables."

Independent proprietorship and "respectable" behavior, however, did not necessarily imply deference to mill owners. Direct conflict between artisans and mill owners occurred remarkably early. When the Slater Mill was built in 1793 it was necessary to build a second dam on the Blackstone a short distance upstream of Pawtucket Falls. The building of the Slater Mill dam restricted the flow of water available to the iron-workers John, Stephan, and Eleazer Jenks, whose ancestors were the first to use the Pawtucket Falls water privilege. The Jenkses responded, in the words of the court case which followed, by "illegally and violently" pulling down the upper dam. This act of sabotage was only the first instance in a prolonged and acrimonious local conflict over the fair apportioning of the Blackstone's power. (15)

Even among other "respectable" artisans, who seemed to subscribe to the values of mill owners, there was considerable ambivalence. In the early 1820s, local artisans formed the Pawtucket Mechanics Society apart from the prior organization of the mill owners and their agents. None of the Society's numerous officers were mill owners. At a dinner meeting of the Society held in the Smithfield Hotel, March 20, 1828, the artisans offered toasts to the "American System," to Henry Clay (the "Champion of Freedom"), and to General Jackson: "in the hands of a mad opposition he would cut the throat of his country." Each of the toasts reflects a political culture shared by mill owners and artisans. However, the meeting was held in celebration of the traditional ending of the use of artificial light for late-afternoon labor in the textile mills. This was an authentic element of working-class culture in New England mill towns. In Lowell, "blowing out" balls customarily marked the 20th of March, and the practice continued in Rhode Island at least into the 1850s. (16)

It is not surprising that Pawtucket artisans identified with those below them in the new industrial hierarchy. Many had directly experienced the changes brought by capitalist organization. Others observed for themselves the increased use of unskilled labor, the new discipline of the factory, and the emergence of a wealthy elite. In the bonds of experience, common culture, and kinship, the lives of lesser artisans and mill workers were linked. These links strengthened and made more visible Pawtucket's resistance to the claims of capital. There is an important and growing literature on the centrality of artisan leadership both to the American and to the European trade union movement. But the evidence from Pawtucket indicates

relatively little direct leadership by artisans, at least before the 1830s. During this decade, local artisans played a critical role in the formation of the area's first labor paper, The New England Artisan, and in the establishment of the first regional labor organization, the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Workingmen. The strike of 1824 was led, not by artisans, but by the young women weavers. The artisan presence was important, however, because it provided mill workers with additional resources of experience and support. This alliance between mill workers and artisans was most noticeable during times of crisis. Yet at other times, and increasingly through the 1830s for reasons to be explored in the conclusion, that alliance appeared fragile and incomplete, its promise never fully realized. (17)

Pawtucket's textile workers were generally recruited in family units from nearby farms. Large families were prized by the early spinning mills because of the industry's need for child labor. In 1820, children constituted more than two-thirds of Pawtucket's textile work force. A sizeable number of adults, and some children were, however, employed outside the factories, for this was an industry only partially mechanized. In its first twenty to thirty years, the spinning mills of Pawtucket depended on hand-loom weavers and hand pickers. The latter were workers who, in their own homes, opened the raw cotton by hand, separated the fibers and removed the excess dirt and seeds. The weavers, often farmers or members of farm families, produced finished cloth from yarn furnished by the mills at a rate fixed by the mill owners. Because of the nature of production, numerous local families came into direct contact with the new textile industry. (18)

The mechanization of picking and weaving in cotton textiles took place between 1814 and 1825 and was essentially complete in Pawtucket by 1824. Machine pickers and power looms increased production and altered the composition of the work force. More young women entered the factories to tend the new power looms. Labor was sufficiently scarce throughout this period to require mill owners to lure their new labor with cash wages. One Pawtucket company advertised in 1821 for "Twenty-four good Water Loom Weavers, to whom good wages will be given, part cash, or all, if particularly required." The increased rate of work made it difficult for small children to keep pace and by the mid-1820s they were rarely used as production workers. Children remained in the mills in

a variety of auxiliary jobs, most of which involved moving stock from one point in the production process to the next. The percentage of children in Pawtucket's cotton mills declined from almost 70 percent of the total work force in 1820 to approximately 40 percent in 1831. Over the same period, the percentage of women increased from about 16 percent to over 30 percent, while the percentage of adult men increased from about 15 percent to about 25 percent. By 1824, Pawtucket's textile mills exhibited a fully mature factory system, a system which necessarily incorporated a much larger number of adult workers.(19)

Pawtucket's mill workers did not adjust easily to the demands of industrial capitalism. Freshly drawn from the tasks of farm labor, they were not yet accustomed to the methodical, attention-demanding, and repetitive nature of factory work, nor to the new strictures of a day's work solely defined by the factory bell. They expressed their independence from the mill owners in a number of critical ways. During various times in the industry's first decade, parents disrupted production by removing their children from the Slater Mill at random moments in the day; hand-pickers refused to work with dirty cotton; children refused to clean ice from the water wheel; five to six male workers left Slater's employ in a dispute over wages to begin a mill of their own; and during berry picking season in July 1796, most of Slater's outworkers chose to pick whortleberries rather than clean cotton.(20)

The village's textile workers expressed their independence outside the factory as well, to the discomfort of moralists such as the Baptist minister, David Benedict: "The cotton mill business had brought in a large influx of people who came in the second-class cars. Such was the prejudice against the business that few others could be had, and the highways and hedges had to be searched even for them....There was a set of old and staid inhabitants of a very respectable class, who made up their minds to live here the best way they could. But when strangers came here who had been accustomed to a good state of society, they made loud complaints, and their censures were frequent and free. Bang-all, Hard-scrabble, Bung-town, Pilfershire, etc., were with them appropriate epithets for the place."(21) Elsewhere, Benedict referred to Pawtucket as a "nest of corruption and disorder,"(22) and one of the village's nineteenth-century historians argued that the first generation of local mill workers had a reputation for "rough, rude, and boisterous behavior, for drunkenness and debauchery."(23)

These are of course class-biased comments, but they indicate the extent to which Pawtucket's workers lived beyond the comfortable propriety of church-going mill owners. By all accounts, local mill workers drank heavily. The village's dozen taverns were not closely licensed and local production of liquor was extensive. In 1820, there were sixteen cider mills in North Providence producing 900 barrels a year. In the same year, a single local resident, Oliver Holmes, brewed 800 barrels of beer, and a local cooper, Edmund Shelton, worked full-time in the production of rum barrels. The minister and deacons of Pawtucket's First Baptist Church continually expressed concern over the drinking habits of church members. The church elders were equally preoccupied with sexual misdeeds. Even among church members (a decided minority of the population) the incidence of pre- and extra-marital sex was marked, though only women seem to have been singled out for the ritualized investigations. Such investigations were most often followed by confession, excommunication, and on occasion, by readmission to church "fellowship." In their drinking habits and their sexual behavior, the village's workers conformed to the more openly secular standards of the late eighteenth century, a period noted for its alcoholic consumption and for its high rate of pre-marital pregnancy, the highest of any period in American history prior to the 1960s. (24)

The mill workers also distinguished themselves from the mill owners and their supporters by their recreation. The primary summer sport, both for children and adults, consisted of swimming in the Blackstone. The nude swimming of adolescent boys elicited middle-class outrage, but not as much as the practice of high diving. It became customary for boys, swimming both at the noon hour and after work, to challenge each other to jump from large rocks at the river's edge and from the Main Street bridge into the eddy below the falls. The "boldest" of the jumpers was the mule spinner Sam Patch, who began his short but brilliant career as a nationally prominent daredevil by jumping off the four-story "Yellow Mill" into the river. Patch, the best-known Pawtucket resident of his time, attracted large local crowds and, according to one account, left the village after "people began to object" to his performances. He became a traveling "professional," immortalized in nineteenth-century folklore.(25)

The mill owners made concerted efforts to control the behavior of the village's workers by establishing churches, moral reform societies, and temper-

ance organizations, all institutions designed to buttress the values and ideology of industrial capitalism. Their efforts, reflecting a desire to achieve cultural hegemony in the village, were similar to those of American industrialists elsewhere in this period. Paul Faler, in his study of Lynn, Massachusetts in the early nineteenth century, has described the attempt of local manufacturers to create an "industrial morality," emphasizing order, inner discipline, propriety, and the work ethic.(26) Pawtucket's mill owners adhered to the same morality and attempted to extend its reach to the entire village. In 1815, two years after a significant expansion in textile mill capacity, the owners formed the Pawtucket Moral Society to "combat the irreligion and licentiousness" said to be connected with rapid population increase. The mill owner Timothy Greene was its first president, Oliver Starkweather and Samuel Slater, its first vice-presidents. Its objects were to "suppress intemperance," "profane swearing," and "breaches of the Sabbath."(27) The latter problem was particularly vexing. It became customary for the Baptist Church to appoint a committee each year "to preserve order in and about the meeting house in time of service."(28) Like the children of Slatersville, Rhode Island, who in this period played ball "before the doors" of the meeting house "all the time of service," most of Pawtucket's workers viewed Sunday, not as a day of religious observance, but as a time for rest and recreation.(29) Recognizing the difficulty of changing the behavior of workers through voluntary organizations, local mill owners also attempted to increase police power. In June 1814, mill owners and their supporters petitioned the Rhode Island General Assembly for authorization to form a local police force "for the punishing of such persons who may be disturbers of the peace." The twenty-five signers admitted that "it has often been found difficult to preserve order and due subordination."(30)

Throughout this period few mill workers joined churches. Over all, no more than 15 percent of the area's population belonged to Pawtucket's churches. First Baptist, formed in 1805 and dominated by mill owners Starkweather, Tyler, Croade, and Slack, had less than 200 members in 1820. Some mill workers clearly joined the church, particularly in periods of economic depression, but they did not do so in great numbers. St. Paul's, an Episcopal Church formed in 1815 with the active support of Slater, David Wilkinson, Barney Merry, and the Greenes, had 309 members in 1824, many of whom were children. For a time, it faced the village's "bitter hostility," perhaps be-

cause of its associations with British aristocracy and high-church ritual. It is likely that the only workers who joined were recent British immigrants like Edward Jones, who in 1820 lived in a mill worker tenement. The one church free of mill owner influence at its inception was the Free-Will Baptist, formed by Ray Potter in 1820 with a membership of only sixty to seventy. In 1821, mill owner and church member Daniel Greene, hostile to Potter's encouragement of revivalism and religious "enthusiasm", set a portion of the congregation against Potter and gained control of the church. Potter's published defense was cast in the form of a sermon on the Biblical text, "Do not rich men oppress you? lo to ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you." Greene's successful bid to control Free-Will Baptist established the authority of mill owners over the village's only evangelical sect, one whose beliefs were implicitly democratic and whose practice was, on occasion, disruptive of public order.(31)

The independence of Pawtucket's mill workers was nurtured on the rocky and unyielding soil of New England's hard-scrabble farms, and derived in part from standards of work, leisure, and customary right characteristic of non-commodity production, a form which Michael Merrill has recently termed the household mode of production. This was a cultural inheritance reinforced by the responses of farmers themselves to the coming of the spinning mills. Many of the mill workers who migrated from local farms in the first thirty years of textile mill development carried with them the knowledge that their neighbors and kinsmen had previously defied the encroachment of textile mill owners and other industrialists. The farmers of Waterford, Rhode Island, for example, opposed the building of a woolen mill and "placed all the obstacles which they could in its way." Other farmers contested mill owners over matters of tax policy, road building, and town division. But the most pervasive form of conflict saw farmers invoking stout definitions of customary right in a long series of disputes over water power. In so doing, their actions evoke the outlines of what E.P. Thompson has identified as a "moral economy of the poor" in eighteenth-century England: "a traditional view of social norms and obligations, of the proper economic functions of several parties within the community." (32) Dams built to provide water power for textile mills or iron furnaces had two serious consequences for those farmers who lived above the dams. First,



the building of a new dam sufficient to power those industries which required a substantial and a continuous flow, significantly raised water levels upstream and frequently flooded arable farm land. This occurred in Valley Falls, Scituate, and Manville, Rhode Island. In two of the cases, the aggrieved farmers won court cases against the mill owners, but the fines imposed were not high, and the upstream lands remained under water. The flooding of good farm land caused bitterness. One resident of Valley Falls, a Blackstone River mill town just above Pawtucket, pointedly complained that "one of two of the best farms in the region [was] forever submerged under the waters of the created [mill] pond." (33) Second, the building of dams the width of the river forced curtailment of the seasonal fish runs. Reducing the number of fish in the river had serious consequences for farmers and fishermen accustomed to the traditional spawning of shad, alewives, and salmon at Woonsocket Falls. Before the extensive damming of the Blackstone, according to one report, "salmon were very plentiful, so much so that they formed the chief article in the farmer's bill of fare." (34) Conflict over fishing rights had divided the village previously. In 1714, local residents cut a fishway, known as Sargeant's Trench, around the Pawtucket Falls on the west bank. When the fishway failed in its purpose, anti-industrial interests were strong enough to have the Rhode Island General Assembly declare the Blackstone a "public" river and to make it lawful to break down or blow up the rocks at Pawtucket Falls to "let fish pass up." (35) The controversy festered until the damming of the river in 1792-93, and the refusal of both the Court of Common Pleas in Taunton, Massachusetts and the Rhode Island General Assembly to act against the mill owners effectively ended any hope of redress for the farmers and fishermen. (36)

The oppositional elements of eighteenth-century rural culture were given political direction by the popular democratic thought of the Revolutionary period. The villagers were active partisans of the Revolution and maintained strong democratic values. Some of Rehoboth's farmers, for instance, participated in Shays' Rebellion and gained the support of a majority of the town's freemen, and the voters of North Providence played an important and continuing part in efforts to expand the restrictive Rhode Island suffrage. As a consequence of such traditions, many of the villagers opposed the textile mills as a British importation. It was, of course, not uncommon in this period for many Americans to view British manufacturing as a threat to democratic liberties and

as an assault upon equality. According to Benedict, there was prejudice against Slater because he was an Englishman, prejudice which "lasted some time, and attached to everything pertaining to cotton manufacturing." Pawtucket's textile workers thus inherited a democratic and equalitarian culture, suspicious of textile mill owners and resistant to "industrial" values, a culture with its roots in eighteenth-century agricultural life and in the traditions of the Revolutionary period. (37)

This oppositional culture formed a common heritage for many textile workers throughout New England, but it was especially vibrant in Pawtucket because mill owners had to build their institutions and impress their values within a pre-existing community with strong internal ties. In their first thirty years in Pawtucket, textile mill owners altered the physical landscape with their large mills and stately houses, greatly increased the numbers of unskilled laborers by employing women and children, introduced new definitions of time, work, and leisure, and attempted to secure political and cultural control of the village. Their hegemony, however, was never secure. Despite their wealth, and despite the increasingly restrictive Rhode Island suffrage, they rarely controlled town politics. This meant that they not only had to face recalcitrant work habits, but that they could not mobilize a majority of freemen in their efforts to win uncontested rights to water power, freedom from local taxes, and a free hand in disciplining their child laborers. Moreover, this was a village which had no rows of company housing, and no church until 1805. There was one company-run store, but it had no monopoly of local business since it sold its wares alongside numerous other stores. The buttressing institutions of early capitalism were consequently weaker here than elsewhere in New England. Pawtucket was also a community in which the experiential ties among lesser artisans, farmers, and mill workers were especially strong, and likely reinforced by kinship and marriage. This became increasingly evident after the introduction of the power loom, when large numbers of young, unmarried women, the daughters of local artisans, farmers, and mill workers entered the mills to tend the new looms. Unlike the young mill women of Lowell, who developed strong and cohesive ties to each other but had none to the local community (and who consequently lost their strikes of the early 1830s), the weavers of Pawtucket not only drew strength from each other, but from the community as well. This was a lesson brought home to the village's mill owners in the spring of 1824. (38)

The strike of 1824 was precipitated by the decisions of local mill owners on May 24 to run their mills one hour longer and to reduce, by approximately 25 percent, the wages of "those who weave by the yard." The owners, acting in concert, intended the changes to take effect June 1. Increasing the work day was to be accomplished by reducing the "time allowed at the several meals." This would bear equally on all workers. Reducing weaving piece-rates, however, would affect only the young women weavers. (39)

The owners' rationale was explicit. They referred to conditions of "general depression" in a report justifying their actions, which was published after the strike. They believed themselves to be paying 10-20 percent more for the same work than "any manufacturing district in the union." Their factories were running fewer hours than others to their knowledge. One newspaper report mentioned the recent tariff as a cause of the mill owners' action, but the owners themselves did not discuss it. The owners displayed a remarkable willingness to reveal their competitive disadvantages. If the economic arguments were not sufficient to convince a hostile community that their actions were responsible, the owners summoned one further argument. They claimed that the women weavers made \$2.00 a week "above their board" and that this was "generally considered to be extravagant wages for young women." It was, the owners continued, much more than the women could earn elsewhere, and was a sum "out of proportion to the wages of other help." This latter statement can be interpreted to mean that some weavers, at least, were making more money than unskilled men. (40)

There is no evidence of "general depression" in 1824. It is clear, however, that by the early 1820's the cotton textile industry was first feeling the effects of the capitalist trade cycle. Earlier periods of economic crisis could be traced partly to political causes. The stronger producers had weathered the overexpansion of the embargo years and the subsequent dumping of British goods at the close of the War of 1812. Beginning in 1819-20, though, the entire industry began to experience periodic bursts of over-production and declining cloth prices in the context of a volatile and largely uncontrolled market--conditions which haunted the industry throughout the nineteenth century. In the early nineteenth century markets could not be created fast enough, nor be sufficiently stabilized, to keep pace with the

thrusts of technological innovation. (41)

Productivity, measured by annual cloth output, rose from 1820 to 1824 by a factor of four, from 13,844,000 yards to 55,777,000 yards. This was primarily the result of the introduction of the power loom. Over the same period, and following the same logic, the average annual price of brown sheeting on the New York market dropped precipitously, from 24.4 cents per yard to 14.6 cents per yard, the sharpest drop coming between 1823 and 1824 (20.7 cents per yard to 14.6 cents per yard). Combined with a steep rise in the average annual price of middling cotton (11.4 cents per pound in 1823, 14.8 cents per pound in 1824), these figures suggest that New England textile mill owners found themselves during the spring of 1824 in deteriorating economic circumstances. (42)

These trends were generally reflected in Pawtucket. The Pawtucket Cotton Manufacturing Company (the name of the "Yellow Mill" company by 1832) experienced a decline in the price of brown shirting from 30 cents per yard in 1816 to 12.5 cents per yard in 1824. Profits for 1824 were 8 percent, compared to 15 percent the year earlier and to 10 percent in each of the two subsequent years. The early 1820's were also years of serious drought in Pawtucket. Lack of water forced mills to lie idle in the late summer, further contributing to the economic difficulties of local mill owners. (43)

It is not surprising, therefore, that Pawtucket mill owners sought to cut labor costs, for these were the only major costs over which they had control. Their decision to reduce the rates of women weavers may be seen as shrewd calculation. The weavers were the newest entrants to the factory system. Since no real labor market existed for women prior to textile mill development, it can be assumed that young female weavers had no highly developed sense of a customary wage. The mill owners evidently believed that the weavers would not respond to a wage cut as forcefully as male laborers. And since piece-rates for power weaving were a new and still experimental form of payment, it is likely that female weavers of sufficient skill and dexterity were able to make more money than unskilled males, as the owners seemed to charge. The owners were willing to exploit the issue, perhaps assuming that it would divide the work force. They miscalculated badly. (44)

Though the increase in hours and reduction in rates were not to go into effect for a week, the wor-

kers responded immediately. The local manufacturers' press provided a detailed account of the beginning of the "turnout": "When the laboring part of the community learned the result of the meeting [this was the meeting of owners on May 24], they very generally determined to work only the usual hours; and when the bell rang to call them to their employment, they assembled in great numbers, accompanied by many who were not interested in the affair, round the doors of the mill, apparently for the purpose of hindering or preventing the entrance of those [willing to work], no force, however, was used."(45) The "turn-out" closed all the textile mills in the village and was supported by "many" who did not work in the mills. Moreover, it elicited the spontaneous and militant action of the young women weavers. The Manufacturers' and Farmers' Journal continued its account with patriarchal disdain: "The female weavers assembled in parliament to the number, it is stated of one hundred and two--one of the most active, and most talkative, was placed in the chair, and the meeting,



Bobbin-winder

it is understood, was conducted, however strange it may appear, without noise, or scarcely a single speech. The result of the meeting was a resolution to abandon their looms, unless allowed the old prices."(46)

Though the young women weavers very quickly took a leading role in the "turn-out," they did not act alone. They were supported by a substantial part of the village, and this was made clear on the evening of May 26. According to the Journal: "On Wednesday evening a tumultuous crowd filled the streets, led by the most unprincipled and disorderly part of the village, and made an excessive noise--they visited successively the houses of the manufacturers, shouting, exclaiming and using every imaginable term of abuse and insult. The window in the yellow mill was broken in--but the riot, considering the character of those who led, and the apparent want of all reflection in those that followed, was not so injurious to property and personal security, as might have been reasonably apprehended. The next day the manufacturers shut their gates and the mills have not run since."(46) Like the eighteenth-century mobs analyzed by recent historians, the crowd in Pawtucket acted with restraint and deliberation to defend accepted community standards and a broadly defined notion of the public good. The owners' intention to cut wages and increase hours, while justified by the new standards of capitalist entrepreneurship, threatened to degrade the village's mill laborers and to intensify their exploitation. The community's immediate and unambiguous response served notice of a different set of standards, one rooted in an artisan culture with a profound sense of the dignity of labor. It is significant that the community chose the mill owners' houses as objects of its anger, for they were the village's chief symbols of aristocratic pretense, the physical embodiments of the anti-democratic thrust of textile industrialism.(48)

The strike continued through the remainder of the week and into the next. The Journal's account, published on May 31, indicates continued unrest: "The citizens of Pawtucket have, for a few days past, been in a state of excitement and disorder, which reminds us of the accounts we frequently read of the tumults of manufacturing places in England, though unattended with the destruction and damage usually accompanying those riots."(49) There is no record of further organized and public activity by the strikers. However, early on the morning of June 1, a fire broke out in a section of the "Yellow Mill." The Journal re-

marked that it was "evidently the work of an incendiary." (50) Fire enveloped seven bales of cotton near a window, but was discovered quickly enough to prevent major damage.

The deliberate burning of textile mills was not uncommon in early nineteenth-century New England. One historian of industrial Rhode Island asserts that "many of the early mill fires were reported to be of incendiary origin." (51) In Pawtucket alone more than five attempts were made to burn cotton mills or related structures in the period 1811-1820. On October 5, 1811 at 1:30 AM, the iron-slitting mill of Oziel Wilkinson was burned, and the fire spread to a workshop owned by Almy, Brown, and Slater, causing considerable damage. (52) Three nights later, fire was discovered in the Slater Mill, but was put out before serious damage was done. Samuel Slater, in a letter to Almy and Brown, stated that "[m]any are of opinion it was set on fire wilfully," though Slater himself did not wish to believe it. (53) On February 1, 1814, the Rhode Island American reported that "[s]everal attempts have been made to set fire to the cotton mills in Pawtucket." The newspaper interpreted the attempts as political attacks against the Federalist mill owners. (54) Then, in early May, 1820, three fires were set in a five day period, two of which involved cotton mills. (55) These acts were a form of anonymous resistance to the textile industry and the factory system, and part of a larger underground tradition employing arson for the redress of grievances both public and private. And if we wish to glimpse something of the attitude of mill workers to the burning of their mills, there is the remarkable statement of a nineteenth-century Rhode Island historian who, in commenting on the changing relations of workers and owners since the depression of 1837, asserted that "[n]o body of men would now stand by and cheer at the destruction of their employers' mill, as they did when that of William Harris, at Valley Falls, was being devoured by the flames." (56)

The burning of textile mills seems to have declined by the 1830s as the working-class movement became increasingly committed to public organization and agitation; yet at its high point, this form of resistance was vigorous enough to prompt changes in mill construction. By the 1820s, the majority of new textile mills were constructed of stone rather than wood, and in the same decade, Rhode Island mill owner Zachariah Allen developed a form of "slow-burning" interior construction designed to resist the effects of fire. Wood beams of large cross-section and

floors three to four inches thick replaced the traditional use of smaller beams, joists, and single-ply floors. Adopted as a response both to the "normal" fire hazards of buildings full of loose cotton and fast-running machinery, as well as to the high incidence of arson, masonry mills with "slow-burning" interiors became commonplace by the 1830s. (57)

Mill owners in this period were well aware of the possibility of arson. The attempt to burn Walcott's Mill may have encouraged Pawtucket's owners to settle quickly, for the strike came to an end almost immediately after this incident. There are only two pieces of evidence relating to the strike's conclusion. On June 3, the Journal reported that the "ferment" in Pawtucket had "subsided," and the mills were "generally in operation." On June 5, the Providence Patriot stated that "the Pawtucket mills are again in operation, under a compromise between the employers and the employed." This is not unqualified victory, but the compromise settlement underscores both the inability of Pawtucket's mill owners to dominate the village and the strength of the community's opposition. (58)

On June 2, the day after the fire at Walcott's Mill, the mill owners met at Blake's Hotel. A committee of five was appointed to draft a statement for the local newspapers. Among other things, the statement was designed to refute "a report...industriously circulated" that the recent changes were "for the purpose of tyrannizing over, and oppressing the people employed in [the owners'] factories." Two days later, after the strike had been finally settled, the owners met "at the usual place" to issue their report. This is the same report which freely and candidly revealed the wage scale, the hours of operation, and the comparative disadvantages of Pawtucket's mill owners. The tone is defensive and the act of writing deliberate. This was no hasty nor poorly conceived response, but the act of a committee proceeding with due consideration, and attentive to public opinion. The strike was clearly perceived as a matter of consequence. The owners took seriously the threat to their reputation and went to unusual lengths to "remove all impressions...prejudicial to the manufacturers" of their village. On one level, this reflected the owners' fear that if such impressions gained currency, they would have a harder time recruiting workers. On another, more fundamental level, the owners' response was an indication of the incomplete and still fragile hegemony of industrial capitalism. Despite the workers' recourse to the strike, a weapon both new and of

doubtful legality, it was the owners who felt called upon to defend themselves.(59)

The text of the owners' report is significant, not simply for what it says, but for what it does not say. With the exception of the owners' aggressive stance on the wages of women weavers, they made no direct attack on the workers. They did not mention the organized crowd, the insults and epithets, the damage to property, or the attempted arson. Within the developing ideology of industrial capitalism, the owners could have used any or all of these incidents to mount a damning attack on Pawtucket's workers. Yet, they did not do so. Given the history of Pawtucket, the mill owners' defensiveness is understandable. They knew that a direct attack on the workers would not have been supported by the community. This is not the sort of defensiveness one expects to find among nineteenth-century capitalists, but in 1824 the future success of industrial capitalism was far from assured. If the mill owners of Pawtucket did not act like men confident of their own values, there were reasons for it which were deeply rooted in the village's past.

In the immediate aftermath of the strike, a special meeting of the North Providence Town Council was called. With authorization provided by the annual town meeting two days earlier, Abraham Wilkinson, Timothy Greene, and Caleb Drown petitioned the Council to appoint a night watch in the fire district of Pawtucket. The town granted the petition and the three were authorized to select a watch and to "provide a suitable building as a Watch house and Bridewell to confine any person or persons...disturbing the peace and quiet."(60) The watch, established because of the owners' fear of continued arson, was organized to guard the town and the owners' property from 9:00 PM to sunrise. The cost, however, was to be borne, not by the town, but by the petitioners. While seemingly sympathetic to the owners' fears, the good citizens of the town had no intention of paying for the mill owners' protection.

While the mill owners and freemen of North Providence considered the role of local government in protecting private property, local mule spinners were busy organizing. For approximately three weeks, both the Journal and the Patriot carried notices announcing a meeting of "Mule-Spinners in the State of Rhode Island and vicinity" to be held July 5 at Joseph

Randall's Inn, Smithfield, just one mile from Pawtucket. The purpose of the meeting was to organize a society of mule spinners and "to establish rules and regulations for the government thereof." In many ways it was a remarkable notice, indicative of the spinners' newly felt power. The spinners could have met on the previous day. They chose instead to meet in the middle of a working day, curtailing production for the time they were out. Unfortunately, we know nothing more. The press carried no account of the meeting, and organizational records have not survived.(61)

In the face of the workers' efforts to organize, the mill owners continued their attempts to establish cultural control. In the fall of 1826, 200 residents met in the Pawtucket Hotel in support of the newly organized temperance movement. A petition signed by the village's leading figures, was addressed to the Rhode Island General Assembly asking for authorization to pass more stringent licensing laws. It was granted immediately, but because of local opposition, could not be effectively implemented in the village.(62) On July 4, 1827, the owners sponsored their most impressive act of public theater. Three hundred to four hundred young boys from the village's Sunday Schools, wearing "the look of health, cheerfulness and prosperity," paraded alongside a gala float drawn by six white horses. The float contained a loom and spinning frame operated by a crank leading from one of the axles: "On a flag floating over the machinery, were the names, H. Clay, H. Niles, and M. Carey [three of the manufacturers' most effective propagandists], and attached to the flag-staff was a placard 'Encourage National Industry, under this we prosper'."(63) The loom wove, in the course of the parade, eight or fifteen yards of cloth, depending on accounts.(64)

The effectiveness of these institutions was limited. Most of Pawtucket's workers remained unruly and resistant to the values of the mill owners. In March 1828, the mill owners on the Massachusetts side offered one answer. After a petition to the Massachusetts legislature, the town of Pawtucket, Massachusetts was constituted as a distinct entity. Its first town clerk was J.C. Starkweather, and its three selectmen were mill owners, and five of its seven tax assessors. For the first time, mill owners controlled at least part of the village. Rhode Island mill owners made similar efforts. At the August town meeting, they proposed to split Pawtucket from North Providence. The proposal was first postponed and later dropped. Pawtucket was not separated from North

The mill owners' efforts at political control aroused new opposition. In the fall of 1828, the editorial column of the Pawtucket Chronicle gave notice of a significant, and perhaps unique, effort at community alliance against the mill owners. The villagers had "promptly and liberally" raised \$500, at public subscription, for a town clock to be placed in the new Congregational Church then being built on the Massachusetts side. The Chronicle expressed the need for such a clock with clarity: "A time-piece which can be depended upon as a regulator, located in so central and public a situation as the new Congregational Church, will be of great utility in this village--All are aware of the vexatious confusion occasioned by the ringing of the factory bells at this time, and which can only be remedied by erecting a clock that will always give 'the time of day'."(66) The clock was erected to counter the mill owners' monopoly of public time. In the absence of such a public clock, the village and its workers, were at the mercy of the factory bells and the owners' definition of time. Thomas LeFavour prior to becoming a mill owner himself, worked from dawn to 7:30 PM, "or what they called half-past seven, for the clock used to be figured to suit the owners."(67) Even advertisements for workers carried references to a work day, not defined by the number of hours, but by the factory bell. J. Underwood and Company advertised in the fall of 1821 for twenty to thirty weavers "willing to work six whole days in each week, and attend their Looms all bell hours." (68) The clock, as the Chronicle indicated, would reduce confusion, but more importantly, it would directly challenge the mill owners' power to define public time. The erection of the clock represented a genuine victory for Pawtucket's workers, but the victory had been won on terms set by the mill owners. Workers would now have a public standard to gauge and resist the owners' capriciousness, but the new clock sanctioned the concept of industrial time and limited the scope of future conflict.

Two conflicting trends are visible in the 1830s. The early years of the decade saw the first flowering of national labor unrest as trade societies, labor newspapers, regional labor associations, and Workingmen's Parties were formed. But the militance of such labor radicals as the Providence carpenter Seth Luther was at times tinged with despair. Luther saw the power and influence of labor slipping away. He

believed that the press was not open to the laboring class, and feared that the control of mill owners over their workers was becoming more overt, and that the possibility for education was increasingly beyond the grasp of working people. In this period, mill owners consolidated their power, tightened discipline in the factory, and increased the pace of production. Potential labor alliances were weakened because of the small number of mill workers who participated in sustained organization.(69) The New Haven delegates to the third convention of the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and Other Workingmen complained in October 1833 that: "The absence of delegates from the factory villages gives reason to fear that the operatives in the factories are already subdued to the bidding of their employers--that they have felt the chains riveted upon themselves and their children and despair of redemption. The Farmers and Mechanics, then, are the last hope of the American people."(70)

The organization of mill workers in this period was fraught with difficulty. Textile factory hands were divided by age, sex, and skill and were peculiarly subject to the imposition of a competitive work culture structured by piece rates, and divisive of group solidarity. Further, they were a mobile and transitory population, described by one contemporary source as a "succession of learners," and not yet imbued with a sense of permanence as a factory proletariat. And finally, they were largely isolated in small rural villages, frequently without access to taverns or halls not owned by the mills. This isolation restricted their contact, not only with other mill workers, but with the artisan radicals who played such a major role in the labor movement of the 1830s. (71)

Beyond this, however, the alliance between mill workers and artisans, as important as it was in Pawtucket during times of crisis, was in other respects fragile and incomplete. No firm explanation for this is yet possible, but two reasons may be suggested. Paul Faler has argued that the artisan radicals of Lynn adhered to a form of "industrial morality," which embraced temperance, frugality, moral discipline and propriety. Through their emphasis on education, self-help, and organization, these workers turned this morality against the claims of capital. For many textile workers, who adhered to a more traditional sense of time, work, and leisure, this was a stern and unattractive morality. Cultural differences could be overcome, but they were a hindrance to sustained and

organized collective action. Secondly, although there was a strong identity of interest and experience between mill workers and lesser artisans, the scope and depth of that identity was limited by the attenuated development of the American textile industry. Unlike Britain, the United States had no large network of traditional textile craftsmen, weavers, framework knitters, and wool croppers, whose trades were threatened by foreign competition, price-cutting, and the introduction of machine technology. The displaced British artisans, through their own experience, grasped the central contradictions of the new economic order: increased productivity attended by unemployment and the promise of a new machine age accompanied by the tyranny of the factory and the degradation of the craft. Through such understanding they provided the radical leaven for the British working-class movement, and thereby narrowed the ideological gap between the producer ethic, with its powerful and continuing artisan vision of individual proprietorship, and the class consciousness of industrial workers. The absence of these crafts in the United States eliminated one whole level of resistance and a major link between mill workers and artisans. The labor movement of the 1830s was unable to make up the deficiency through its own resources.(72)

Despite the absence of mill workers in the counsels of the New England Association, Pawtucket's tradition of opposition to textile industrialism did not entirely die. Its outlines are visible throughout the early 1830s, in the continued conflict over the mill owners' definition of time, in the organization of a cooperative store, and in the formation of the New England Artisan. With the depression of 1837, the base for continued opposition was weakened. The depression took its toll, closing mills and scattering workers. Pawtucket did not recover until the coming of the railroad and the Irish in the late 1840s. Even in the 1840s, however, one sees evidence of a continuation of Pawtucket's anti-authoritarianism. Like other mill villages, Pawtucket provided critical support for the pro-suffrage party of Thomas Dorr. The effort to revise the colonial charter and to expand the suffrage beyond its restrictive property qualifications was first led by laborers and artisans. Though the movement was later dominated by middle-class elements, and its goals watered down, its primary popular support was found in the mill villages of the Blackstone and Pawtuxet River Valleys. But the pro-suffrage forces lost the Dorr War, and the Irish quickly replaced the Yankees in Rhode Island's mills in the late 1840's and early 1850's. The



Pawtucket about 1830

possibilities for sustained class consciousness had been weakened by depression, loss of the free suffrage fight, and the encroaching power of the mill owners. With wholesale demographic change, the owners would be faced with the new problems of disciplining a second group of pre-industrial migrants to the work habits of industrial capitalism. But they would not have to face a culturally unified working class with a forty-year tradition of opposition to textile industrialism.(73)

#### Notes

1. On the strike, see John Commons, et al., History of Labour in the United States, Vol. I (New York, 1918), p. 156. Commons refers to it as the "first instance of women participating in the activities of labour organization." He does not argue that it is the first textile strike in North America, but I have found no reference to one earlier.

2. Gutman, "The Workers's Search for Power: Labor in the Gilded Age," in H. Wayne Morgan (ed.), The Gilded Age: A Reappraisal (Syracuse, 1963), and "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815-1919," American Historical Review 78 (June 1973); Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (London, 1963), and "Time, Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism," Past and Present 38 (December 1967); Dawley, Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn (Cambridge, MA., 1976).

3. Massena Goodrich, Historical Sketch of the Town of Pawtucket (Pawtucket, 1876), pp. 5, 15; 1820 U.S. Census (Washington, 1821). William Bagnall, The Textile Industries of the United States, 1639-1810, Vol. I (Cambridge, MA., 1893), pp. 253-56, 379-82; Robert Grieve, An Illustrated History of Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Vicinity (Pawtucket, 1897), pp. 136ff; Louis McLane, Report of Secretary of the Treasury, 1832: Documents Relative to the Manufactures in the United States, 2 vols. (Washington, 1833).
4. David Wilkinson, "Reminiscences," in Transactions of the Rhode Island Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry in the Year 1861 (Providence, 1862), pp. 76-99; see also pp. 101-18; Timothy Dwight, Travels in New England and New York, Vol. II (New Haven, 1821), p. 27; 1820 Census of Manufactures, Schedule for Massachusetts and Rhode Island; Pawtucket Past and Present (Pawtucket, 1917), p. 27.
5. On mill village development, see Caroline Ware, The Early New England Cotton Manufacture (Boston, 1931), passim; and H.R. Hitchcock, Rhode Island Architecture (Providence, 1939). On the problems of wealth, status, and power, I have benefited from a research project of Lisa Krop's (data on file at the Slater Mill Historic Site) and from Jonathan Prude, "The Coming of Industrial Order: A Study of Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts, 1813, 1860," (Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1976).
6. Moses Brown to Elisha Waterman, February 23, 1802; Almy, Brown and Slater Papers, Rhode Island Historical Society, hereafter cited as ABSP.
7. See the charter of the Pawtucket Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers, Rhode Island Charters, July 1810, Rhode Island State Archives and the "Petition of Cotton Manufacturers of Providence and Vicinity to the Senate and House of Representatives," October, 1815, Timothy Pickering Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.
8. Grieve, An Illustrate History, pp. 80, 84-87; Records of the Catholic Baptist Society, December 1792-March 1838, bound and Records of the First Baptist Church, August 1805-November 1837, bound, First Baptist Church, Pawtucket; Rhode Island Petitions, 1811-12, p. 60, Rhode Island State Archives; Rev. Edward H. Randall, A Discourse Commemorative of the 50th Anniversary of the Consecration of St. Paul's Church, Pawtucket, R.I., (Pawtucket, 1868); Goodrich, Historical Sketch of Pawtucket, pp. 152-53.
9. Grieve, pp. 136-37.

10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., pp. 54-56, 100, 140.
12. 1820 Census of Manufactures; McLane, Report; Transactions..., pp. 101-18. Rich sources for artisan life in this period are the depositions in the Sargeant's Trench Case, Ebenezer Tyler, et al. v. Abraham Wilkinson, et al., 1826, Federal Case No. 14,312,4, Mason 397, Federal Records Center, Waltham, Massachusetts; Pawtucket Past and Present, p. 27.
13. Rhode Island Petitions, 1815, p. 11, Rhode Island State Archives.
14. Report of the Centennial Celebration of the 24th of June, 1865, at Pawtucket, of the Incorporation of the Town of North Providence, 1865, 87; Grieve, pp. 98-99.
15. Moses Brown, "Deposition," August 31, 1792, cited in The Flyer, January 1972, publication of the Slater Mill Historic Site; Grieve, pp. 104ff; David Green, "Battle for Water Power: The Sargeant's Trench Case, Pawtucket, 1826," (unpublished manuscript, Slater Mill Historic Site, 1976).
16. Manufacturers' and Farmers' Journal, August 23, 1824; Pawtucket Chronicle, August 29, 1829 and March 22, 1828. See also the membership list of the artisans' militia unit, the Fayette Rifle Corps, Grieve, p. 218. It included no mill owners. On the "blowing-out" balls, see the Pawtucket Gazette and Chronicle, March 18, 1852 and Hannah Josephson, The Golden Threads: New England's Mill Girls and Mag-nates (New York, 1949).
17. Pawtucket Chronicle, April 25, 1829; Grieve, pp. 98-99; The New England Artisan. The Artisan was published in Pawtucket from January, 1832, when it was founded, until October 1832, when it moved to Boston. The best history of the New England Association is still that written by Helen Sumner for John Commons, et al., History of Labour in the United States, Vol. I (New York, 1918). On artisans, see E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class; Dawley, Class and Community; Bernard Moss, The Origins of the French Labor Movement, The Socialism of Skilled Workers, 1830-1914 (Los Angeles, 1976).
18. Ware, Early Cotton Manufacture, pp. 198-235; 1820 U.S. Census.
19. Manufacturers' and Farmers' Journal, June 18, 1821; 1820 U.S. Census; McLane, Report.
20. Slater to Almy and Brown, September 25, 1795



and July 19, 1796, ABSP; George S. White, Memoir of Samuel Slater (Philadelphia, 1836), pp. 98-106.

21. David Benedict, "Reminiscences No. 23," Providence Gazette and Chronicle, 28 October 1853.

22. Report of the Centennial Celebration, p. 88.

23. Grieve, p. 94.

24. 1820 Census of Manufactures; Records of the First Baptist Church (see note 8), meetings of December 5, 1818, July 28, 1819, January 7, 1819, February 5, 1820, March 1, 1820, August 7, 1820, September 28, 1820, June 28, 1821. See also Bruce Laurie, "'Nothing on Compulsion': Life Styles of Philadelphia Artisans, 1820-1850," Labor History (Summer 1974) and Daniel Scott Smith and Michael Hindus, "Pre-martial Pregnancy in America, 1640-1971," Journal of Interdisciplinary History (Winter, 1976).

25. Grieve, pp. 100-01; Richard M. Dorson, "The Wonderful Leaps of Sam Patch," American Heritage 18 (December 1966).

26. Faler, "Cultural Aspects of the Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts, Shoemakers and Industrial Morality, 1826-1860," Labor History (Summer 1974).

27. Rhode Island American, September 8, 1815.

28. Records of the First Baptist Church.

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